



From 1 October 2021, a prescription is required for all purchases of nicotine vaping products, such as nicotine e-cigarettes, nicotine pods and liquid nicotine. This includes products purchased both in Australia and imported from overseas suppliers. Find out how to legally import nicotine vaping products before you purchase or import products from overseas.

Changes to personal imports of nicotine vaping products

From 1 October 2021, consumers will need a valid doctor's prescription to import nicotine vaping products into Australia. This aligns with domestic restrictions under state and territory law that prohibit the supply of nicotine vaping products to Australian consumers without a valid prescription.

These changes balance the need to prevent adolescents and young adults from taking-up nicotine vaping products while allowing current smokers to access these products for smoking cessation with appropriate medical advice. It's important that you speak to your GP about your smoking cessation options.

Obtaining nicotine vaping products after 1 October 2021

There are two main ways to obtain nicotine vaping products if your doctor gives you a prescription:

- filling your prescription at a pharmacy (either a physical community pharmacy or an Australian online pharmacy)
- importing from overseas using the Personal Importation Scheme.
- Nicotine vaping products can only be legally used by the person named on the prescription; they cannot be legally supplied to friends or family members in Australia or overseas.

Be aware that apart from pharmacies dispensing nicotine vaping products to patients with a prescription, it is illegal for any other retailers including vape stores in Australia to sell nicotine vaping products.

Using the Personal Importation Scheme to access nicotine vaping products

You can order the nicotine vaping products prescribed by your doctor from an overseas online retailer using the Personal Importation Scheme. You or your GP may want to contact the overseas supplier to check if the product meets the regulatory requirements and has appropriate packaging, labelling and manufacturing controls.

Under the scheme, you can order a maximum of 3 months' supply at one time and a maximum of 15 months' supply in a 12-month period.

You should arrange for a copy of your prescription to be enclosed within the package your nicotine vaping product is sent in. This could be requested through the overseas online retailer or their logistics provider. Australian Border Force (ABF) officials can stop your import at the Australian border if they suspect that it is unlawful and having a valid prescription available at the time of import will assist in the assessment and clearance of your goods.

If you would like to import more than a 3 months' supply in a single order, your doctor will need to apply to the TGA for approval through the Special Access Scheme <https://www.tga.gov.au/form/special-access-scheme> or the Authorised Prescriber Scheme <https://www.tga.gov.au/authorised-prescriber-scheme-0> before they give you a prescription.

What are the consequences if I import nicotine vaping products unlawfully?

If there is no prescription enclosed in the package containing your nicotine vaping products, the ABF may refer the import to the TGA for assessment. The TGA will then contact you to ask for a copy of your prescription. If you do not provide a copy of your prescription, the TGA can request that the ABF proceed to the seizure of the goods.

The TGA encourages consumers to comply with Australian laws by providing education and guidance in the first instance. For repeated and deliberate non-compliance, the TGA takes escalated regulatory action which can include infringement notices, civil court proceedings and criminal prosecution.

Further information

Further information about the regulation of nicotine vaping products can be found at <https://www.tga.gov.au/nicotine-vaping-products>.

Contact us

Web: <https://www.tga.gov.au/contact-tga>

Phone: 1800 020 653 (free call within Australia)

Email: info@tga.gov.au