Overview
Revised Ordinance of Honolulu, Sections 9-9.1 through 9-9.4 regulate the use of plastic bags on O’ahu, effective July 1, 2015. Businesses are 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. Businesses may provide, at the point of sale, reusable bags, compostable plastic bags, or recyclable paper bags for the purpose of transporting groceries or other merchandise provided they charge the customer a minimum of 15 cents per bag. Effective January 1, 2020, compostable plastic bags shall no longer be provided, and plastic film bags made out of thin flexible sheets of plastic with a thickness of 10 mils or less shall no longer be considered "Reusable Bags." See the second page of this Information Sheet for Exemptions A-J.

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.
   **Effective January 1, 2020, compostable plastic bags shall no longer be provided.**

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.
   **Effective January 1, 2020, plastic film bags made out of thin flexible sheets of plastic with a thickness of 10 mils or less shall no longer be considered "Reusable Bags."**

---

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