

GUIDE TO LEAD RESTRICTIONS IN JEWELRY IN CALIFORNIA

(Health and Safety Code sections 25214.1-25214.4.2)

California's Metal-Containing Jewelry Law regulates the amount of lead in jewelry by specifying:

- The materials that can be used; and
- The levels of lead that are allowed in certain of these materials.

There are different restrictions for each of the following categories: children's jewelry; body-piercing jewelry; and all other jewelry. The purpose of this guide is to clarify the lead restrictions for two categories: children's jewelry and all other jewelry except body-piercing jewelry.¹ California law prohibits the manufacture, shipping, or sale of jewelry, or offering the jewelry for promotional purposes in California, unless the jewelry meets the restrictions set forth in the law.

Children's jewelry² – under California law:

- *Metallic materials*: less than 0.06 percent (600 ppm) lead by weight (unless they are class 1 materials, which carry no lead restriction)
- *Plastic or rubber, including acrylic, polystyrene, plastic beads and stones, and polyvinyl chloride (PVC)*: less than 0.02 percent (200 parts per million) lead by weight.
- *Glass or crystal decorative components*: must weigh less than one gram, excluding any glass or crystal components containing less than 0.02 percent (200 ppm) lead by weight and that have no intentionally added lead
- *A dye or surface coating*: less than 0.06 percent (600 ppm) lead by weight
- *Printing ink or ceramic glaze*: less than 0.06 percent (600 ppm) lead by weight
- *Class 3 materials*: less than 0.02 percent (200 ppm) lead by weight.

Non-metallic materials that are Class 1 materials (for example – glass, ceramic, or crystal components, certain gemstones, and elastic, fabric, ribbon, rope, or string,

¹ The body-piercing jewelry provisions under the Metal-Containing Jewelry Law identify the materials that can be used in this jewelry, without specifying lead restrictions. "Body-piercing jewelry" is defined as that part of the jewelry that is placed in a new piercing or a mucous membrane. [Please see Health and Safety Code section 25214.1(b) for a full definition.]

² Under California's Metal-Containing Jewelry Law, "children" are defined as age 6 and younger. "Children's jewelry" is defined as "jewelry that is made for, marketed for use by, or marketed to, children. [Please see Health and Safety Code section 25214.1(c) and (d) for full definitions.]

without intentionally added lead) can be used in children's jewelry, as long as they do not violate the glass or crystal component restrictions above.

All other jewelry (except body-piercing jewelry):

- *Electroplated metal alloys*: less than 6 percent lead by weight.
- *Unplated metals (other than Class 1)*: less than 1.5 percent by weight.
- *Plastic or rubber, including acrylic, polystyrene, plastic beads and stones, and polyvinyl chloride (PVC)*: less than 0.02 percent (200 parts per million) lead by weight.
- *A dye or surface coating*: less than 0.06 percent (600 ppm) lead by weight.

[The above are "Class 2 materials".]

- *Any material not a class 1 or class 2 material* ["Class 3 material"]: less than 0.06 percent (600 ppm) lead by weight.

The following materials can be used in jewelry intended for adults, and have no lead restrictions:

- Class 1 materials, namely:
 - Stainless or surgical steel.
 - Karat gold.
 - Sterling silver.
 - Platinum, palladium, iridium, ruthenium, rhodium, or osmium.
 - Natural or cultured pearls.
 - Glass, ceramic, or crystal decorative components, including cat's eye, cubic zirconia, including cubic zirconium or CZ, rhinestones, and cloisonné.
 - A gemstone that is cut and polished for ornamental purposes. *The following gemstones are not class 1 materials: aragonite, bayldonite, boleite, cerussite, crocoite, ekanite, linarite, mimetite, phosgenite, samarskite, vanadinite, and wulfenite.*
 - Elastic, fabric, ribbon, rope, or string, unless it contains intentionally added lead and is listed as a class 2 material.
 - All natural decorative material, including amber, bone, coral, feathers, fur, horn, leather, shell, wood, that is in its natural state and is not treated in a way that adds lead.
 - Adhesive.