

3

Checking Identification

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Identify acceptable forms of identification.
- Identify the characteristics of a valid ID.
- Identify valid IDs issued to minors.
- Verify that an ID is genuine.
- Verify that an ID belongs to the guest who has presented it.
- Identify when to check IDs.
- Identify the proper procedure for checking IDs.
- Properly use bar-code and magnetic-stripe ID readers.
- Identify the proper way to deal with a fake ID.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. **True or False:** A birth certificate is an acceptable form of identification. (See page 3-5.)
2. **True or False:** To be valid, an ID must contain a state seal. (See page 3-5.)
3. **True or False:** An ID with split lamination is not valid. (See page 3-5.)
4. **True or False:** IDs containing the words "Official," "Authentic," or "Secure" are not genuine. (See page 3-10.)
5. **True or False:** A guest that avoids eye contact while you are carding him may have presented a fake or altered ID. (See page 3-14.)

For answers, please turn to page 3-20.

CONCEPTS

- **Hologram:** Three-dimensional image that appears to change when viewed from different angles.
- **Lamination:** Plastic film enclosing many state-issued IDs.
- **Ghost photo image:** Faint copy of the photo added to the ID as a security feature.
- **ID checking guide:** Reference used to validate IDs. It includes samples of each state's drivers' licenses and a detailed description of minor IDs, state ID cards, and valid drivers' licenses in current circulation.
- **ID reader:** Device used to validate IDs by reading information encoded in an ID's bar codes or magnetic stripes.

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *Spot the Minor*

Which of these people is a minor?

1



2



3



4



For answers, please turn to page 3-20.

INTRODUCTION

While all of the women in the photos look at least 21 years of age, all of them are minors. The woman in photo #1 is only 17-years old!

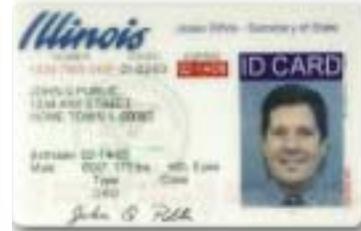
Many minors today look much older than they actually are. For this reason, it is dangerous to make a decision about service on a guess or hunch about a guest's age. As a seller or server of alcohol, you are responsible for ensuring that all of your guests are of legal age to drink. This can be a challenging task given the fast-paced environment in which you work. If there is any doubt about a guest's age, however, you must take the appropriate steps to verify that he or she is of legal age to drink. You have the legal right to refuse service if you suspect the guest is underage. Remember: you can be held criminally liable for serving a minor.

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION

The types of identification that can be used to confirm a guest's age depends upon what is legally acceptable in your state or municipality. In most states, the following forms of ID are acceptable:



Driver's License

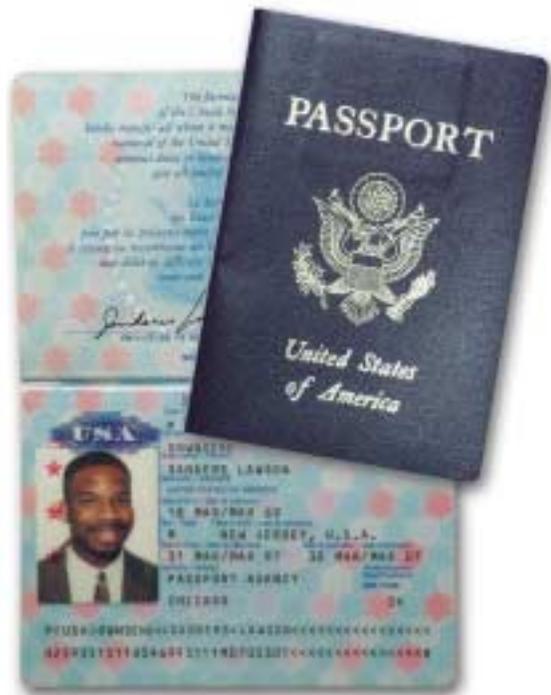


State ID Card



Military ID

Military IDs and passports, while acceptable, are not commonly used forms of identification in most areas. For this reason, you should always use an ID checking guide to validate them.



