



4.01 – PLASTIC BAGS NORFOLK ISLAND POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this policy is to encourage the phasing out of single use plastic shopping bags, also known as high density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic shopping bags, used by retailers in Norfolk Island.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVE

To reduce the amount of single use plastic shopping bags issued by retailers. This will result in the reduction of plastic bags that become waste and enter the environment as litter.

The intent of this policy is to move behaviour away from single use plastic shopping bags and towards reusable alternatives – not to simply substitute a single use lightweight plastic bag with a slightly thicker single use bag that has the same environmental and wildlife impacts if littered.

3. POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all retailers in Norfolk Island.

4. DEFINITIONS

Barrier bag - a plastic bag that is used to carry unpackaged perishable food such as bakery goods, meats and fruit and vegetable products. These are typically 'bags on a roll' or bags without handles.

Biodegradable bag - may include material that is compostable under Australian Standard 4736 and plastic that is designed to degrade and break into fragments over time.

Compostable bag - a compostable bag which meets Australian Standard 4736 and are biodegraded in municipal and industrial aerobic composting facilities.

Degradable bags - are made from petroleum products however they are made to weaken and break down into smaller fragments. These bags cannot be composted. These bags can still pose the same risks to wildlife as HDPE bags and the fragments may persist in the environment for a long period of time.

HDPE plastic bags - lightweight plastic bags, such as single use plastic shopping bags, made from high density polyethylene.

LDPE plastic bags - heavier plastic bags, found in specialty stores and department stores, made from low density polyethylene (LPDE).

Single use plastic shopping bag - is defined as a carry bag with handles that is made in whole or part from plastic, whether or not the plastic is degradable. The bag may be made of a thickness that is less than 35 microns. A single use plastic bag does not include a compostable bag which meets Australian Standard 4736.

5. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy aligns with the *Norfolk Island Regional Council Operational Plan 2017 – 2018 - Action 1.3.3 – Develop a policy for the phasing out of plastic bags in shops.*

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Communication

Amendments to the policy as adopted shall be advertised in local newspapers and to Council staff via the internet.

6.2 Associated Documents

Australian Standard 4736 Biodegradable plastics

7. POLICY

7.1 Phasing out of plastic bags

Retailers are encouraged to use existing single use plastic shopping bag stock and phase out the use of single use plastic shopping bags. Retailers are encouraged not to order further stock of single use plastic shopping bags.

7.2 Alternatives to HDPE plastic shopping bags

Retailers are encouraged to provide alternative shopping bags for their customers, such as cardboard and paper bags, cardboard boxes, compostable bags that meet Australian Standard 4736 and reusable bags.

7.3 Implement charge for supply of single use plastic shopping bags or LDPE plastic shopping bags

It is encouraged that if single use plastic shopping bag or LDPE plastic shopping bags are supplied to a customer that a charge is placed on the supply of the bag to discourage the consumer from using the plastic shopping bag. Retailers are encouraged to provide alternative shopping bags for their customers as detailed in 7.2 above.

This policy does not apply to garbage bags, bin liners or barrier bags.

8. REVIEW AND VERSION CONTROL

Policy Number	4.01	Responsible Officer	Team Leader Waste & Environment	
Effective Date	18 October 2017	Next Review Date	2020	
Version Number	Version	Resolution No.	Effective Date	Version description
	V1	2017/173	18 October 2017	Developed and Adopted