City of Seattle

Bag Requirements



What the City of Seattle Law Requires:

Plastic Carryout Shopping Bags	Large Paper Shopping Bags	Smaller Paper Bags	Green Plastic Bags* (such as produce)	Clear Plastic Produce/ Bulk Food Bags
 BANNED	 5¢ (Minimum charge required.)	 FREE (Charge optional.)	 BANNED *Requirement is effective July 1, 2017	 ALLOWED

Seattle Stores:

- May not provide customers with single-use plastic or compostable carryout (shopping) bags, or bags labeled "biodegradable," "degradable," "decomposable" or similar.
- May not provide customers with plastic bags (such as produce bags) that are tinted green or brown.* Stores can provide approved compostable bags, and they must be colored green or brown.*
- May provide customers with any size recyclable paper or reusable carryout bags. Stores must charge a minimum paper bag fee of 5 cents for large 1/8 barrel paper bags (paper bags 882 cubic inches or larger).
  - › Paper bag charges must be shown on customer receipts. Sales tax applies. Stores keep the paper bag fee.
  - › The large paper bags for which customers are charged must contain at least 40 percent post-consumer recycled fiber, and the minimum recycled fiber content must be printed on the outside of the bag.
  - › Recycled fiber content and labeling is encouraged for all paper bag sizes.
  - › Stores may provide smaller paper bags free or charge customers for them.
- Plastic bags 2.25 mil or thicker are considered reusable bags. Stores may provide them free or charge the customer for them.

*Requirement is effective July 1, 2017

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EXEMPTIONS & ADDITIONAL DETAILS

Exemptions & Information

Exemptions from the Ban:

- Customers using state or federal food assistance program vouchers or benefits cards are exempt from the 5-cent large paper bag fee.
- Plastic bags used in stores for bulk items or to protect vegetables, meat, frozen foods, flowers and similar items are exempt. Plastic bags cannot be green or brown tinted.* Approved compostable bags are permitted for these purposes.
- Plastic or approved compostable bags used for take-out orders of prepared food from restaurants are allowed.
- Plastic dry-cleaner, newspaper and door-hanger bags are allowed but cannot be tinted green or brown.*

Bags Still Allowed



Produce/Meat

Bulk Foods



Newspaper

Dry Cleaning



Door Hanger

Take-out Food

Paper Bags

Encouraged:

Choose Reusable Bags

- Single-use bags are wasteful. They also often end up blocking storm drains, littering our streets, polluting our waterways, contaminating compost, and creating more trash.



*Requirement is effective July 1, 2017

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For interpretation services please call 206-684-3000.
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