



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care

GUIDE TO **TOBACCO PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS**



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01	Guidance material has been updated to include information on amended Regulations that commenced on 13 December 2024, requiring cigarettes that contain a filter to display an on-product health message.	December 2024

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DISCLAIMER

All manufacturers, packagers, suppliers and retailers (including importers and wholesalers) of tobacco and e-cigarette products should ensure they understand all of the requirements in the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* and *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024*.

This guide does not itemise all of the requirements under the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* and *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024*. The requirements that are not itemised in this guide are not any less important or significant than those that are displayed.

The guide does not provide legal advice and is not to be relied upon as a source of legal advice. It is provided for general information and as such any person reading this guide should rely upon their own judgement and make their own inquiries seeking relevant professional advice.

There are additional requirements under the *Commonwealth Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* and *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024* for tobacco products and packaging. Anyone who possesses, manufactures, packages, purchases, sells or supplies (including import, wholesale and retail), tobacco products or tobacco product accessories in Australia, must ensure they comply with these requirements. There are some limited exceptions for personal use or export out of Australia of tobacco products and tobacco accessories.

Nothing in this guide should be taken in any way to replace the provisions of the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* and *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024*.

The Department of Health and Aged Care (the department) does not certify compliance with any tobacco legislation. The department does not undertake a review or approval scheme for tobacco packaging and the associated health warnings, tobacco product safety, tobacco advertising, or any other tobacco legislation issues.

For complete requirements refer to the legislation available at <http://www.legislation.gov.au>.

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Introduction

Purpose of the guide

The Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (the **department**) has produced this guide to help the public understand the Commonwealth's *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* (the **Act**) and the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024 (the **Regulations**), specifically the requirements for tobacco products. This guide is not intended to comprehensively cover tobacco product requirements. The images in this guide are an example of how the tobacco product may look.

This guide does not contain all of the tobacco packaging requirements, or the requirements relating to health warnings, health promotion inserts (**HPIs**) or advertising and sponsorship. Other guides available include:

- [Guide to Tobacco Packaging Requirements](#)
- [Guide to Health Warnings](#)
- [Guide to Health Promotion Inserts](#)
- [Guide to Advertising and Sponsorship Prohibitions](#)
- [Guide to Online Point-of-Sale Advertising Requirements](#)

All of these resources will be available from <https://www.health.gov.au/>

You are encouraged to download an up-to-date version of the Act and Regulations from the Federal Register of legislation website (www.legislation.gov.au).

Definitions

'Filter paper' means the paper casing covering the filter. This may also be known as 'tipping paper'.

'Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation' means the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Act 2023* and the *Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) Regulations 2024*.

'Regulated tobacco item' means a tobacco product or a tobacco product accessory.

'Tobacco product' means the following designed or intended for human consumption or use:

- (a) processed tobacco in any form;
- (b) a product that contains tobacco as an ingredient.

'Tobacco product accessory' means any of the following:

- (a) a cigarette paper (including a pre-rolled cigarette paper) that is not part of a tobacco product;
- (b) a cigarette roller;
- (c) a filter tip for a cigar or cigarette that is not part of a tobacco product;
- (d) a wrapper for tobacco that is in the form of a sheet or tube made from or with tobacco;
- (e) a card, capsule, bead or other device that is designed or intended to alter the flavour, smell or intensity of a tobacco product (except such a device that is part of a tobacco product);
- (f) a pipe designed or intended for smoking pipe tobacco.

The definitions used in the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation can be viewed in section 8 of the Act, and section 5 of the Regulations. The above definitions are provided to assist in understanding this guide.

Requirements for tobacco products

The Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation contains requirements for tobacco products, including but not limited to:

- requirements relating to the marks that are permitted to appear on tobacco products
- requirements relating to the appearance and physical features of certain tobacco products
- restrictions on the use of certain ingredients in tobacco products
- restrictions on certain tobacco product design features and tobacco product accessories
- performance and testing requirements for cigarettes.

