

ARTICLE 7. - CARRYOUT BAGS.

§ 15-6-121 - DEFINITIONS.

In this article:

- (1) BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT means any commercial enterprise that provides carryout bags to its customers, including sole proprietorships, joint ventures, partnerships, corporations, or any other legal entity whether for profit or not for profit and includes all employees of the business and any independent contractors associated with the business.
- (2) CARRYOUT BAG means a bag provided by a business establishment to a customer typically at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting purchases.
- (3) REUSABLE CARRYOUT BAG means a carryout bag that is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse, and meets the following criteria:
 - (a) displays in a highly visible manner on the bag exterior, language describing the bag's ability to be reused and recycled, as prescribed by rule;
 - (b) except as provided in subsection (d) below, has a handle;
 - (c) is constructed out of either:
 - (i) Cloth, other washable fabric, or other durable materials whether woven or non-woven,
 - (ii) Recyclable plastic, with a minimum thickness of 4.0 mil and containing only the types of plastic resin as prescribed by rule, or
 - (iii) Recyclable paper; and
 - (d) handles are not required for carryout bags constructed out of recyclable paper with a height of less than 14 inches and width of less than 8 inches.
- (4) SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAG means a carryout bag that is not a reusable carryout bag.

Source: Ord. 20120301-078.

§ 15-6-122 - REGULATIONS.

- (A) Beginning on the effective date of this ordinance, the City will engage in a public education campaign to inform business establishments and citizens of the requirements regarding carryout bags.
- (B) Beginning March 1, 2013, no person may provide single-use carryout bags at any City facility, City-sponsored event, or any event held on City property.
- (C) Beginning March 1, 2013, a business establishment within the City limits may not provide single-use carryout bags to its customers or to any person.
- (D) Beginning March 1, 2013, a business establishment within the City limits must provide prominently displayed signage advising customers of the benefit of reducing, reusing and recycling and of the need to use reusable carryout bags. The language and placement of signs under this Section shall be as prescribed by rule.

- (E) A business establishment within the City limits may provide or sell reusable carryout bags to its customer person. A person may provide or sell reusable carryout bags at any City facility, City-sponsored event, or held on City property.

Source: Ord. 20120301-078.

§ 15-6-123 - EXEMPTIONS.

This article does not apply to:

- (1) Laundry dry cleaning bags, door-hanger bags, newspaper bags, or packages of multiple bags intended for use as garbage, pet waste, or yard waste;
- (2) Bags provided by pharmacists or veterinarians to contain prescription drugs or other medical necessities, only if the bags are recyclable within the City of Austin residential recycling program;
- (3) Bags used by restaurants to take away prepared food, only if the bags are recyclable within the City of Austin residential recycling program; and
- (4) Bags used by a consumer inside a business establishment to:
 - (a) Contain bulk items, such as produce, nuts, grains, candy, or small hardware items,
 - (b) Contain or wrap frozen foods, meat, or fish, whether or not prepackaged,
 - (c) Contain or wrap flowers, potted plants or other items to prevent moisture damage to other purchases, or
 - (d) Contain unwrapped prepared foods or bakery goods; and
- (5) Bags used by a non-profit corporation or other hunger relief charity to distribute food, grocery products, clothing, or other household items.

Source: Ord. 20120301-078.

§ 15-6-124 - HARDSHIP VARIANCE.

- (A) The Director may grant a variance from a requirement of this article only after determining that:
 - (1) application of this article would cause undue hardship based upon unique circumstances, or
 - (2) application of this article would deprive a person or business enterprise of a legally protected right.
- (B) The request for variance shall be submitted on a form prescribed by rule.
- (C) A variance granted under this Section must be the minimum departure necessary to address the hardship.
- (D) The Director shall prepare written findings to support the grant or denial of a variance request under this Section.

Source: Ord. 20120301-078.