



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

June 21, 2019

The Honorable Sabina Matos  
President, Providence City Council  
Providence City Hall  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Council President Matos,

Enclosed please find the Implementation and Enforcement Plan regarding the Reduction of Single-use Checkout Bags by Retail Establishments in the City of Providence, which I submit for your information pursuant to Sec. 12-20 of the Code of Ordinances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leah Bamberger".

Leah Bamberger  
Director, Office of Sustainability

IN CITY COUNCIL  
JUL 09 2019

READ  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn S. [unclear]".  
CLERK



## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

### **Implementation and Enforcement Plan regarding the Reduction of Single-Use Checkout Bags by Retail Establishment**

#### **Introduction**

On April 22, 2019, the Providence City Council passed the Reduction of Single-use Checkout Bags by Retail Establishments Ordinance. The policy requires the Office of Sustainability to, "develop and submit to the Council, for approval, an implementation and enforcement plan"... "no more than sixty (60) days after passage." This document presents such a plan.

#### **Implementation**

To ensure effective implementation, the Office of Sustainability must inform both retail establishments and customers about the change in policy. This shall occur via the following efforts between July 1 and October 22, when the policy goes into effect.

Given that there is pending legislation in the state legislature, this outreach effort will seek to inform businesses generally of the coming changes. The state bill is similar to Providence's in nature, but it would permit the City's authority to independently regulate single-use check out bags.

#### **Industry Group Engagement**

The Office of Sustainability and its partners will work directly with industry groups including, but not limited to the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce Association, Eat Drink RI, small business/merchant associations, and packaging and bag providers. We will attend their meetings and provide information that can be disseminated to their members and customers that will help them be in compliance with the policy.

#### **Media**

The City of Providence will focus on informing community members of the coming changes in policy through social media and earned media in English and in Spanish.

#### **Business Walks**

Targeting main business corridors, we will conduct door-to-door outreach to businesses throughout Providence. This will be done in partnership with Groundwork Rhode Island's summer Green Team (youth employment program), and the Office of Economic Opportunity summer job program.



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### Print Materials

After the passage of the state plastic bag law, or the close of the legislative session, the City will provide templates for signage that retailers can post in their stores. This information should include the following information in both Spanish and English:

- When the policy goes into effect
- What types of bags are permissible and which are prohibited
- Where customers can get bags, such as the free bag exchanges at Providence Community Libraries

### Special Events, Smaller Retailers and Others

The Office of Sustainability will work with the Department of Art, Culture + Tourism to ensure that the special event permitting process informs event organizers of the City's plastic bag policy. We will also reach out to food trucks and farmers markets (via Farm Fresh RI), attend existing community meetings throughout the summer, provide reusable bags at back to school events, and do direct outreach to social services providers/emergency food distribution.

### **Enforcement**

The City will coordinate enforcement efforts in order to align with the pending state legislation.

### **Exemptions**

Should the City retain authority to provide exemptions, the Office of Sustainability will post guidelines explaining what will be considered for exemption. There will be a form to apply for such exemption posted on the Office of Sustainability's website. Once the Office of Sustainability receives the request, they will review and respond within 60 days.