

New Jersey's Single-Use Plastic Carryout Bag and Polystyrene Foam Ban Takes Effect May 4, 2022

NJ businesses urged to prepare for new requirements that will ban single-use plastic carryout bags and polystyrene foam food service products, and limits plastic straws

Do you run a grocery store or retail outlet that distributes plastic or paper carryout bags to customers, or a food service business that provides plastic straws and polystyrene foam clam-shell takeout containers and other products?

As part of the eco-friendly initiative to eliminate plastic pollution in the environment, **New Jersey will soon ban single-use plastic carryout bags, polystyrene foam food service products, paper carryout bags in grocery stores at or larger than 2500-square-feet and will limit plastic straws to by-request-only.** The ban will go into effect on May 4, 2022.

The law, signed by Governor Murphy in 2020, bans the use of plastic carryout bags – regardless of thickness – at grocery stores and retail outlets, as well as paper carryout bags at grocery stores at or larger than 2,500-square-feet. The law will also ban polystyrene foam clamshell food containers and other products such as plates, cups, food trays and utensils, and make plastic straws available only upon request. For a helpful chart of establishments and products affected, and exemptions, please see, https://www.nj.gov/dep/get-past-plastic/#foam_products



The ban was designed to address the problem of plastic pollution with solutions to protect the environment for future generations. In 2017, only 8.4 percent of plastics in the United States were recycled. Most single-use plastic carryout bags arrive in landfills, are incinerated, or accumulate in the environment. Unable to biodegrade, leftover plastic products release chemicals into the environment that are harmful to human health and negatively impact major contributors to the New Jersey economy – such as the tourism, fishing, and shipping industries, as well as recreation.

To encourage the use of reusable carryout bags, New Jersey Clean Communities Council has formed the [“Bag Up NJ” campaign](#), which educates and reminds

consumers about their options for sustainability and encourages them to bring their own reusable bag when they shop.

To assist businesses with compliance, the NJ Business Action Center (NJBAC) has rolled out resources on its website, www.business.nj.gov, which, has a list of wholesale vendors of reusable bags. The Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has rolled out <https://www.nj.gov/dep/get-past-plastic/#faqs> with detailed information about the new law. NJ Clean Communities Council – with responsibility for outreach, educational programs, and public service announcements – will be distributing a limited number of free reusable carryout bags through a partnership with the [Clean Communities Program](#). Find your County Clean Communities Coordinator at www.njclean.org.

To stay on track, businesses can read the single-use plastic carryout bag and polystyrene foam ban [timeline](#) for all critical dates as defined by the law. It is recommended that businesses print a copy of this timeline and keep it posted in order to keep track of important deadlines.

The NJ Department of Environmental Protection <https://www.nj.gov/dep/get-past-plastic/> is responsible for the overall implementation of the plastics ban law, including the adoption of implementing regulations. The NJDEP, along with the municipalities, CEHA and the NJ Department of Health are responsible for enforcement of the law. Penalties will be given to businesses who do not comply, which include a warning for the first offense, up to \$1,000 per day for a second offense and up to \$5,000 per day for a third offense or subsequent offense.

If you need additional support, The New Jersey Business Action Center (NJBAC) offers a Live Chat on its website, www.business.nj.gov, or can be reached at 1-800-JERSEY-7 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, where New Jersey-based business experts will assist you and provide answers to your questions.

For more information contact the NJDEP Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste at singleuseplastics@dep.nj.gov or 609-984-4250.

To learn more about New Jersey Clean Communities' "Bag Up" campaign, visit: <https://www.bagupnj.com/>

To gain access to free resources provided by the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC), visit: <https://njnoplastics.org/>



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