Passport

In some jurisdictions, an immigration card is an acceptable form of identification. Ask your manager if you can accept them.

IDs that are valid in one state may not be valid in another. For example, some jurisdictions do not acknowledge out-of-state drivers' licenses or state ID cards as acceptable forms of ID. Check with your manager.

In most states, the following forms of ID are **not** acceptable:



Birth Certificate



School ID



Voter's Registration Card

VERIFYING IDENTIFICATION

When checking an ID, you must verify that it

- is valid.
- is genuine.
- has not been issued to a minor.
- belongs to the guest.

Each of these topics will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

Determining if an ID is Valid

An ID must be valid before you can accept it. A valid ID has the following features:

It contains the owner's birth date.

- The birth date can be used to calculate the age of the guest.

It is current.

- An expired license is never valid.
- Minors often use the expired license of a family member or friend who has been issued a new one.



It contains the owner's photo.

- The photo is used to verify that the person who presented the ID is the owner.

It is intact.

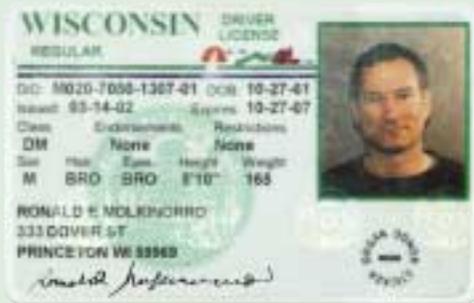
- Several states use IDs that are laminated, or enclosed in plastic.
- Lamination must be the proper thickness, and must not be split or contain bubbles or creases.
- In most states, a damaged ID is not valid and must be replaced.

It contains the owner's signature.

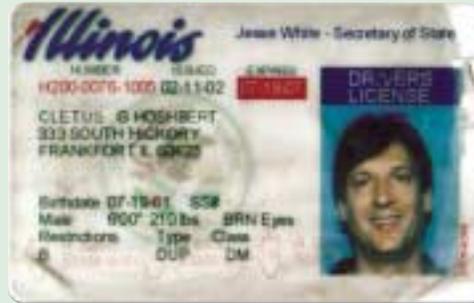
- The signature can be used to verify that the person who presented it is the owner.

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *Valid or Invalid?*

Circle the ID(s) that are not valid.



1



2



3

For answers, please turn to page 3-20.

Determining if an ID Has Been Issued to a Minor

All states add special features on a minor's ID to make an underage guest easy to spot. These include:

- Designated colors
- **Title bars.** Many states use specific colors in title bars, headers, and bands used to highlight text on the ID. See the ID at right.

- **Photo backdrops.** Some states use a red, yellow, or blue photo backdrop to identify minor IDs.
 - **Outlines and borders around photos.** Many states use red frames, outlines, or borders around photos on minor IDs.
 - **Text.** Several states display the minor’s birth date, name and address, and other text in a special color.
- **Text**
 - Most states include the words, “UNDER 21,” or “UNDER 21 UNTIL 00-00-0000” on the ID.
 - **Layout features**
 - **Photo placement.** In some states, a minor’s photo is placed on the opposite side of where it is placed for someone 21 years or older. In Minnesota, for example, a minor’s photo is placed on the left side of the ID, while a person who is of age has a right-sided photo.
 - **Format of the ID.** The IDs issued to minors in many states are in a vertical format rather than the horizontal format used for those over 21 years of age.
 - **Ghost photo images.** A ghost photo image is a faint copy of the photo added to the ID as a security feature. Many states place a ghost photo image on all IDs, while some states use the ghost image only on minor IDs.

MINOR IDS WITH VERTICAL FORMAT

Text indicating guest is a minor until the date listed



Blue block highlighting expiration date

HOW THIS RELATES TO ME...

List the security features used on minor IDs in your state.



