

DISPOSABLE PLASTIC BAG BAN FACTSHEET*



Two new ordinances (laws) passed by the Anchorage Assembly make it **unlawful for retail stores to provide any soft plastic shopping bags for a purchaser to carry away goods after September 15, 2019.**

1 PURPOSE OF THE LAWS

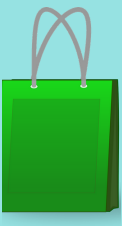
- Plastic bags are harmful to bodies of water, such as lakes and creeks in Anchorage and Cook Inlet.
- Plastic bags endanger wildlife, such as moose, bears, eagles and whales.
- Plastic bags are toxic and take hundreds of years to decompose.

2 MAIN POINTS

- Beginning September 15, 2019, retailers cannot provide any plastic shopping bags for a purchaser to carry away goods.
- Shoppers may bring and use their own bags, of any kind.
- Reusable bags made of cloth or other woven material, with handles, which are designed and manufactured to withstand repeated use over time, may be sold by retailers or provided to customers free of charge.
- Alternative bags (such as paper bags) may be made available by retailers. Retailers must charge the shopper 10¢ per bag to a maximum of 50¢ per transaction for the alternative bag, and that charge must be separately itemized on the receipt.

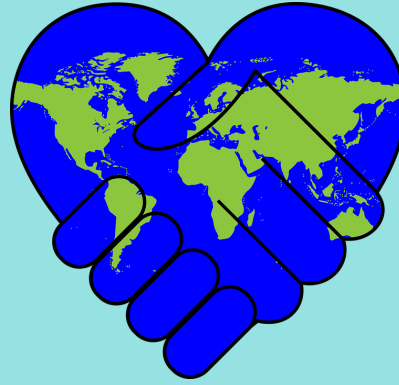
3 TERMS USED IN THE NEW LAW

- **Plastic shopping bag** is a bag made exclusively or primarily of soft plastic (including plastics marked or labeled as “biodegradable” or “compostable”) that is designed to carry customer purchases from the retail seller’s premises.
- **Reusable bag** is a bag designed and manufactured to withstand repeated use over time; OR is made from cloth, other machine washable fabric, or is made from other woven material that can be cleaned and disinfected regularly; and has handles.



*This fact sheet is provided as a courtesy to the public to highlight provisions of the law; it is not the law. For specific details of the law and the requirements or prohibitions in the law, please refer to the text of the ordinances (AO NO. 2018-63(s), As amended, and AO NO. 2018-110, As Amended), or Anchorage Municipal Code Chapter 15.95.

DISPOSABLE PLASTIC BAG BAN FACTSHEET (CONT.)



3 TERMS USED (CONT.)

- **Alternative bag** means any bag that is designed to carry customer purchases from the retail seller premises that is neither a disposable plastic shopping bag nor a reusable bag.

4 THERE ARE SOME EXCEPTIONS IN THE LAW

- This ordinance does not apply to plastic bags used for: goodie bags, non-profit giveaways, individuals bringing in their own plastic bags, bulk item bags, bags used to contain frozen foods, meat or fish, ice, newspaper, prescription drugs, wrapped flowers or potted plants, unconsumed portion of a bottle of wine, laundry or dry-cleaning, and protected goods that are not individually wrapped. It does not apply to a package of multiple bags for use off the store premises, such as for garbage, pet waste, or yard waste.
- Fees for alternative bags provided by retailers will be waived for any purchases made with federal or state supplemental nutrition assistance programs (food stamps, food coupons, WIC, etc.).

5 CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS BY RETAILERS

- A warning for a first offense,
- A \$250 fine for a second offense, and
- A \$500 fine for a third and subsequent offenses.



Reviewed by the Municipality of Anchorage Legal Department

If you have additional questions, your Assembly Member's contact information may be found at www.Muni.org/Assembly.