

Reusable Bags

Covered Products:

For the purposes of this category, reusable bags are bags designed and manufactured specifically for multiple uses. These bags are made of cloth or other machine washable fabric that has handles or is a durable bag with handles made for multiple uses.

Goal:

The goal of this specification is to state the requirements for all reusable bags sold within New York State. These requirements include durability and strength standards, minimum reusable bag volume, reusable bag material, toxic metal contamination, and print that must be included on the reusable bag.

Definitions:

Reusable Bag - A bag made of cloth or other machine washable fabric that has handles, or a durable plastic bag with handles that is at least 2.25 millimeters thick and is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse.

Durability - In this case, durability will refer to the minimum number of uses that a particular reusable bag can withstand in one lifetime.

Plastic - Any of various compounds produced by polymerization, capable of being molded, extruded, cast into various shapes and films, or drawn into filaments used as textile fibers.

Cloth - Woven or felted fabric made from wool, cotton, or other fiber.

Specifications:

Durability and Strength Standards – Reusable bags must have a minimum lifespan of 125 uses. One use is equivalent to carrying a minimum of 22 pounds over a distance of at least 175 feet

Volume Standard - Reusable bags must have a minimum volume of 15 liters, and if made of plastic must be at least 2.25 millimeters thick.

Handle Construction – Reusable bags must have handles that are fastened to the bag in such a manner that they allow the bag to meet the above durability and strength standards.

Cleaning Standards – Reusable bags must be machine washable or made from a material that can be cleaned or disinfected.

Product Take Back/Recycling – At the end of the useful life of the reusable bag, the bag must be readily recyclable or include special instructions informing the user of appropriate end-of-life management methods for the bag. Additionally, if the handles are constructed of a different material than the main part of the bag, there must be instructions on the appropriate methods of managing the handles.

Toxics – Reusable bags must not contain lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts, as defined by applicable state and federal standards and regulations for packaging or reusable bags.

Recycled Content – Reusable bag manufacturers are encouraged, when designing and manufacturing their bags, to utilize post-consumer recycled content.

Required Print – Reusable bags must have printed, on a tag or somewhere else visible on the bag, the name of the manufacturer, the location (country) where the bag was manufactured, a statement that the bag does not contain lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury or any other heavy metal in toxic amounts, and the percentage of post consumer recycled material used, if any. Print is encouraged to meet the EO4 Ink Specification.

Recommended Instruction – Instructions should be printed on the reusable bags indicating that they should be washed between uses and that foods that are usually consumed raw should be separated from other food products and should also include any applicable product take back/recycling information.

Packaging

Packaging shall comply with Environmental Conservation Law section 37-0205. Packaging shall not contain inks, dyes, pigments, adhesives, stabilizers, or any other additives to which any lead, cadmium, mercury or hexavalent chromium is intentionally added or contain incidental concentrations of lead, cadmium, mercury or hexavalent chromium which together are greater than 100 parts per million by weight (0.01%).

New York State encourages affected entities to adopt the following:

- The use of bulk packaging.
- The use of reusable packaging.
- The use of innovative packaging that reduces the weight of packaging, reduces packaging waste, or utilizes packaging that is a component of the product.
- That all packaging remain the property of the supplier and not become the property of the affected state entity under any circumstance or condition. In situations where packaging take back is sought, the vendor shall certify that the packaging material will be reused, recycled, or composted, and managed in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Packaging that maximizes recycled content and/or meets or exceeds the minimum post-consumer content level for packaging in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.
- Packaging that is recyclable or compostable.