Ghost photo

Using the Birth Date to Verify a Guest's Age

Many state IDs include the date that the minor will turn 21-years old. This eliminates the need to calculate the guest's age from his or her birth date. However, since several states do not provide this information, it is important to be able to calculate if a guest is old enough to drink.

Example: The guest was born on May 5, 1982.

Step 1 Add 20 to the guest's birth year.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \boxed{1982} & + & 20 = \boxed{2002} \\
 \text{Guest's} & & \text{Total} \\
 \text{birth year} & &
 \end{array}$$

Step 2 Add 1 to the total.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \boxed{2002} & + & 1 = \boxed{2003} \\
 \text{Step 1 total} & & \text{Calculated} \\
 & & \text{year}
 \end{array}$$

Step 3 Compare the calculated year to the current year.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \boxed{2003} & \text{to} & \boxed{2004} \\
 \text{Calculated} & & \text{Current year} \\
 \text{year} & &
 \end{array}$$

IF	THEN
The calculated year occurs before the current year	The guest is 21-years old or older.
The calculated year occurs after the current year	The guest is underage.
The calculated year matches the current year and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the guest's birthday has passed ■ the guest's birthday has not passed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The guest is 21-years old. ■ The guest is underage.

In the example, since the calculated year (2003) occurs before the current year (2004), the guest is 21-years old or older.

Your establishment may also post signs or calendars that state a guest must have been born on or before the current date to be served alcohol in your establishment. These can be excellent aids to help you determine if a guest is old enough to drink. They are typically available through your liquor distributor. Talk to your manager.



APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *To Serve or Not to Serve?*

It is July 19, 2004. Based on their birth dates, which of the following guests are old enough to be served?

1. Someone born on 12-31-83
2. Someone born on 01-18-84
3. Someone born on 05-11-85
4. Someone born on 07-01-82

For answers, please turn to page 3-20.

Verifying That the ID is Genuine

It is important that you become thoroughly familiar with the valid IDs in your state and neighboring states. In recent years, states have developed IDs that are difficult to alter or falsify, but counterfeiters have also become more sophisticated at creating genuine-looking IDs. The key to spotting fake IDs is to be knowledgeable and to use the most current tools at your disposal.

Check with your manager for the valid IDs issued by your state. Another important tool you can use is an ID checking guide. These guides provide full-size samples of each state's drivers' licenses. They also provide a detailed description of minor IDs, state ID cards, and valid drivers' licenses in current circulation.



Characteristics of Genuine IDs

To determine if an ID presented by a guest is genuine, look for the following characteristics:

- **Proper text and images.** The text on the ID must have the correct font and be properly spaced.

Counterfeiters often place improper text or icons on IDs in order to avoid criminal liability. IDs should not contain the words “Official,” “Valid,” “Secure,” “Genuine,” “Authentic,” “Souvenir,” “Novelty,” or similar terms. Also, look for improper icons such as keys or locks.

States often include other security features on their IDs to discourage tampering. These include:

- **Special text or images.** Several states place holograms or other images on their IDs. These images can be seen only when the ID is tilted, or they might change color or shape when the ID is held at an angle. Possible images include the state’s name, seal, motto, shape, or other graphics. When checking an ID with one of these images, make sure it is appropriate, has been placed in the correct location, and is not distorted.

Several states include objects that can only be seen using ultraviolet light. If the ID contains these features, you must make sure they are present.

- **License numbers.** All states include a license number on the ID. This may consist of the person’s social security number, or a series of letters and/or digits that may be coded to the person’s name, birth date, etc. When checking IDs, make sure that this number contains the appropriate letter(s) and/or number of digits. If the number is coded to the person’s personal information, make sure it is coded correctly.



Note the word *Genuine* on this fake ID.



Note the image of the key on this fake ID.