From 1 July 2025, all tobacco products and retail packaging must comply with the requirements in the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation.

On-product health messages on cigarettes containing a filter

On-product health messages are messages that provide information to increase consumer knowledge and understanding of the health effects and consequences of smoking and to encourage people who smoke to quit, at the time of smoking a cigarette.

All cigarettes containing a filter that are sold or supplied, or offered for sale or supply, in Australia must display an on-product health message. There are eight on-product health messages specified in Schedule 10 of the Regulations.

For each brand name and variant (if any) of cigarettes containing a filter, each on-product health message must be displayed as nearly as possible in equal numbers on the cigarettes manufactured in each calendar year.

The on-product health message **must** be printed in black directly onto the filter paper, using a matt finish, and be plainly visible and readable. The on-product health message **must not**:

- be distorted in any way
- be obscured or obliterated in any way, or obscure or obliterate any other mark required or permitted under the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation
- be etched, embossed, debossed or applied otherwise than in accordance with the requirements under the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation
- be removable
- be likely to be erased or damaged when the cigarette is handled.

The full on-product health message must appear within a white rectangular background that is 6mm in height and at least 24mm in length (see Figures 1 and 2) that is centred along the length of the filter paper. The message must be duplicated on directly opposite sides of the filter (see Figure 3). The text of the message must appear such that:

- each row of text is 2.1mm in height and does not exceed 22mm in length
- the left margin of the text is 1mm from the left border of the white background, and the right margin of the text is at least 1mm from the right border
- the top and bottom margins of the text must be equidistant from the top and bottom border respectively.

Illustrative layouts

The following images (not to scale) are an example of the location of on-product health messages on the filter paper of cigarettes.

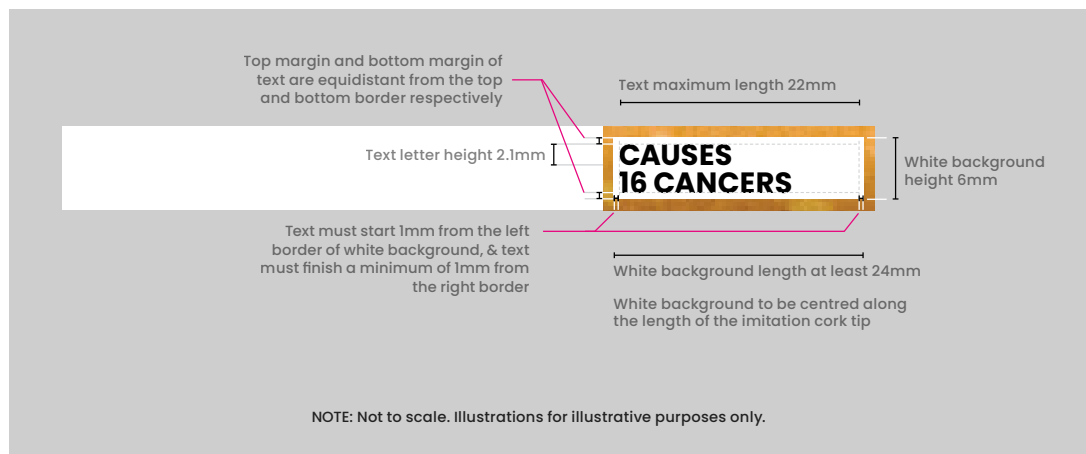


Figure 1: Image of cigarette with on-product health message on filter paper >24mm in length.

Note: If the white rectangular background is the same length as the filter paper, there will be no imitation cork filter paper visible to the left and right of that background and will appear as in Figure 2. An alphanumeric code may also appear on the cigarette, as in Figure 3.

