# **Scotland’s Single Use Plastics Ban**

# **Frequently Asked Questions About Exemptions**

## **For Businesses**

Question) Will there be any exemptions to the new regulations?

Answer) Yes, There will be exemptions for plastic straws for those who need them to eat and drink independently and / or for medical purposes. There will also be an exemption for single-use plastic balloon sticks which are used for industrial or professional uses. Find out more information on exemptions on the Zero Waste Scotland Website at this [link](https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/single-use-plastic-products-scotland-regulations-2021)

Question) I work in the hospitality sector how will this affect the business?

Answer) The Regulations do not restrict the manufacture of single-use plastic straws, only the supply of straws. This means businesses covered by the exemption can still purchase single-use plastic straws from a wholesaler or manufacturer so they can provide them to a customer. Zero Waste Scotland have produced a straw toolkit that you can download which provides information to businesses on the regulations at this [link](https://www.zerowastepartners.org.uk/straws-exemption/).

Question) What do I do if a customer asks for a plastic straw?

Answer) You can still provide customers with a plastic straw when they request it alongside food or drinks, and they do not need to provide proof.

Question) I am a local business that supplies celebration balloon displays that use plastic sticks, how will the ban affect me?

Answer) It is still possible to use single-use plastic balloon sticks for industrial or professional uses where they are not handed out to customers, for example by an events company to decorate an event provided the balloon sticks are not distributed to the attendees at the event.

Question) I still have a stock of single use items. Can I still use them?

Answer) The ban due to come into force on 1 June 2022, which is subject to the UK Internal Market Act with details available at this [link](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2020/27/contents) and the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 with details available at this [link](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2021/410/contents/made). It means it will be unlawful to supply any single-use plastic cutlery, plates, beverage stirrers, as well as food containers and cups made of expanded polystyrene. Exemptions apply for plastic straws and balloon stirrers and details can be found at this [link](https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/single-use-plastic-products-scotland-regulations-2021). Zero Waste Scotland has lots of tips and advice on moving your business away from single use Making more sustainable choices: moving away from single-use which can be found at this [link](https://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/resources/making-more-sustainable-choices-moving-away-single-use).

## **For Consumers**

Question) Why has Scotland introduced a Plastic Ban?

Answer) The ban will help us positively impact our environment and help tackle the climate emergency. Did you know that we use an estimated 300 million plastic straws, 276 million pieces of plastic cutlery, 50 million plastic plates and 66 million polystyrene food containers every year in Scotland.

Question) Can I still use single-use plastic straws?

Answer) Single use plastic straws will still be available for those who need them. You will be able to ask for them in the following list of locations:

• Cafes, restaurants etc that are serving food and drink that will be eaten or drunk straight away

• Pharmacies

• Care homes

• Prisons

• Schools

• Places for early learning and childcare, day care or childminding

Question) How do I ask for a plastic straw?

Answer) You do not need proof that you need a plastic straw when you ask for a straw. Businesses will have a supply for customers who request them.

Question) I work with clients/ have family that need to use drinking straws to eat and drink independently, can they still get access to plastic straws?

Answer) Single-use plastic straws can still be obtained by those that need them, or on behalf of someone that needs them from a pharmacy and the customer does not need to provide proof of need. Straws can be given on request at hospitality and catering premises.

Question) I don’t feel confident asking for a straw.

Answer) Zero Waste Scotland have produced a communication card which can be used to help ask for a straw. You do not need to use this card or provide proof of need to ask for a straw. If you would like to download a digital or print version, it is available on their website at this [link](https://www.zerowastepartners.org.uk/straws-exemption/) .

Question) Why will I no longer be able to buy plastic plates, but I will still be allowed to buy plastic bowls?

Answer) Plastic plates, that are made either entirely of plastic or partially of plastic e.g. paper plates that have a plastic lining will be covered by the regulations as they are designed for consuming food straight away. However, single use plastic bowls are going to be considered separately alongside food containers as they have a potential to also be used as a food container.