



Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme

Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme – Briefing for Bakers

Scotland will be the first part of the UK to introduce a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, from 1 July 2022. It will be available across all of Scotland and will make it easier for everyone to recycle their used bottles and cans. In doing so, it will help reduce the emissions that contribute to climate change.

What you need to know

This briefing sets out what Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme will mean for you.

Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme will give you a role in increasing recycling and helping to tackle climate change. This will be an important part of Scotland's response to the climate emergency.

If you sell drinks in the in-scope single-use containers (PET plastic bottles, metal cans and glass bottles), you will have new legal obligations.

- You will be required to charge the deposit on in-scope containers, make it clear the container is part of the scheme, display the 20p deposit and display information for consumers about how they can redeem the deposit.

If you sell any of the in-scope drinks to take away, you will be required to offer a return point for consumers unless you obtain an exemption.

- As a return point you will need to accept containers, redeem the deposit and retain the packaging for collection. If you wish to apply for an exemption from the obligation to do this, you can follow the process outlined below.

As an industry-owned and operated scheme it is important that industry take responsibility for key decisions concerning the set-up of the scheme. Some operational details will be up to any scheme administrator, which we expect to form once the Regulations have passed. Further information will be available at that point.

It is important that you begin to familiarise yourself with the expected requirements so that you will be ready for the scheme going live.

Zero Waste Scotland will continue to work with retailers and hospitality businesses to support the delivery of the scheme.



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What is deposit return?

Deposit return schemes are used across the world as a way of encouraging more people to recycle drinks containers, such as bottles and cans. They work by charging anyone who buys a drink a small deposit for the bottle or can that it comes in. They get this money back when they return the bottle or can to a return point to be recycled.

Which drinks are included?

Scotland's scheme will place a 20p deposit on all drinks that come in PET plastic bottles, metal cans and glass bottles.

All types of drinks in these containers and all containers of at least 50 ml and up to 3 litres in size are included.

What will deposit return mean for me?

All businesses that sell drinks in these containers will have new legal requirements.

You will be required to charge the deposit on in-scope containers, make it clear the container is part of the scheme, display the 20p deposit and display information for consumers about how they can redeem the deposit.

Will I have to accept returns?

If you sell drinks to take away, you will be required to offer a return point for consumers unless you obtain an exemption.

As a return point you will need to accept containers, redeem the deposit and retain the packaging for collection. You have two options for facilitating returns – collecting manually over the counter or via a reverse vending machine.

For every container you collect, you will receive a reasonable handling fee to cover additional costs incurred in offering a return point.

The Scottish Government is working with the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland to develop guidance to support retailers, particularly smaller businesses, in implementing DRS in a way that is consistent with your legal obligations relating to issues such as food safety.

Can I be exempt from accepting returns?



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Businesses can apply to Scottish Ministers for an exemption from acting as a return point. There are two different routes through which an exemption can be granted.

The first route is by getting agreement from another return-point operator to take back containers on your behalf. This might be a nearby store or voluntary return point established by someone other than a retailer. You must show that:

- this alternative return point is within reasonable proximity to your premises;
- if the exemption is granted, this will still provide consumers with reasonable access to a return point.

The second route is to provide evidence to satisfy Ministers that there is no reasonable way for you to operate a return point on your premises without either making unreasonable alterations or else risking being in breach of relevant legal obligations such as food safety.

Applications for exemptions will open in January 2021. The Scottish Government is working with representatives of the retail sector and other relevant stakeholders to develop guidelines to support businesses in making an application.

When will the scheme become operational?

The scheme will go live on 1st July 2022. It will require changes to your business, so it's important that you begin to get ready now.

Further Information

To find out more about Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme and what it will mean for your business, visit www.depositreturn.scot

We issue a regular stakeholder newsletter. To sign up, please visit: <https://depositreturnscheme.zerowastescotland.org.uk/contact>