



# PLASTIC BAG BAN INFORMATION SHEET

Effective Date: July 1, 2015



## Overview

Revised Ordinance of the City & County of Honolulu, **Sections 9-9.1 through 9-9.4** regulate the use of plastic bags on Oahu. Effective July 1, 2015, businesses shall be prohibited from providing plastic checkout bags and non-recyclable paper bags to their customers at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise. Nothing in the ordinance shall preclude a business from making available to customers, with or without charge, at the point of sale: 1) reusable bags, compostable plastic bags, or recyclable paper bags for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise; or 2) non-recyclable paper bags to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods.

## Banned Plastic Bags

**"Plastic Checkout Bag"** means a carryout bag that is provided by a business to a customer for the purpose of transporting groceries or other retail goods, and is made from non-compostable plastic and not specifically designed and manufactured for multiple re-use.

### EXEMPTIONS

The term "plastic checkout bag" does not include the following types of bags. The following types of bags are exempt from the ban and may continue in use.

- A. Bags used by customers inside a business to package loose items, such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, ground coffee, grains, candies, or small hardware items;
- B. Bags used to contain or wrap frozen foods, meat or fish, flowers or potted plants, or other items to contain dampness;
- C. Bags used to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods, including takeout bags used at restaurants, fast food restaurants, and lunch wagons, to transport prepared foods;
- D. Bags provided by pharmacists to contain prescription medications;
- E. Newspaper bags for home newspaper delivery;
- F. Door-hanger bags;
- G. Laundry, dry cleaning, or garment bags, including bags provided by hotels to guests to contain wet or dirty clothing;
- H. Bags sold in packages containing multiple bags intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or yard waste bags;
- I. Bags used to contain live animals, such as fish or insects sold in pet stores;
- J. Bags used to transport chemical pesticides, drain-cleaning chemicals, or other caustic chemicals sold at the retail level; provided that this exemption shall be limited to one bag per customer;
- K. Compostable plastic bags.

## Acceptable Bags

1. **"Compostable Plastic Bag"** means a checkout bag that is provided to a customer for the purpose of transporting groceries or other retail goods, that meets the current ASTM D6400 Standard Specifications for compostability and that is labeled:
  - a) With the Biodegradable Product Institute (BPI) logo as meeting the ASTM standard for compostability; and
  - b) With "Compostable" on both sides of the bag in either green color lettering that is at least one inch in height, or as otherwise specified; or within a green color band that is at least one inch in height in order to be readily and easily identifiable.
2. **"Recyclable Paper Bag"** means a paper bag that: (1) is one hundred percent recyclable, (2) contains a minimum of forty percent post-consumer recycled content, and (3) displays the words "Reusable" and "Recyclable" in a highly visible manner on the outside of the bag.
3. **"Reusable Bag"** means a bag with handles that is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse and is made of: (1) cloth or other washable fabric; or (2) durable material suitable for reuse, including plastic that is at least 2.25 mils thick.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the City's Recycling Branch at **768-3200** or visit **opala.org**.