

Cup By-law Update #3 - June 7, 2022 Businesses required to accept customers' reusable cups by July 1, 2022

Single-Use Cup By-law Amendments - effective July 1

On June 7, 2022, Vancouver City Council approved changes to the cup regulations in License By-law No. 4450 that require businesses to accept customers' clean reusable cups for drinks ordered in-store starting July 1, 2022. The requirement for businesses to accept customers' reusable cups was approved in principle by Council on March 2, 2022.

The new by-law requirements for reusable cups have been developed with guidance from public health authorities. These changes help create a level playing field for businesses and allow customers to avoid the cup fee and reduce waste by choosing a reusable alternative.

Details of the regulations to accept customers' reusable cups effective July 1, 2022

Food vendors must have and follow a written procedure for serving drinks (hot and cold) in a customer's clean reusable cup **for drinks ordered in store**. The procedure must be in accordance with food safety and sanitary practices required by public health authorities.

- Food vendors can refuse:
 - **Cups that are not food safe** (e.g., dirty or damaged cups).
 - **Cups that are too small for the drink the customer has ordered.**
 - **Cups that are not safe for hot drinks** (e.g., an uninsulated glass jar).
- The requirement to accept a customer's reusable cup will also not apply to:
 - **Drinks already served in reusables.** When a drink is already being served in a reusable cup supplied by the business (e.g., at a dine-in restaurant), the business is not required to accept a customer's reusable cup for that drink.
 - **Alcoholic drinks.** Liquor licensees are responsible to ensure patrons do not take liquor outside their alcohol service area.
 - **Events with bag checks.** Events where every patron is checked to prevent anyone from bringing in objects that could be used as projectiles.
 - **Drive-thrus.** Food vendors are not required to accept reusable cups at drive-thrus.

Note: The cup fee and other cup regulations still apply when reusable cups cannot be accepted.

For details on the new by-law requirements for reusable cups, visit vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use

What this means for businesses:

- If your current food safety and sanitation plan includes a written procedure for accepting customers' clean reusable cups, you can continue following your procedure with no change to your operations. **TIP:** Let your customers know you accept reusable cups. Posters and till toppers are available at vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use
- If your food safety and sanitation plan does not yet include a written procedure for accepting customers' reusable cups, **update your plan as soon as possible and submit it to your local health authority for review and approval** so you can start accepting reusable cups by July 1, 2022. **TIP:** Contactless cup procedures, allowed by Vancouver Coastal Health, are available at vancouver.ca/cups

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can businesses accept customer's clean reusable cups during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Yes. Under current BC Centre for Disease Control and Vancouver Coastal Health guidelines, food vendors can accept customers' reusable cups during COVID-19, provided they document their store policy and follow the required prevention measures.

2. What methods can food vendors use to safely accept and fill customers' reusable cups during the COVID-19 pandemic?

"Contactless Cup Methods" are available on the City's website at vancouver.ca/cups. Used by cafes and restaurants around the world, these procedures are safe for accepting customers' reusable cups during COVID-19 and are allowed by Vancouver Coastal Health. Download a single-use item toolkit at vancouver.ca/reduce-single-use

3. Do vendors have to accept dirty or damaged cups, or vessels that are not made from a food safe material?

No, food vendors are not required to accept customers' reusable cups that are not food safe.

Food vendors must develop and follow a procedure for accepting customers' reusable cups, and these procedures must be in accordance with public health direction. The [Provincial Policy on the Use of Reusable Food Containers in Food Premises in B.C.](#) provides guidance to food vendors to develop procedures for refusing cups that are soiled, non-food grade, or damaged.

4. Who should businesses talk to about updating their food safety and sanitation plans, and other public health requirements?

Contact your Environmental Health Officer. If Vancouver Coastal Health is your local health authority, call (604) 675-3800 or email ehvc@vch.ca