



## Reusable Bag Ordinance for Alameda County

### Requirements for Retail Stores

**As of May 1, 2017 for all retail establishments:**



### All stores in Alameda County must adhere to the following:

- Stores can no longer provide single-use plastic bags.
- Stores that distribute compliant recycled paper or reusable bags at point of sale must charge a minimum of 10 cents per bag (*see compliant bag specifications on reverse side*).
- The sale of compliant recycled paper and reusable bags must be itemized on the receipt.
- Stores keep the 10 cent bag charge.
- The charge is not subject to taxes per the California State Board of Equalization.
- Stores that fail to comply with any elements of the law are subject to fines ranging from \$100 - \$1,000 depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

### Exceptions:

- The law does not apply to bags without handles used to protect merchandise, produce, bulk items, etc., when placed together in a single bag.
- Stores may choose to provide SNAP/WIC customers compliant bags at no charge.
- If your store does not distribute bags for purchases, no changes are needed.



ALAMEDA COUNTY  
WASTE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

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# Reusable Bag Ordinance for Alameda County

## Bag Requirements and Sources

### Bag Requirements

#### Recycled Content Paper Bags

The paper bags your store offers for sale at checkout must meet the following requirements:



- Paper bags must contain no old growth fibers
- Bags must be a minimum of 40 percent post-consumer recycled content paper
- Bags must be 100 percent recyclable and compostable, including the handles
- Bags must have all the following information printed in a highly visible manner on the outside of the bag:
  - The word “recyclable”
  - Name and country of the manufacturer
  - The percentage of post-consumer recycled content paper

#### Reusable Bags

Reusable bags your store offers for sale at checkout must have handles and be designed and manufactured to:



- Have a minimum lifetime of 125 uses, which means capable of carrying a minimum of 22 pounds 125 times over a distance of at least 175 feet
- Hold a minimum volume of 15 liters
- Be machine washable or made from a material that can be cleaned or disinfected
- Be at least 2.25 mils thick, if made of plastic
- Have printed on the bag or on a permanent tag all of the following:
  - Name of the manufacturer
  - Country of manufacture
  - A true statement that the bag does not contain lead, cadmium or other heavy metal in toxic amounts
  - Percent of post-consumer recycled material used in the bag, if any

### Where to Buy Compliant Reusable Bags

Please note that bag suppliers may sell non-compliant bags in addition to compliant bags. Verify that the bags you are ordering meet the criteria for the Reusable Bag Ordinance.

- All bags currently listed on the State website meet the requirements of the Alameda County Reusable Bag Ordinance.
- Compostable bags do NOT meet the Alameda County reusable bag requirements.
- Local sources for compliant reusable bags: <http://reusablebagsac.org/sources/plastic-bags>
- State of California Directory: <https://www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/ReusableBags>



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