

Underage Vaping in London

Key information

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Introduction

The **London Assembly Health Committee** is investigating underage vaping in London.

Terms of Reference

- To understand to what extent underage vaping in London is a problem, by exploring its prevalence and impact

- To ask what action London boroughs are taking to tackle underage vape sales
- To ask what impact the Tobacco and Vapes Act could have on underage vaping and explore any potential challenges to implementation in London
- To explore young people's attitudes towards vaping in London
- To explore what further action the Mayor, Government and boroughs should take to tackle underage vaping in London

Key issues

- Data suggests underage vaping increased significantly between 2021 and 2023, coinciding with the growth of disposable e-cigarettes.
- Evidence generally suggests that in the short to medium term, vaping poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking. However, the long-term effects of vaping are not yet known. According to the NHS, children are 'more sensitive' to the effects of vaping due to their developing lungs and brains.
- Although the sale of vapes to under-18s is illegal, evidence suggests underage sales are common. In a rapid one-off review of sales compliance by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute of 422 test purchases of disposable vapes made by young people, illegal sales were made on 33 per cent of purchases.
- Concerns have also been raised about the sale in London of illicit vapes, including disposable vapes, vapes with illegal amounts of nicotine, vapes which include banned ingredients and those missing health warnings. Testing of vapes confiscated from schools has found chemicals that exceed safe exposure levels, containing high amounts of lead, nickel and chromium.
- The Tobacco and Vapes Act, passed in May 2026, aims to reduce vaping and prevent the next generation from ever being able to buy cigarettes. One of the key changes in

the Act is the introduction of a mandatory licensing scheme for all retailers selling vapes. The scheme will be monitored and enforced by local authorities and their Trading Standards teams.

- Staffing levels of Trading Standards teams have decreased considerably, falling by almost half between 2002 and 2025, and raising concerns about the capacity of teams to successfully ensure compliance with standards.

Call for Evidence

The London Assembly Health Committee would like to invite those who have knowledge and awareness of underage vape use in London to provide written evidence to the Committee for its

The Committee is keen to hear from public health agencies, health professionals, academics, schools, education bodies, charities, advocacy groups, local authorities, and Trading Standards and licensing professionals.

Written submissions should be sent to [this link](#) with '**Health Committee call for evidence**' as the subject line. The deadline is 30 September 2026. You do not need to answer all questions - please answer only those that are most relevant to you or your organisation.

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