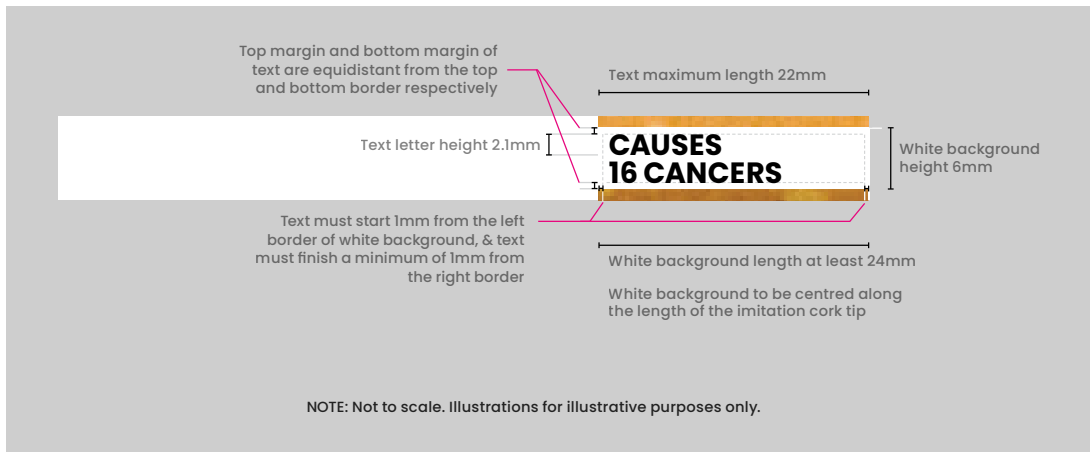


Figure 2: Image of cigarette with on-product health message on filter paper that is 24mm in length.

Note: For filter paper that is 24mm in length, the white background will extend to the ends of the filter paper. An alphanumeric code may also appear on the cigarette, as in Figure 3.

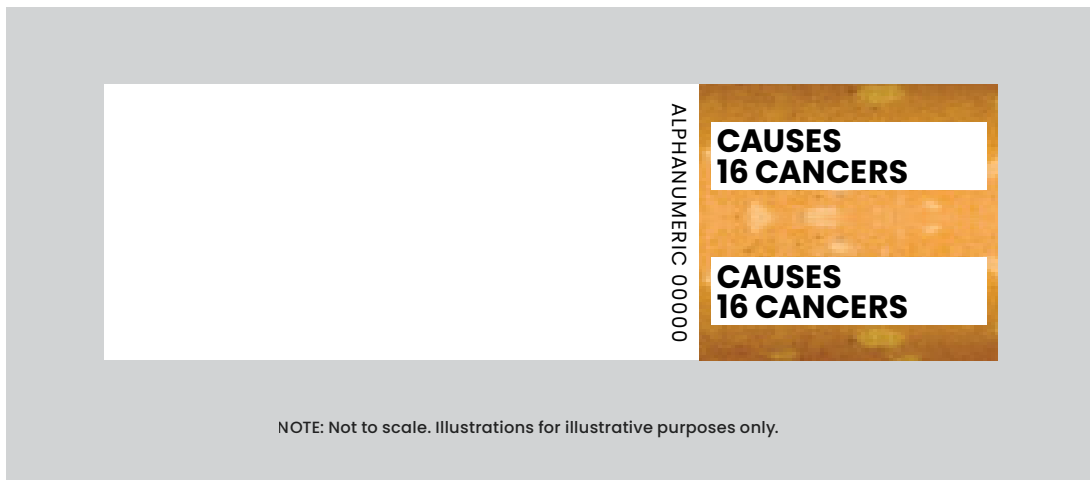


Figure 3: Image of cigarette paper unrolled, showing the placement and orientation of the on-product health message duplicated on opposite sides of the filter.

How to access images

Electronic files containing on-product health message images are available on request, free of charge, for persons involved in manufacturing cigarettes. A copy of the files containing on-product health message images can be requested from the department by completing the webform available on the [department's website](#).

Appearance and physical features of tobacco products

Cigarettes

Cigarettes are defined as a roll of cut tobacco for smoking that is enclosed in paper. Cigarettes generally contain a filter tip, however they **may** be manufactured and sold without a filter, provided they comply with the other tobacco product requirements.

