



City of Long Beach

Carryout Bag Ordinance

Rebuilding Stronger, Smarter, Safer



Upon recommendation from the City of Long Beach’s Environmental Advisory Board in 2015, the City partnered with local organizations and businesses to organize free “Bag It” documentary viewings at City Hall, the MLK Center, Bridgeworks, and the beach, to educate the public on plastic bag pollution. The City conducted research and outreach, with the help of local environmental groups and the Chamber of Commerce. **An ordinance was drafted that would require businesses to explicitly charge for paper and plastic carryout bags to discourage the use of single-use bags and encourage the use of reusable bags.** If passed, the City would become the first municipality in Nassau County to do so.

Why reduce carryout bag usage?

- ✓ **Quality of Life:** Bags often become litter, blocking storm drains which exacerbates flooding, and blowing into trees and waterways which diminishes quality of life and endangers wildlife. City crews constantly remove plastic bags from streets, storm drains, sidewalks, trees, beaches and parks taking them away from other tasks; Increased flooding causes property damage and restricts travel;
- ✓ **Climate Change:** Reducing plastic and paper carryout bag usage decreases carbon released into the atmosphere as a result of production, transportation, and waste associated with bags; Clear storm drains enhance our resiliency during storm events;
- ✓ **The cost for bags should be made clear to the customer:** Single-use carryout bags already cost customers money – stores pass on the cost of their bags to the customer;
- ✓ **Current, statewide plastic bag recycling law is ineffective,** and our Single Stream Recycling Program, like many municipalities, cannot recycle plastic bags;
- ✓ **Success of Other Cities:** Suffolk County and New York City recently enacted bag charges to reduce bag usage and waste. Cities nationwide, including Washington DC, Los Angeles, and San Jose, have successfully reduced single use carryout bags by enacting bag charges. We need to play our part, by thinking globally and acting locally.



What would a carryout bag ordinance mean for Long Beach?

On Earth Day, April 22, 2017, all business establishments would begin charging a fee of not less than five (5) cents for each carryout bag made of plastic, paper, or reusable material (thicker plastic or cloth) to make the cost of the bag clear to the customer – **customers who bring their own bags will not be charged.** That date was selected to allow adequate time for the City to do proper public education, including reusable bag giveaways, and for the businesses to prepare.



➤ **Fees:** All fees collected are retained by the business establishment – the City would not retain any portion of the fee. Business establishments shall post signage at or near points of sale to notify customers – a downloadable poster will be provided on the City website;

➤ **Fee Exemptions:** Customers using NYS Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or NYS Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), as full or partial payment shall not be charged; Bags without handles that are used to carry produce, meats, loose baked goods, loose dry goods, dry cleaning, newspaper delivery bags, liquor store sales, flowers or other non-prepackaged food items to the point of sale within a store or market, or to prevent such items from coming in direct contact with other purchased items, or (ii) a bag provided by a doctor, pharmacist, or veterinarian to carry prescription drugs, shall not carry a charge;

➤ **Penalties** for non-compliance are as follows: \$100 for first violation; \$200.00 for second violation; \$250 for third violation and subsequent violations. Each day such offense continues shall constitute a separate additional violation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT WWW.LONGBEACHNY.GOV/BAGS

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