

PLASTIC BAG BAN INFORMATION SHEET

Overview

Revised Ordinance of Honolulu, Sections 9-9.1 through 9-9.4 regulate the use of bags on O’ahu, effective July 1, 2015. Businesses are prohibited from providing non-compliant bags to their customers at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise. Businesses may provide compliant recyclable paper bags or compliant reusable bags to customers at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise, provided they charge the customer a minimum of 15 cents per bag. Additionally, businesses are permitted to provide non-recyclable paper bags with or without charge to protect or transport prepared foods, beverages, or bakery goods.



Plastic Film



Compostable Plastic



Reusable Plastic
unless >10 mils (15¢)



Reusable Cloth or
Washable Fabric



Reusable Paper



Recyclable Paper

Compliant Bags

1. **“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.
2. **“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 thicker than 10 mils.

Exemptions

The following types of bags are exempt from the ban and may continue in use.

- (A) Handle-less plastic bags used by customers inside a business to package loose items, such as bakery goods, fruits, vegetables, nuts, ground coffee, grains, candies, or small hardware items;
- (B) Handle-less plastic bags used to contain or wrap frozen foods, meat or fish, flowers or potted plants, or other items to contain dampness;
- (C) Newspaper bags for home newspaper delivery;
- (D) Laundry, dry cleaning, or garment bags;
- (E) Bags sold in packages containing multiple bags intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or yard waste bags;
- (F) Bags used to contain live animals, such as fish or insects sold in pet stores;
- (G) 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.

For details, definitions, history, & frequently asked questions, visit the opala.org Plastic Bag Ban page.
Contact the City’s Recycling Branch at businessrecycle@honolulu.gov or 768-3200 ext. 6.



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