All cigarettes:

- **must** be encased in white paper with a matt finish that is free from any marks (other than an alphanumeric code if used, referred to below)
- if the cigarette contains a filter, the filter paper **must** be an imitation cork tip and contain an on-product health message. Further requirements for [filter tips on cigarettes](#) are outlined later in this guide
- **may** be marked once with an alphanumeric code that complies with the size, orientation and design requirements prescribed in the Regulations. The alphanumeric code **must not** form a symbol or design or represent, or be suggestive of, the brand name or variant name (if any) of the cigarette
- **may** use lowered permeability bands that comply with the requirements prescribed in the Regulations.

All cigarettes must be of the following dimensions:

Required diameter	Required length
At least 7.65mm but not more than 8mm.	At least 82mm but not more than 85mm.



Figure 4: Image of cigarette with on-product health message on filter tip and alphanumeric code around circumference.

Filter tips on cigarettes

All filter tips on cigarettes **must**:

- be covered by imitation cork filter paper on the outside, with an on-product health message
- be coloured white on the inside
- be solid and smooth without any recessing, hollowing, raised features, embossing, decorative designs, ridges, bulges or other irregularities.

This means that products such as recessed filter cigarettes and hollow filter cigarettes are prohibited under the legislation. White paper on the outside of the filter is not permitted other than when required for the on-product health message.

For additional information about on-product health messages, please refer to the [above section](#).

Cigars

Cigars are defined as a roll of cut tobacco for smoking that is enclosed in tobacco leaf, or the leaf of another plant. Cigars **may** also be recognised as “little cigars” when they have a diameter no greater than 10mm, and a mass no greater than 1.4 grams (excluding any mouthpiece). Cigars **may** also be filtered in a manner similar to that of cigarettes.

A single, Pantone 448C coloured cigar band **may** appear around the circumference of a cigar. Any non-compliant bands that appear on the cigar **must** be removed prior to being offered for sale.

The following marks **may** appear once on the band, provided they comply with the size, orientation and design requirements prescribed in the Regulations:

- the brand name and variant name (if any) of the cigar
- a country of origin statement
- an alphanumeric code or a covert origin mark that is not visible to the naked eye.
The alphanumeric code **must not** form a symbol or design or represent, or be suggestive of, the brand name or variant name (if any) of the cigar.

In addition to the requirements for [filter tips on cigarettes](#) (other than on-product health messages), filter tips on filtered cigars **may be**:

- on either or both the outside or inside, the colour known as Pantone 448C or drab dark brown.

If a cigar is intended for retail sale (such as an original-coloured cigar tube), the non-compliant cigar tube and any other non-compliant cigar bands **must** be removed prior to retail sale. All cigars **must** be in retail packaging that complies with the tobacco product requirements at the time of retail sale.

Note: Handwritten labels are not permitted.



Figure 5: Image of cigar with cigar band around circumference

Note: For more information on retail packaging please refer to the [Guide to Tobacco Packaging Requirements](#).



Figure 6: Image of little cigar



Note: For more information on retail packaging please refer to the [Guide to Tobacco Packaging Requirements](#).

Figure 7: Image of cigar with filter

Bidis

A bidi is defined as a tobacco product for smoking, that is not enclosed in paper. The tobacco product commonly known as a bidi **may** include a single black thread around the circumference of the bidi.



Figure 8: Image of bidi with single black thread around circumference

Tobacco accessories – filter tips

All filter tips that are tobacco product accessories **must**:

- be coloured white on both the outside and the inside
- be solid and smooth without any recessing, hollowing, raised features, embossing, decorative designs, ridges, bulges or other irregularities.

This means that products such as recessed filters and hollow filters for use in roll your own cigarettes are prohibited under the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation.

Reduced Fire Risk requirements for cigarettes

All cigarettes manufactured or imported into Australia are subject to the mandatory standard for reduced fire risk cigarettes. A reduced fire risk cigarette is one that slows down the rate at which a cigarette burns. They are likely to self-extinguish if the smoker does not draw on the cigarette.

