



Single-Use Foodware Reduction Ordinance Commonly Asked Questions from Food Vendors: January 2024

1. What items does the fee apply to?

The 25-cent fee should apply to each disposable cup and takeout container provided for to-go, including: cups for water, hot drinks, cold drinks, and alcoholic beverages; and bowls, plates, trays, cartons and boxes.

The fee should **not** be applied to:

- pizza boxes
- large cake or pastry boxes
- cups or containers provided for leftovers for customers dining in
- lightweight packaging used for to-go, such as paper wrappers, foil wrappers, paper food bags, etc.
- reusable cups or containers provided by the customer

2. How should food vendors accept customer-provided reusables for phone and online to-go orders?

Food vendors need to provide customers a way to avoid the 25-cent fee by bringing their own reusables, and should clearly communicate to their customers how they can do this. For online/phone orders, food vendors are encouraged to wait until the customer arrives with their reusable to serve their meal, which can include plating the meal on a reusable dish for the interim. We understand that this may not always be feasible. If vendors can only accommodate customer-provided reusables for takeout orders placed in-person inside the restaurant or have other limitations, then they should make this clear in their communications to customers, including on any online ordering platforms. Customers should be made aware of their options for avoiding the fee so they can make an informed choice.

3. Under what conditions can a food vendor reject a customer-provided reusable?

According to the California Health & Safety Code, food vendors may refuse, at their sole discretion, any customer-provided reusable foodware that is cracked, chipped or corroded, appears inappropriate in size, material, or condition for the intended beverage or food item, or that appears to be excessively soiled or unsanitary. If the customer provided reusable foodware is rejected, the food vendor may instead require use of reusable foodware for consumption on the premises, or use of a disposable foodware item for to-go, together with the 25-cent fee.