

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

IN THE MATTER OF

Vape R Us Inc.
837 Whalley Avenue
New Haven, CT 06515
Credential No. ECD.03936
DCP Case Nos.: 2025-867; 2025-1431

July 29, 2025

SUMMARY SUSPENSION ORDER

I. Background

Vape R Us Inc. (“Respondent”) is the holder of Dealer of Electronic Nicotine Delivery System or Vapor Product Registration No. ECD.03936 (“ECD”), issued by the Department of Consumer Protection (“Department”) for the Respondent’s place of business located at 837 Whalley Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut (“Premises”). This ECD registration authorizes the sale of electronic nicotine delivery systems but does *not* authorize the sale of cannabis or cannabis-related products. Respondent is not, nor has it ever been, licensed to possess or sell cannabis or cannabis-derived products under Connecticut law.

II. Findings of Fact

The Department’s findings of fact in connection with three separate compliance checks of the Premises are as follows:

A. First Inspection (May 7, 2025)

On May 7, 2025, Department of Consumer Protection Drug Control Division agents, in coordination with the New Haven Police Department and Connecticut State Police, conducted a compliance inspection at the Premises after receiving complaints that the Respondent was marketing products to children. During this compliance visit:

- 1) The Department noted that the exterior signage at the Premises displayed “Vape R Us” in colorful lettering, with a backwards “R” and a depiction of a giraffe, consistent with the logo of “Toys R Us,” and their mascot, Geoffrey the Giraffe. Additionally, the interior of the store was decorated with imagery of cartoon and anime characters.
- 2) The Department determined that the store lacked a posted ECD registration.
- 3) The Department further determined that the Premises was selling non-legend drugs such as Advil, Motrin, Excedrin, and NyQuil, among others, and did not possess a non-legend drug permit.

- 4) Department agents and police officers identified 818 units of cannabis products, equivalent to 24 pounds of cannabis flower, that the Department knew from training and experience to contain intoxicating tetrahydrocannabinol (“THC”) concentrations above 0.3% THC or above the THC milligram limits as allowed under Connecticut law. The New Haven Police Department seized these illegal products, which included: cannabis flower, THC pre-rolls, vapes, and edibles with THC levels exceeding legal limits.
- 5) The Department noted that various items were marketed with labels containing false and misleading medical claims.
- 6) Finally, agents found that cannabis products were packaged to appeal to children by depicting, among other things, candy, ice cream, sidewalk chalk, and children’s vitamins.

B. Second Inspection (June 30, 2025)

On June 30, 2025, Department agents returned to the Premises for a follow-up compliance check. During this inspection:

- 1) Despite prior advisement, agents again observed, in plain sight, hundreds of illegal cannabis products for sale, including flower, edibles, and THC vapes.
- 2) Items exceeded legal THC limits and were packaged to appeal to children. For example, the packages were similar to commercially available non-cannabis products such as Peeps, cereal, and candy, or had representations of cartoon characters commonly associated with children such as Scooby Doo and SpongeBob.
- 3) Store employees were reminded that the Respondent lacked any cannabis license and was prohibited from selling cannabis.
- 4) Agents further observed that the Respondent continued to sell non-legend drugs such as Advil, Tylenol, Motrin, etc., despite lacking a non-legend drug permit from the Department.

C. Third Inspection (July 8, 2025)

On July 8, 2025, only eight days after having determined that the Respondent was still illegally selling cannabis and marketing to children, Department agents, accompanied by New Haven police officers, returned to the Premises to conduct a third inspection. During this inspection:

- 1) Department agents and New Haven police determined that the Respondent was still operating without a posted ECD credential and was unable to produce a copy of such registration.
- 2) Department agents discovered many cannabis products for sale behind the counter, including cannabis flower material, pre-rolls, edibles and electronic cigarettes that agents knew to be above 0.3% THC or above the THC milligram

limits as allowed by Connecticut law. New Haven police seized 449 units of illegal cannabis products, equivalent to 13 pounds of marijuana flower.

- 3) Agents again noted that many such illegal products were marketed towards children, including items packaged like candy, toys, and cereal.
- 4) Agents further noted that the Respondent continued to display non-legend drugs for sale, such as Tylenol, Claritin, Motrin, etc., despite lacking a non-legend drug permit from the Department.

III. Conclusion and Order

In sum, the Department finds that the Respondent has repeatedly and willfully engaged in the unlicensed sale and display of illegal products, including high-THC cannabis, in violation of Connecticut law. Moreover, the Respondent engaged in these sales after being explicitly advised that the Premises was noncompliant and having illegal products identified and/or seized during three separate compliance inspections conducted within a two-month timeframe. The Department further finds that the Premises poses an imminent threat to public health and safety, and particularly to minors, given the presence of child-targeted packaging and exterior and interior marketing. Most notably, the store's name, signage, and mascot deliberately mimic the well-known branding of "Toys R Us," a nationally recognized children's toy retailer, further amplifying the risk of child appeal and public deception.

Specifically, the Department alleges that the Respondent:

- 1) Failed to obtain a permit to sell non-legend drugs, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 20-623(a);
- 2) Was in possession of cannabis or cannabis product with the intent to sell or dispense, offer, give, or administer to another person without statutory authorization, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 21a-278(b);
- 3) Failed to post a valid, in-date Dealer of Electronic Nicotine Delivery System or Vapor Product registration in a prominent location adjacent to electronic nicotine delivery system products or vapor products offered for sale, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 21a-415(b);
- 4) Sold or offered to sell cannabis to consumers without the necessary license and/or outside the course of employment by an authorized licensee, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 21a-420c(a);
- 5) Acted as a retailer or represented itself as such without obtaining or possessing an adult use cannabis retailer license, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 21a-420r(a); and
- 6) Engaged in unfair and deceptive acts and practices in the conduct of trade and commerce, in violation of Connecticut General Statutes § 42-110b.

THEREFORE, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 4-182(c), it is hereby ORDERED:

The Dealer of Electronic Nicotine Delivery System or Vapor Product Registration ECD.03936, held by the Respondent, is hereby **SUMMARILY SUSPENDED, effective immediately.**

A formal administrative hearing will be scheduled to determine whether the credential should be permanently revoked or subject to further disciplinary action. The Department will notify the Respondent of the date, time, and format of the hearing, pursuant to Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

ISSUED BY:

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION



Maureen Magnan
Deputy Commissioner
Department of Consumer Protection
State of Connecticut