

# What You Need to Know About Victoria's Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw

## What's New

Starting July 1, 2018 businesses in Victoria cannot provide customers with single-use plastic checkout bags. These changes are being introduced as part of the City of Victoria's new Checkout Bag Regulation Bylaw (No. 18-008).

This new bylaw intends to reduce plastic bag litter and waste in our community and our landfill.

Businesses may provide paper checkout bags for a minimum charge of 15 cents per bag (rising to 25 cents on July 1, 2019), and reusable checkout bags for a minimum charge of \$1 per bag (rising to \$2 in 2019). These fees should be stated on customer bills.

## Reusable Bag Requirements

The Bylaw defines a reusable bag as a "bag with handles that is for the purpose of transporting items purchased by the customer from a business and is:

- (a) designed and manufactured to be capable of at least 100 uses, and
- (b) primarily made of cloth or other washable fabric"



*Synthetic fabric*

*Cotton*

*Other natural fabrics*

## Reusable Checkout Bag Examples

There are many types of reusable checkout bags that are designed to be capable of at least 100 uses. Examples of durable and reusable bag materials include:

- ✓ Synthetic fabrics like nylon, polyester and polypropylene (non-woven and woven polypropylene)
- ✓ Cotton or recycled cotton
- ✓ Other natural fabrics (e.g. hemp, jute)

## What to Consider When Choosing a Reusable Bag

The ideal reusable bag is made from sustainable materials, is durable and is easily recycled or repurposed. Find more considerations online at [victoria.ca/reusablebags](http://victoria.ca/reusablebags).

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

The complete Bylaw, Retail Toolkit and a detailed list of Questions and Answers are available online at [victoria.ca/reusablebags](http://victoria.ca/reusablebags)

## Permitted Single-Use Plastic Bags

Single-use plastic bags are permitted under the bylaw if specifically used for one of the following purposes:

- Packaging loose bulk items (e.g. fruit, vegetables, nuts, grain or candy)
- Packaging loose small hardware items (e.g. nails and bolts)
- Containing or wrapping frozen foods, meat, poultry or fish – whether pre-packaged or not
- Wrapping flowers or potted plants
- Protecting prepared foods or bakery goods that are not pre-packaged
- Containing prescription drugs received from a pharmacy
- Transporting live fish
- Protecting linens, bedding or other similar large items that cannot fit easily in a reusable bag
- Protecting newspapers or other printed material intended to be left at the customer's residence or place of business
- Protecting clothes after professional laundering or dry cleaning

Please note that small paper bags (i.e. less than 15 cm by 20 cm) are also permitted in the Bylaw.

The above list of permitted uses will be reviewed after one year to determine if any changes are required.

## Bylaw Education and Enforcement

A Retail Toolkit has been developed to provide businesses with information and tools to help transition to the new bylaw. The Toolkit is available at [victoria.ca/reusablebags](http://victoria.ca/reusablebags).

The City's current focus is on developing education and awareness related to the bylaw, and will continue to work with retailers to promote compliance.

The City will begin administering fines in January 2019 if required. The Bylaw states that an individual can be fined between \$50 and \$500, while a corporation can be fined between \$100 and \$10,000 dollars. These amounts are consistent with other City bylaws.

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