To comply with the performance requirements in the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation, at least 75% of cigarettes tested in a test trial must fail to achieve full-length burns.

When cigarettes are tested for compliance with this requirement, testing is completed in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4830-2007, *Determination of the extinction propensity of cigarettes (AS 4830-2007)*. A copy of AS 4830-2007 can be purchased from SAI Global's website: <https://www.saiglobal.com>. The department can make a copy of the standard available for viewing at one of its offices, subject to licensing conditions.

Each test of a cigarette in a test trial **must** be conducted on 10 layers of filter paper, each different kind of cigarette **must** be tested in a separate trial, and each test trial must consist of 40 replicated tests.

Prohibited and permitted ingredients

Prohibited ingredients

The Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation prohibits the use of the following ingredients in tobacco products (with limited exceptions):

- additives that have flavouring properties or that enhance flavour except those included in the list of permitted ingredients below
- amino acids that have been added to the product
- caffeine
- cloves, clove oil, clove extract and eugenol
- colouring agents (except those required to comply with the tobacco product requirements)
- essential fatty acids
- fruits, vegetables or any product obtained from the processing of fruit or vegetables (except activated charcoal or starch)
- glucuronolactone
- menthol and menthol derivatives, including but not limited to l-menthol and l-menthone
- mineral nutrients (except those necessary to manufacture the product)
- probiotics
- spices, seasonings or herbs
- sugars or sweeteners (except starch) that have been added to the product
- synthetic cooling or masking agents, including but not limited to 2-Isopropyl-N,2,3-trimethylbutanamide (WS-23) and
- N-Ethyl-p-menthane-3-carboxamide (WS-3)
- taurine
- vitamins.

Permitted ingredients

The use of the following ingredients in tobacco products will continue to be permitted:

- benzoic acid
- butylated hydroxytoluene
- carboxymethyl cellulose
- citric acid
- ethanol
- fumaric acid
- glycerol
- glycerol esters of wood rosin
- guar gum
- n-Propyl acetate
- paraffin wax
- polyoxyethylene sorbitan monolaurate
- propylene glycol
- sodium acetate anhydrous
- sodium alginate
- sorbic acid
- triacetin
- tributyl acetylcitrate
- molasses (only in shisha tobacco).

Prohibited devices

All tobacco products that contain devices capable of altering their flavour, smell or intensity are prohibited under the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation.

This means that products such as cigarettes that contain 'crush balls' or 'flavour beads' are prohibited.

Prohibited tobacco product accessories

Tobacco product accessories that alter (or are capable of altering) the flavour or smell of the tobacco product with which they are used are prohibited.

This means that tobacco product accessories such as flavoured filter tips, flavoured rolling papers and flavour cards are prohibited under the legislation.

Enforcing the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation

The Government takes breaches of the Act seriously. The department is responsible for investigating reported breaches of the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation. The department's [Tobacco Control Enforcement Policy](#) outlines the principles used to guide the department's decisions and actions in enforcing these laws.

Any person who possesses, manufactures, packages, purchases, sells or supplies (including import, wholesale and retail) tobacco products in Australia which do not comply with the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation may face significant criminal or civil penalties. A range of options are available to enforce the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation, including issuing infringement notices, seeking enforceable undertakings or injunctions, or referring the matter to the Australian Federal Police who may, in turn, refer the matter to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions.

As at publication, the maximum penalty for contravening the tobacco product requirements is 2,000 penalty units (\$660,000) for individuals and 20,000 penalty units (\$6.6 million) for bodies corporate.¹

If you wish to report a potential breach of the Public Health (Tobacco and Other Products) legislation, please contact the department. Reports of breaches can be submitted in writing through the [make a complaint](#) link on the department's website or by emailing TobaccoCompliance@health.gov.au. Please include sufficient information to enable the department to investigate the alleged breach, including images or document copies demonstrating the allegation where possible.

¹ Since 7 November 2024, the value of one penalty unit is \$330.00. This amount may be subject to increase in the future.

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