

VILLAGE OF ROSCOE

AGENDA ITEM - STAFF REPORT



Agenda Item: Initial Discussion – Consideration of a Tobacco Retailer Licensing Ordinance

Date: October 2, 2025

Meeting: Village Board – 10/7/2025

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Department: Administration

Overview/Background Information

In 2022, the Winnebago County Health Department prepared a model tobacco retailer license ordinance and supporting white paper recommending that municipalities adopt licensing requirements for the retail sale of tobacco, alternative nicotine products, and electronic cigarettes. At that time, the Village of Roscoe did not move forward with adoption.

Since then, local school districts have reported an uptick in the use of tobacco, CBD, and THC-related products by students. While Illinois law sets the minimum purchase age at 21, recent reports suggest that underage individuals continue to obtain these products.

Currently, enforcement within the Village consists primarily of police investigations into sales of tobacco (and alcohol) to minors. These cases typically result in citations issued to store clerks, carrying only minimal fines. The retail establishments themselves face limited consequences under the current system.

Key Issues

Creating a local retail tobacco license—similar to the Village’s existing liquor licensing framework—would allow the Village to:

- Place accountability directly on the retail establishment rather than only the employee.
- Establish harsher penalties, including suspension or revocation of the license, for violations.
- Require documented training programs for retail employees.
- Provide stronger tools for enforcement to discourage sales to minors.

The 2022 Winnebago County Health Department white paper noted that tobacco use remains a significant health issue:

- **21% of adults** in Winnebago County reported smoking in 2021, compared to 16% statewide.
- In the 2020 Illinois Youth Survey, **6% of 8th graders, 14% of 10th graders, and 17% of 12th graders** in Winnebago County reported recent use of e-cigarettes or vaping products.
- Smoking is a modifiable behavior that requires coordinated community and policy-level interventions

The attached model ordinance provides a framework for a licensing system that:

- Requires a retail tobacco license to sell tobacco, nicotine, or vaping products.
- Establishes license application and renewal procedures.
- Requires the display of warning signage and employee training.
- Prohibits sales to individuals under 21 and requires ID checks for individuals appearing under 30.
- Provides for suspension, revocation, and fines through a local “Tobacco Commissioner” (often assigned to the Liquor Commissioner).

Fiscal Note/Budget Impact

The ordinance would allow the Village to establish an annual license fee (amount to be determined). This could provide a modest revenue stream to offset administrative and enforcement costs.

Action Required/Recommendation

Staff is presenting this item for **initial Board discussion only**. The Board is asked to review the model ordinance and provide direction on whether to proceed with drafting a Village of Roscoe tobacco retailer licensing ordinance, including discussion of:

- Classification of Tobacco Retailer Licenses (e.g. High Volume / Low Volume Retailer)
- Appropriate license fee structure.
- Potential inclusion of optional provisions (e.g., sales near schools, vending machine restrictions).

Attachments

1. Model Ordinance – Retail Licensing (Winnebago County Health Department, 2022)
2. White Paper – Model Retail Tobacco License Ordinance (Winnebago County Health Department, 2022)