

## Plastic Bag Reduction Bylaw

### SECTION 1: Purpose and Intent

This bylaw is enacted for the purpose of eliminating the use of thin- film single- use plastic bags by all retail establishments in the Town of Bedford. The production and use of thin- film single- use plastic checkout bags have significant impacts on the environment, including, but not limited to: contributing to pollution of the land environment; creating a burden to solid waste collection and recycling facilities; clogging storm drainage systems; the potential death of marine animals through ingestion and entanglement; and requiring the use of millions of barrels of crude oil nationally for their manufacture.

### SECTION 2: Definitions

2.1 "Thin- film single- use plastic bags", typically with plastic handles, are bags with a thickness of 2.5 mils or less and are intended for single- use transport of purchased products.

2.3 "Reusable bag" means a bag, with handles, that is specifically designed for multiple use and is made of thick plastic, cloth, fabric or other durable materials.

### SECTION 3: Use Regulations

3.1 Effective October 1, 2017, thin- film single- use plastic bags shall not be distributed, used, or sold for checkout or other purposes at any retail establishment within the Town of Bedford.

3.2 Thin- film plastic bags used to contain dry cleaning, newspapers, produce, meat, bulk foods, wet items and other similar merchandise, typically without handles, are permissible.

3.3 Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable shopping bags to stores. Retail establishments are encouraged to provide reusable thick plastic, paper, fabric or other types of bags.

### SECTION 4: Enforcement

4.1 The Building Inspector is hereby designated and authorized as the officer charged with the enforcement of this bylaw.

4.2 Penalty for Violation. Whoever violates any provision of this bylaw shall be punishable by a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00) for each offense.

4.3 Noncriminal Disposition. In addition to the procedure for enforcement as described above, the provisions of the bylaw may also be enforced by noncriminal disposition, as provided in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 21D. The penalty for such violation shall be \$25.00 for the first offense, \$50.00 for the second offense, and \$100.00 for the third and each subsequent offense.

*This bylaw proposes to reduce the use of plastic bags at retail establishments in Bedford.*