- **Clear photos.** A blurry photo may indicate that the ID has been altered. Many states include a ghost photo image on the ID as an additional security feature. When checking IDs from these states, make sure the ghost image is present and matches the photo.
- **Appropriate information on the back.** All state-issued ID cards contain information on the back, such as an organ-donor signature area or driving restrictions. A majority of states also include bar codes, magnetic stripes, or both on the back of their IDs. These contain specific data about the person, and can be accessed by using an ID reader (see page 3-16). For states that include bar codes and/or magnetic stripes, make sure these features are present on the ID.



This fake ID has a blurry photo, indicating that it has been altered.

You should be aware that the backs of fake IDs are sometimes blank or contain a statement that identifies it as a fake, such as “For Entertainment Purposes Only.” For this reason, always check the back of an ID to ensure it is genuine.

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *Check It Out!*

Using this page from the *I.D. Checking Guide*, identify the features on the ID that should be verified to ensure the ID is genuine.



For answers, please turn to page 3-20.

I.D. Checking Guide page courtesy of The Drivers License Company.

NEBRASKA

Description: Current license is digitized with ghost image; 2D bar code on back. Prior license: Photographic, encased in plastic. Current CDL shows “COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE” in orange headbar. Prior license has “COMMERCIAL/DRIVERS LICENSE” at top right of state heading.

Minor’s license: Current in vertical format with “UNDER 21 UNTIL MM-DD-YYYY” and, if applicable, “UNDER 18 UNTIL MM-DD-YYYY” in red under headbar. Prior licenses issued beginning September 1999 have a red photo backdrop and “UNDER 21” down each side and on the back. Blue “MINOR” stickers, begun in September 1997, are no longer issued.

Validation: Current license: Front laminate shows an optically variable pattern of the state name and seal that changes color when the license is tilted and that fluoresces under UV light. Date of birth overlaps ghost image; state seal overlaps photo and ghost image. Prior license: State seal and 3-digit serial number below state seal overlap photo. Laminate contains a box with “BUCKLE UP (with or without) NEBRASKA” and “DON’T DRINK AND DRIVE” over data portion.

License number: One letter followed by up to 8 numbers, not spaced, not coded.

License term: Up to 5 years, expiring on birthday in the 5th year after issuance, making the license good for up to 5 years 11 months. If under 21, license expires on 21st birthday.

HOW THIS RELATES TO ME...

List the security features used on IDs issued by your state.

Verifying That the ID Belongs to the Guest

A common practice used by minors is to present the valid ID of a family member or friend. They might also use an expired license from an individual who has been issued a new one.

To verify that the ID belongs to a guest:

- **Compare the guest to the photo on the ID.** When making the comparison, you should account for changes that may have occurred since the photo was taken, such as differences in hair length/color, facial hair, etc. Look at the chin, nose, eyes, eyebrows, hairline, and shape of the guest's face. They should match the features in the photo.



■ **Compare the guest to the physical characteristics listed on the ID.**

Make sure the following features match:



Height/Weight

Eye color

Gender



WHEN TO CHECK IDs

Since it is illegal to serve alcohol to a minor, it is vital that you card any guest that appears to be under 21 years of age. Remember: you can be held liable for your failure to do so. To take the guesswork out of carding, many establishments require staff to card guests who are clearly older than 21 years of age—for example 25- or 30-years old. Always follow your house policies regarding when to card.

HOW THIS RELATES TO ME...

When should IDs be checked in your establishment?

THE PROPER PROCEDURE FOR CHECKING IDs

IDs must be checked thoroughly and properly according to the procedure below. While this may seem like an inconvenience, especially during a rush, you must never skip steps. Any time guests leave the establishment and then return, you should recheck their IDs. If you are in doubt or not comfortable with the situation, contact your manager. ***You have the legal right to refuse service if you suspect the guest is a minor.***



1

Greet the guest politely.

The greeting can help you assess whether the guest

- is nervous (avoiding eye contact), indicating that he or she may be using a fake ID.



2

Politely ask the guest for ID.

