County of Los Angeles Public Health

Steps to determine if a tobacco product is defined as a "flavored tobacco product" in Unincorporated LA County
Revised: May 10, 2022

Does the tobacco product impart a characterizing flavor?

A characterizing flavor is a taste or aroma, excluding the taste or aroma of tobacco, imparted either prior to or during consumption of a tobacco product or any byproduct produced by the tobacco product, including but not limited to, menthol, mint, wintergreen, fruit, chocolate, vanilla, honey, candy, cocoa, dessert, alcoholic beverage, herb, or spice. Characterizing flavor includes flavor in any form, mixed with or otherwise added to any tobacco product or nicotine delivery device, including electronic smoking devices (LACC 11.35.020 C).

A flavored tobacco product is a product containing tobacco or nicotine which is intended for human consumption, imparting a characterizing flavor and includes, but is not limited to, menthol cigarettes, flavored little cigars, flavored cigarillos, flavored hemp wraps, flavored vaping products (including flavored vaping juices not containing tobacco or nicotine), flavored chew, flavored hookah tobacco, and flavored pipe tobacco (LACC 11.35.020 J).

NO

Retailers with a valid Tobacco Retail License (LACC 11.35.030) may sell tobacco products containing only the flavor of tobacco in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

Please note tobacco shops, including smoke shops, cigar shops, vape shops, and hookah lounges, must obtain a Tobacco Shop Business License (LACC 11.35.055 A) in addition to a Tobacco Retail License (LACC 11.35.030).

YES

After May 1, 2020, no retailer in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County may sell flavored tobacco products that impart a characterizing flavor (LACC 11.35.070 E).

Violators of the law are subject to penalties which include administrative citations consisting of fines between a minimum of $250 and a maximum of $1000 (LACC 11.35.090 A), and/or license suspensions at a minimum of 7-days and a maximum of 120-days (LACC 11.35.100 D). In the event of repeat offenses, license revocation is possible. Please note, the sale of flavored tobacco products will result in license suspension.

Examples of tobacco flavors that impart a characterizing flavor (non-exhaustive list)		
Liquor	**Fruit/Sweet**	**Mint**
Amaretto	Apple	Arctic Ice
Bourbon	Berry	Fresh
Caribbean Peach Rum	Cherry	Frost
Cognac	Chocolate	Menthol
Honey Bourbon	Cinnamon	Peppermint
Irish Cream	Cream	Spearmint
Moonshine	Fruit Punch	Smooth Mint
Peach schnapps	Grape (green, red)	Wintergreen
Piña Colada	Honey	Winterchill
Rozay Wine	Java	
Rum	Licorice	
Scotch	Pineapple	
Spiced Rum	Pumpkin	
Tequila	Raspberry	
Whiskey	Spice	
Wine	Strawberry	
	Sweet	
	Vanilla	

STILL UNSURE? Contact the Department of Public Health's Tobacco Control and Prevention Program at 213-351-7890 or tobacco1@ph.lacounty.gov for more information.