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FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY

GUIDELINES FOR THE LABELLING OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

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1 INTRODUCTION

In the quest for regulating tobacco products and reducing the epidemic of tobacco use, the labelling of tobacco and tobacco products has been envisaged to be one of the most effective measures to increase awareness and communicate specific health risks such as death, addiction, cancer, stroke, lung and heart diseases. An effective package message reduces attractiveness of packaging to smokers or tobacco users, encourages smokers to quit and empower youth to say “No to Tobacco”. Health warnings that include pictures have been largely encouraged as they have been shown to be more effective since they are more likely to be noticed, critical in communicating health risks to larger number of low literacy group. The size, location and design of Pictorial Health Warnings increase its effectiveness.

The introduction of these warnings is expected to have positive public health impact by increasing awareness of the broad range of harms from tobacco and the understanding of the true risks, influencing smoking initiation and quitting behaviours, and ultimately decreasing the number of smokers, resulting in lives saved, increased life expectancy and lower medical costs.

This guideline is hereby promulgated for information, guidance and strict adherence by all concerned.

1.1 SCOPE

In pursuance of Sections 62 to 65 of the Public Health Act 2012, (Act 851) and Tobacco Control Regulations, 2016(L.I.2247) Regulations 10 and 11, these Guidelines are hereby made to provide prospective importers, wholesale distributors and manufacturers of tobacco products with information on the general requirements for the labelling of tobacco products. These Guidelines apply to all body-corporates duly registered by the Registrar General’s Department who want to import, manufacture or distribute tobacco products into Ghana.

2 GLOSSARY

In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise states:

- a) **“FDA”** means Food and Drugs Authority
- b) **“Applicant”** means the product owner or license holder. Representatives of license holders may not hold themselves as applicants
- c) **“Tobacco Products”** means a product entirely or partly made of tobacco leaf as raw material which has been treated or manufactured to be smoked, sucked, chewed or sniffed or handled
- d) **“Package”** includes a packing, carton, wrapping or any other container in which a tobacco product is generally sold by retail

- e) **“Health warning”** means any message, information, graphic or any other thing that is required to appear on the retail packaging of tobacco product determined by the FDA to inform people of health hazards associated with tobacco use.
- f) **“Point of sale”** means any place where tobacco products are distributed, or sold as wholesale or retail.

3 REQUIREMENT

3.1 General Requirement

- (a) The company shall be registered as an applicant of tobacco product (*Refer to Guidelines for registration of tobacco and tobacco products*)
- (b) The company shall register the tobacco product (*Refer to Guidelines for registration of tobacco and tobacco products*)

3.2 Labelling of tobacco products

1. Labelling for tobacco products package, whether manufactured in or imported into Ghana for sale shall carry health warnings that shall be frequently rotated within 24 months.
2. The tobacco product package shall include but not limited to the following:
 - a) Health warnings (pictorial images and accompanying text) shall cover 50% of principal display area at the front and 60% at the back of a rectangular packaging, positioned in the lower portion of each of the principal display areas.
 - b) For a carton and other outside packaging, the warning and message shall cover the widest main surfaces in a way that they cover not less than 50% to the left side of each of those surfaces. This warning shall be a textual warning.
 - c) Health warnings shall be permanently inscribed on the package and shall not be inscribed on any cellophane or other wrapping that can be removed.
 - d) The visibility of the warning and message shall not be susceptible at any time to being damaged, concealed, obstructed, obscured, disrupted, covered, or changed by any markings, stamps, package design feature or mechanism, or by anything supplied by the manufacturer or seller.
 - e) The warnings must be reproduced on the package by electronic imaging derived from the original images contained in the electronic files and displayed on the package with the same quality and clarity.
 - f) The text of the warnings and messages shall be in the English language and shall be printed in legible characters on a contrasting background as shown in the electronic images determined by the Authority.

- g) Only the prescribed warning and message shall be inscribed on the part of the space reserved for the warning and message.
 - h) For smokeless tobacco product, the health warning and a message shall cover 65% of the main display areas of the package and meet all the requirements specified under Sub-regulation (c) to (g).
 - i) The inscription "**FOR SALE IN GHANA ONLY**" displayed on the side panel of the product pack: The inscription shall have a font colour which contrasts with the background of the product pack.
 - j) Tobacco product packages shall state the country of origin of the tobacco product, the manufacturers address, batch number and manufacturing date.
 - k) A sign on a side panel of the product pack shall specify the age eighteen (18) years as the lowest age for the sale of tobacco and tobacco products.
3. In addition to the required health warnings and messages, the lateral surface of the unit and outside packaging of smoked tobacco product shall contain permanently inscribed information on the constituents and emissions of the product as specified by the electronic file (source Document).
4. The packaging and labelling of a tobacco product shall not:
- a) promote the tobacco product by a means that is false, misleading, deceptive or likely to create an erroneous impression about its characteristics, health effects, hazards or emissions, including a term, description, trademark, figurative or any other sign that directly or indirectly creates a false impression that a particular product is less harmful than any other tobacco products.
 - b) A term referenced in "a)" includes the use of the expression "light", "ultra-light", "low tar", "mild", "extra" and any other expression which creates the impression that the tobacco product is less harmful or has beneficial effects.

3.2.1 Pictorial Health Warnings for Tobacco Product Package

The electronic file (source Document) containing the graphic health warnings shall be obtained from the FDA in addition to forms for registration of tobacco and tobacco products.

3.3 Specifications for Points of Sale

1. A person who sells or offers for sale tobacco or a tobacco product

- a) Shall conspicuously display at the points of sale a health warning determined by the FDA which shall cover not less than 420mm by 594mm on a poster.
- b) The poster referred to in Sub-regulation (1) (a) shall also include the following statements.
 - a. "WE CANNOT, BY LAW, SELL TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS."

3.3.1 Text of Points of Sale Warning

The text of the health warning for tobacco products points of sale is indicated below:

HEALTH WARNING
"Cigarette smoking is harmful to your health"

4 APPENDIX

4.1 Change History

SN	Date	Ver. No.	Description of Change (section)
1.	01/02/2013	00	Initial issue
2.	10/04/2017	01	Review to conform to tobacco control regulations 2016, (L. I. 2247)
3.	13/08/2018	02	Review of sections 2.0, 3.2 (j) and 3.3
4.	01/10/2019	03	General review of guidelines