

The Bulletin

Norwich gives businesses scanners for alcohol purchases

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NORWICH—Rayallen Bergman said businesses have had to adapt to many safety and sanitary changes due to COVID, yet officials still want to make sure proper ID-ing is taking place.

“If there’s alcohol delivery, or alcohol curbside pickup, the person purchasing (needs to) make sure their ID is valid, or that they’re not presenting with anything that might stand out, like purchasing for a youth.” said Bergman, the How Can We Help coordinator for Norwich Youth and Family Services.

To help Norwich restaurants and package stores, Youth and Family Services has been giving vouchers for virtual training on how to ID someone for an alcohol purchase.

Youth and Family Services also has given out ID scanners.

For the scanners, Bergman said it would help businesses with new employees, or for businesses that keep their own scanning equipment inside.

“We want to make sure they’re fully trained and have all the tools to continue to responsibly sell and serve alcohol,” he said.

One business that received the scanner is Towne Liquor Store. Owner Betsy Eichholz said she’s happy with it because it makes the process quicker and easier. She uses it with both indoor purchases and curbside pickups.

“It’s a very useful tool in IDing people” she said. “It’s a lot quicker to scan the license and have the age come up, and have it say that they’re of age to drink alcohol.”

Bergman said Youth and Family Services had bought four scanners, which have all been distributed.

“If there’s a need, we can definitely look ahead and see if that’s something we want to do again,” he said.

Beyond the fact that it’s illegal to sell alcohol to minors, Bergman said exposing a minor to alcohol can impact brain development.

“If you’re introducing some of these substances early on, while (the brain) is still in development, it’s going to incorporate that into the way it continues to develop” he said. “Adding that in at an earlier age will be more likely to create that dependence into young adulthood, and later on.”

Bergman also said restaurants should still be mindful of where alcohol is, and minors aren’t drinking alcohol in a different setting.

“We just want to make sure they have those different pieces in mind,” he said.