



JEANNINE M. PACIONI
District Attorney

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Emily Hickok, Chief Deputy District Attorney
Telephone: (831) 647-7710

OWNER OF RUBYSTAR GEMS & GIFTS TO PAY \$25,000 IN CIVIL PENALTIES FOR SELLING TOBACCO PRODUCTS TO MINORS AND SELLING FLAVORED TOBACCO

People v. Gamal Kalini (24CV002657)

MONTEREY, California – Monterey County District Attorney Jeannine M. Pacioni announced today that Gamal Kalini, the owner of Rubystar Gems & Gifts in the City of Monterey, has agreed to pay a \$25,000 civil penalty for unlawfully selling tobacco products to minors, as well as selling unlawful flavored tobacco products, hallucinogenic gummies that contained psilocybin, and metal knuckles. The court, through a stipulated judgment, also imposed injunctive terms prohibiting Kalini from violating these laws in the future.

Two salesclerks at Rubystar Gems & Gifts had previously been charged with misdemeanors for selling tobacco products to minors in 2022 and 2023. Recently, the Monterey Police Department received additional complaints from parents alleging that minors were able to purchase tobacco products from Rubystar. The District Attorney’s Office investigated and found that Rubystar was also selling flavored tobacco vapes, which are illegal to sell in California. Flavored tobacco vape products sold by Rubystar included flavors designed to appeal to youth, such as “watermelon sour peach,” “white gummy,” and “vanilla ice cream,” among other flavors.

The sale of flavored tobacco products is prohibited in California. Tobacco contains nicotine which is highly addictive and harmful to adolescent brain development. The 2023 California Youth Tobacco Survey found that vapes were the most widely used tobacco product among high schoolers. A substantial majority of high schoolers who used tobacco reported that they used flavored tobacco products, with fruit flavors being especially popular.

DA Investigators also found that Rubystar was selling packaged “magic gummies” in wrapping shaped like a mushroom that a clerk described as “psychedelic.” Testing later revealed that these “magic gummies” contained psilocybin, a hallucinogenic controlled substance that is illegal to sell in California. The magic gummies were professionally packaged and did not disclose on the packaging that they contained psilocybin. Additionally, upon scanning the QR code on the packaging, it appeared the product was counterfeit and not manufactured by the business named on the label.

If you have any information on retailers that sell tobacco products to minors, or that sell unlawful flavored tobacco or hallucinogenic products, you may contact the District Attorney’s Office’s Consumer Protection Unit to make a complaint at (831) 647-7770 or email at consumercomplaints@countyofmonterey.gov or online [here](#).