Ask the guest to remove the ID from his or her wallet. Hold the ID to detect signs of tampering, including:

- Bubbles and creases
- Improper thickness
- Ink signatures

Signs of tampering may be easier to spot if you light the ID from behind while examining it.

Greet the guest using the name on the ID to

- discourage the guest from lending the ID to another guest.
- remind you later that you've checked this ID.



3

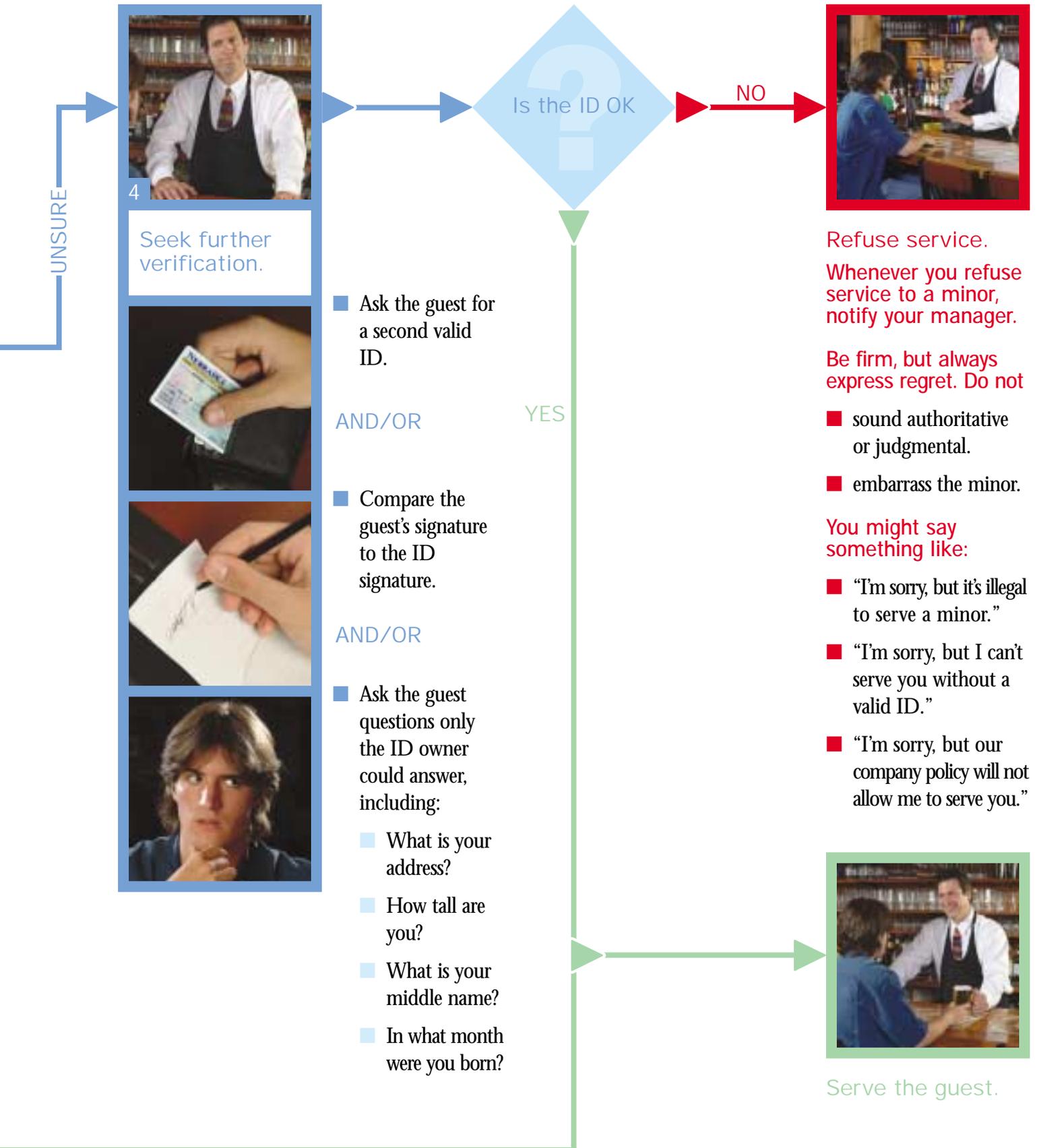
Verify the ID. Make sure it

- is valid.
- has not been issued to a minor.
- is genuine.
- belongs to the guest.



