

Get ready for the

SINGLE-USE PLASTIC ITEMS BAN

From 1 September 2021 some single-use plastic items are not allowed to be supplied in Queensland.

Designed to be used just once, and then thrown away, many single-use plastic items are part of the growing issue of plastic waste and pollution.

The ban is part of **Queensland's plan to tackle plastic pollution** and follows strong support from the community, retailers and industry organisations. The Queensland Government received close to **27,000 submissions**, over a number of surveys and consultation processes. **Over 94% of respondents** were in favour of the ban and the products included in it.

The Queensland Government has engaged the **National Retail Association (NRA)** to help businesses learn more about the ban and how to comply.

› WHICH ITEMS ARE BANNED?

Single-use plastic straws, cutlery and stirrers



- The **ban applies to** single-use plastic straws, stirrers, swizzle sticks, forks, spoons, knives, sporks, splayds, chopsticks and food picks.
- The **ban does not apply to** serving utensils, or items included in shelf-ready pre-packaged food and beverage items (e.g. a straw attached to a juice box).

Single-use plastic bowls & plates



- The **ban applies to** unenclosed single-use plastic bowls or plates, including those made from expanded polystyrene.
- The **ban does not apply to** bowls or plates in shelf-ready pre-packaged food and beverage items (e.g. bowls in frozen meals), servingware, or other takeaway containers (e.g. sushi containers, triangle sandwich containers, or bowls and containers with lids).

Single-use expanded polystyrene takeaway food containers & cups



- The **ban applies to** single-use takeaway food containers and cups made from expanded polystyrene (EPS).
- The **ban does not apply to** EPS trays (like those used for raw meat, fruit or vegetables), EPS business-to-business transport containers, or EPS in shelf-ready pre-packaged goods.

› WHO DOES THE BAN APPLY TO?

All **Queensland businesses** must stop supplying banned single-use plastic items once the ban begins on **1 September 2021**, unless they are an exempt organisation*.

Organisations that will no longer be able to provide a banned item include: restaurants, cafes, bars, takeaway food shops, party suppliers, supermarkets, packaging suppliers, market stalls, not-for-profit organisations (including charities and community groups), online stores and many more.

Suppliers, distributors and wholesalers of banned items may only supply them to an organisation if they have a reasonable belief they are exempt.

*Exempt organisations

Only the following are **exempt organisations** and can continue to supply banned items after the ban begins: clinics or facilities that provide care to persons with a disability or healthcare needs; hospitals; dental clinics; medical clinics; pharmacies; aged care facilities; medical suppliers; and manufacturers/distributors which supply to these organisations. This exemption is designed to ensure that Queenslanders with disability or healthcare needs can continue to access banned items.

Distribution centres supplying to customers outside Queensland are not included in the ban, though businesses should check for similar bans in other jurisdictions.

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› HOW SHOULD BUSINESS PREPARE?

1. PLAN AHEAD

Stop ordering banned items **now** and look at ways to use up existing stock. Also, check with your supplier if you can return stock.

2. CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS

First, businesses should consider reducing consumption and whether you need to keep supplying these items. For example, if most customers take your food home they are unlikely to need disposable cutlery. Reducing the amount of items you give away can also minimise unnecessary costs to your business.

Second, look at whether you can use reusable items made from metal, glass or ceramic. If most of your customers dine instore consider changing to dishwasher-safe reusable items. You may like to sell reusable items and customers should also be encouraged to bring their own reusable items.

Then, if you decide you still need disposable alternatives, talk to your supplier and think about sustainable long-term options starting with reusable items or compostable items like paper, wood or bamboo. Ensure that alternatives are compliant and food safe.

Note: Single-use alternatives which contain compostable plastics (such as PLA or PHA) must meet Australian Standards. These plastics require specific conditions to break down and can still cause harm if littered. Businesses considering these items should check whether they comply with AS 5810-2010 (*Suitable for Home Composting*) or AS 4736-2006 (*Suitable for Commercial Composting*). You will need to provide clear and legible information about these certifications. More info: www.qldplasticsban.com.au

3. EDUCATE YOUR STAFF & CUSTOMERS

Help your staff and customers prepare for the ban and inform them of the changes you have decided to make. You may want to print and display signage, which is available in multiple languages at www.qldplasticsban.com.au

› HOW WILL THE BAN BE ENFORCED?

Using an education-first approach, the Queensland Government, through the National Retail Association and Boomerang Alliance, will work with organisations to ensure they understand the ban and their obligations.

From 1 September 2021, any person can **report a suspected breach** via the website or hotline (see details below). Random spot checks will also be undertaken.

After 1 September 2021, a business may face a **maximum fine of 50 penalty units** for each of the following if they:

- supply a banned single-use plastic item;
- provide false or misleading information to another person about a banned plastic item;
- provide false or misleading information to another person about whether or not a plastic item is compostable;
- do not provide clear and legible written information about whether a plastic item is compostable (e.g. labelling, invoice, order information);
- do not comply with a notice under the *Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Act 2021*.

› NEED HELP?

The **National Retail Association** is delivering a range of resources and activities to assist businesses, including visiting stores, providing signage and factsheets for business, and a tollfree business hotline.

For more information visit:
www.qldplasticsban.com.au
or scan the QR code

Tollfree business advice hotline:
1800 844 946

