



Breaking the Lines of Law: On Use of Fake IDs

For most young people, using a fake ID to buy alcoholic drinks and cigarettes seems so trivial that it can hardly be considered a crime. The common belief is that most can get away with it, and if they don't, the worst that can happen is they get thrown out of the store or bar leaving their fake ID behind. Well, there is always a period in every complete sentence and this holds true with fake ID use.

It may not be the biggest or most sinister crime one can commit. In itself, the motive is not to do harm to anyone or to take anyone's property. It certainly is not a crime directly associated with violence. But at the very least, it is a misdemeanor offense.

The consequences of getting caught vary. In some cases, if a bar or store owner catches you with a fake ID, they just confiscate the fake ID and prevent you from entering. But sometimes, you will get an added humiliation because some (1) [display the fake IDs publicly](#) may be to shame and even to warn others not to try it. Other bar and store owners take it up to the next level and give the fake IDs the confiscate to law enforcers in which case you will have to face the consequences provided for by law.

Penalties vary from one state to another, which include fines, community service, suspension of your genuine driver's license and even jail time. Probably because of its prevalence, some states have made using fake IDs in to a felony. This is much more serious compared to a misdemeanor. At the very least, it would mean higher fines, longer community service, longer suspension term of your driver's license and longer jail time. The worse part is you get a criminal record which could be damaging for your future. It could make it more difficult for you to get in to a good school or finding a good job. You may even lose some privileges as a citizen such as the right to vote.

This might not discourage you because you are probably thinking the chances of getting caught are not really that high. There are so many young people doing it, what are the odds that you will be the unlucky one to get caught. It is very difficult to tell how many do get caught, but one thing is certain, many who try do get caught everyday. Bar and store owners and staff are becoming better at spotting fakes. And do not think for a second that the worse that can happen is that your fake ID gets confiscated. They wouldn't bother to send it to the police. Even if they did not bother to do so, law enforcers now make it a (2) [routine to get the fake IDs from the bars and stores](#). This means that if you are caught flashing a fake ID, prosecution is sure to follow.

Now you may be thinking it probably will not be that difficult going through the process of getting caught. False alarm actually because aside from paying hundreds of dollars in fines and days or months of community service or, worse, jail time, getting caught opens other consequences that you wish would never occur. Being charged with one offense, you now open yourself to other possible charges such as possession of alcohol and providing alcohol to minors to name a few. You will also have to shell out more money to have your license reinstated plus pay higher insurance costs due to the suspension on your driving record.

Another reason why you probably think that it is not easy to get caught is because of the false idea that store and bar owners would rather let you in than turn you down because it is bad for business. Actually, it's the opposite that is happening. The consequence for them, if caught, is not even half of what it is for you. If the business gets caught allowing minors to buy and drink alcohol from their business, they are also given a much bigger fine, they can be forced to close down for days or even months, which means a loss of bigger business or worse, their liquor license can be revoked permanently, also loss of big business. Even if a minor was able to buy liquor from them because they honestly did not spot the fake ID, they have to prove that the fake ID was really hard to spot in court. In which case, it is very much in their interest not to allow minors in and to be thorough in checking for fake IDs rather than face the consequences, which could lead to the loss of the entire business.



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- (1) <http://celticfringe.net/teenlife/fakeid.html>
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