Is the ID OK

YES



APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *Spot the Fake*

Circle the ID(s) that are fake.



1



2



3

For answers, please turn to page 3-20.



USING ID READERS

Some establishments use ID readers to check IDs with bar codes or magnetic stripes. While these tools can help verify the age of a guest, they should be used along with the other checking procedures discussed in this chapter. It is especially important to compare the ID reader's display with the actual information listed on the ID, since bar codes can be imported from valid ID cards. If the ID contains magnetic stripes, the stripes should be checked for signs of tampering intended to invalidate the reading.

DEALING WITH A FAKE ID

If you spot a fake ID, there are several steps you can take depending upon your company policy and the law in your jurisdiction. This may include refusing service, refusing entry to your establishment, and/or confiscating the ID. Always follow your company policy.

APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE: *Rate the Response*

This activity requires the Video/DVD 5: *Evaluating Real-World Scenarios*. After watching each scenario from Section 2 of this video/DVD, rate how well the employee handled the situation by placing the appropriate number in the space provided.

Rating Scale

- 1 = Employee handled the situation effectively.
- 2 = Employee handled the situation somewhat effectively.
- 3 = Employee handled the situation ineffectively.

Video Segment	Description	Rating
1	Parents attempting to serve an underage child in a fine-dining restaurant	
2	Group of friends attempting to enter a nightclub	
3	Flirtatious guest attempting to be served at the bar	
4	Guests attempting to enter a nightclub	
5	Guest attempting to be served at a sports bar	

For answers, please turn to page 3-21.

SUMMARY

As a seller or server of alcohol, you are responsible for ensuring that your guests are of legal age to drink. If you serve an underage guest, you can be held criminally liable. Remember: you have the legal right to refuse service if you suspect the guest is underage. Always follow your company policies.

The type of identification that can be used to confirm a guest's age depends upon what is legally acceptable in your state or municipality. In most states, this includes a driver's license, state ID card, passport, and military ID. When checking an ID, you must make sure it is valid, has not been issued to a minor, is genuine, and belongs to the guest who presented it. A valid ID is intact and current and contains the owner's photograph, signature, and birth date.

States place certain features on minor IDs to make an underage guest easy to spot. This includes the use of designated colors, text, and specific layout features. Many states also show on the ID the date that the minor will be 21-years old. This eliminates the need to calculate the guest's age from his or her birth date. However, since a number of states still do not provide this information, you must be able to make this calculation.

To determine if an ID is genuine, make sure that it contains the proper text and images, a clear photo, and the appropriate information on the back side. Check with your manager for information on the valid IDs issued by your state, and use an ID checking guide. To verify that an ID belongs to a guest, compare the guest to the photo and the physical characteristics listed on the ID.

When checking an ID, start by politely greeting the guest. This can help you assess whether the individual is nervous—a sign he or she may be underage. Next, politely ask the guest to remove the ID from his or her wallet. Once you have looked at the name, greet the guest using it. This can discourage the individual from lending the ID to another guest, and it can help remind you later that you have already checked the ID. It is also important to hold the ID, since this can help you spot signs of tampering. Verify the ID by making sure it is valid, has not been issued to a minor, is genuine, and belongs to the guest. Seek further clarification if you are unsure that the ID is valid. You can ask the guest for a second ID, compare the individual's signature to the signature on the ID, or ask a question only the guest could answer. If you are still unsure that the ID is valid, refuse service and inform your manager. If you spot a fake ID, always follow your company policy.

