

Bring Your Own Bag – Plastic Bag Ordinance Effective January 1, 2020

Retailer F.A.Q.

What is the Bring Your Own Bag – Plastic Bag Ordinance? Starting January 1, 2020, retailers in unincorporated Kitsap County, City of Bremerton, and City of Port Orchard are prohibited from offering thin plastic carryout bags to customers. Paper or thick plastic bags may be provided to customers for a minimum pass-through fee of \$0.08 each. Stores keep the pass-through fee to help cover the cost of providing bags. Everyone is encouraged to use and sell reusable bags.

What businesses are affected? All retail businesses in unincorporated Kitsap County, City of Bremerton, and City of Port Orchard are affected by the ordinance. Food banks and other food assistance programs in unincorporated Kitsap County and City of Port Orchard are exempt from the requirements; however, City of Bremerton food banks and food assistance programs are affected by the ordinance.

What carryout bags are allowed by the ordinance? Under the ordinance, retail establishments may provide consumers large paper bags and thick plastic bags as carryout bags. To qualify, paper carryout bags (1/8 barrel or 882 cubic inches or greater in size) must contain at least 40% recycled paper. Plastic carryout bags must be at least 2.25 mils thick.

Are retailers required to provide a paper or thick plastic bag? No, you are not required to provide bags to customers. If you choose to provide bags, you must charge \$0.08 for large paper bags or thick plastic bags. You cannot provide thin, single-use plastic carryout bags less than 2.25 mils in thickness.

What is the required carryout pass-through fee? Retailers are required to charge a minimum of \$0.08 for each carryout bag provided to a consumer. This fee is kept by the retailer and intended to defray the cost of implementing the ordinance. Retailers may begin charging customers the pass-through fee for paper or thick plastic bags prior to January 1, 2020 and the charge should be clearly indicated on the customer transaction receipt.

Do I have to charge the customer the pass-through fee? Yes, customers must pay the fee for each paper and/or thick plastic bag, thereby encouraging the customer to bring their own reusable bag instead of purchasing a disposable one.

Are all customers required to pay the pass-through fee? Customers who have the following benefits will not pay the pass-through fee when they receive a paper or thick plastic bag during checkout: Women Infants and Children (WIC), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Washington State Food Assistance Program (FAP).

Where does the pass-through fee go? The pass-through fee is retained by the retailer to offset the cost of providing recycled content paper bags or thick plastic bags (at least 2.25 mils thick) which are generally more expensive than thin plastic bags.

How will the Plastic Bag Ordinance be enforced?
Enforcement of the plastic bag ordinance will be complaint-based.

How can I learn more?
Visit kcowa.us/byob to learn more about the Plastic Bag Ordinance.