If your establishment uses an ID reader to check IDs with bar codes or magnetic stripes, make sure you always compare the display with the actual information listed on the ID. Do not rely solely on the ID reader. ID readers should be used in addition to the other checking procedures identified in this chapter.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE STUDY QUESTIONS



1. Which of the following forms of identification is acceptable for verifying a guest's age?
 - A. School ID
 - B. Passport
 - C. Birth certificate
 - D. Voter registration card
2. To be valid, an ID must have all of the following features *except* a
 - A. birth date.
 - B. photo.
 - C. hologram.
 - D. signature.
3. All of the following features are used by states to indicate that an ID belongs to a minor *except*
 - A. placing the words "Secure," "Genuine," or "Valid" on the ID.
 - B. orienting the ID in a vertical format.
 - C. highlighting the birth date in a different color.
 - D. placing the photo on the side opposite of where it is placed for those over 21 years of age.
4. All of the following are grounds for rejecting an ID *except*
 - A. split lamination.
 - B. improperly spaced text.
 - C. a ghost photo image on the ID.
 - D. a blank back side.
5. What should you do to verify that an ID belongs to the guest?
 - A. Check for splits in the lamination.
 - B. Verify the state seal is in the proper location.
 - C. Compare the guest to the physical characteristics listed on the ID.
 - D. Check the license number to see if the coding matches the personal information.
6. After asking for a guest's ID, why should you greet the individual using the name on the ID?
 - A. It helps you determine if the ID is valid.
 - B. It prevents you from having to card the guest again later.
 - C. It discourages the guest from lending the ID to another guest.
 - D. It reduces your liability in the event that you miss something.

For answers, please turn to page 3-21.

ANSWERS



Page Activity

3-2 Test Your Knowledge

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. True

3-3 Spot the Minor

All of them are minors.

3-6 Valid or Invalid?

ID #2 is not valid because it is missing a signature and is not intact.
ID #3 is not valid because it has expired.

3-9 To Serve or Not to Serve?

Only #4 is over 21 years of age.

3-11 Check It Out!

1. The ID must contain a ghost image.
2. The license must contain a two-dimensional bar code on the back.
3. The date of birth must overlap the ghost image.
4. The state name and seal must appear in a repeating pattern that changes color when the license is tilted and fluoresces under UV light.
5. The state seal must overlap the photo and ghost image.
6. The license number must contain one letter followed by eight numbers that are not spaced or coded.

3-16 Spot the Fake

Both ID #1 and ID #3 are fakes. ID #1 has the word "authentic" on it, while the word "secure" and pictures of locks can be seen on ID #3. ID #3 also has an incorrectly colored photo background.

Continued on next page...

ANSWERS *continued*

Page Activity



3-17 Rate the Response

1. Rating: 1—Effective

Here is how the server handled the situation effectively:

- He was not authoritative when refusing service.
- He quoted the law and the consequences to both himself and the establishment when denying service.
- He was firm in the decision to refuse service.

2. Rating: 1—Effective

Here is how the valet handled the situation effectively:

- He communicated important information to the doorman who was checking IDs.

Here is how the doorman handled the situation effectively:

- He thoroughly examined the ID to ensure it was genuine.
- Since he was unsure if the ID belonged to the guest, he asked appropriate questions to verify it, including asking to compare the guest's signature with the signature on the ID.
- He was polite when refusing entry.

3. Rating: 3—Ineffective

The bartender made the following mistakes:

- The bartender failed to use an ID checking guide to examine the out-of-state ID.
- The bartender failed to notice that the photo did not match the guest. This should have prompted a more thorough examination of the ID.
- The bartender failed to notice that the back of the ID was blank, indicating it was a fake.

4. Rating: 3—Ineffective

The doorman made the following mistake:

- The doorman failed to compare the readouts on the ID reader with the information on the IDs.

5. Rating: 3—Ineffective

The bartender made the following mistakes:

- The bartender failed to notice that the guest appeared nervous.
- The bartender failed to ask the guest to remove his ID from his wallet.

3-19 Multiple-Choice Study Questions

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. C
6. C