



Scotland's Deposit Return Scheme

Voluntary Return Point guidelines

Please read in full before you begin to complete your application.

Please note – **you will not be able to save your application once you begin.** You can view the entire application before you start. Where there are free-text boxes, we recommend typing into a Word document and pasting into the application.

If you wish to attach any documents, this can be done at the end of the form. See **Appendix 1** for further instructions.

Can I apply to be a voluntary return point?

In order to apply to be a voluntary return point (VRP), you should be able to demonstrate that your operating and financial plan is feasible. You will need to provide the following in your application:

- What the access to your proposed return point will be
- Evidence that you have sufficient finances to set up and operate the return point for at least one year
- An estimate of how many items of scheme packaging you expect to be returned in an average month;
- How you intend to manage this volume of returns

Section A: Application Submission

- Please enter the details of the person who is completing the application, even if they are different from those of the retailer seeking an exemption.
- Make sure that you have read and understood the privacy statement before continuing

Section B: Application for a voluntary return point

In this section, you will need to supply details of where your proposed voluntary return point is, and who the contact is for that location.



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If you operate a principle office at another site, you should provide the address and telephone number of that office. This could be the address that is registered with Companies House, OSCR, your headquarters or your main office.

If your main office is at the same address as the proposed voluntary return point, please fill in the same address in both fields.

Question 1: Estimated number of returned containers

- You need to show that you have carried out analysis of the number of containers you estimate will be returned in the average month. This could be based on the sales volume of exempted retailers or train/ferry passengers in a transport hub, and footfall through the hub, for example.
- This figure would not be used to directly assess your application but will be used to assess the robustness of your plans.
- You will be able to provide more detail in question 5.

For example:

You manage a transport hub e.g. a bus station, and you are looking to become an alternative return point for the three retail units within the station that sell drinks in DRS containers. You could take into account factors such as the following in calculating the estimate:

- The average monthly sales of in-scope bottles and cans for the three retailers seeking an exemption;
- The total number of passengers that pass through the hub on a monthly basis.

Question 2: Manual or automatic returns

- If you do not plan to install a reverse vending machine (RVM), you should select manual.
- If you do plan to install an RVM, you should select RVM.
- For more information on RVMs, please visit the Retailer section of our [FAQs](#).

Question 3: Access and opening hours

- In this section, you should tell us what the operating hours of the return point are will be. You should include any seasonal variations.
- If you plan to operate an RVM, tell us the operating hours of the RVM, not the premises.



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Question 4: Return point location

- As part of the assessment, you will need to identify where your return point will be located, on a map
- For larger sites or premises such as a shopping centre or retail park, you should also attach a plan which identifies the exact location of the counter or RVM(s) and where the empty containers will be stored/collected from, as this may be some distance apart.

For your application to be submitted, you must confirm that you have attached a map(s) to the form. You can do this as the end with any other documents you intend to attach.

Question 5: Return point arrangements

In this section of the application, you should explain how you plan to manage the voluntary return point. This information will be used to assess the feasibility of your application. In particular you must tell us the following:

- **The source of the containers that you will be collecting**

For example, you could be taking back containers on behalf of local retailers who are seeking exemptions, or you may wish to act as a return point because there are high numbers of containers arising due to tourism.

For example: A local council wants to act as a voluntary return point by installing an RVM in the city centre to collect containers from the daily footfall that occurs, plus the additional containers that arise during the summer season. They should estimate the regular footfall, plus a tourist season uplift.

- **Number of retailers (if any) seeking an exemption in connection with your voluntary return point application**

If there are nearby retailers seeking exemptions that have named your VRP as alternative return point, you should use this section to tell us how many there are and any other details about them.



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If you are applying to become a voluntary return point and there are no retailers seeking exemptions that have named your VRP as alternative return point, you should state this.

- **Return point staffing**

If you plan to operate a manual return point rather than installing an RVM, you should use this section to tell us how many staff or volunteers you estimate you will require to operate the return point.

If you plan to install an RVM(s), you should use this section to provide the specifications of which make and model of machine you plan to install. If you intend to operate more than one RVM (we believe this will be the exception) you should tell us how many. For more information on RVMs, please visit the Retailer section of our [FAQs](#).

- **Opening hours**

If your return point will operate at different times throughout the year, you must clearly indicate these times and explain why these times differ.

Example: You work at the community centre on the Isle of Mull and the centre would like to operate as a voluntary return point. Throughout the year the centre is open on Saturday and Sunday mornings, however from May to September, the centre is open five mornings per week due to tourism.

Question 6: Return point finances

- You should provide an outline of the estimated start up and running costs of your return point. Running costs include reverse vending machine costs, staff and materials and any additional land that is leased or purchased. Some of these costs are recoverable through the [handling fee](#).
- You should indicate whether you plan to purchase or rent a reverse vending machine. If so, you should provide estimate purchase and installation costs. You may wish to include evidence, such as the advertised price or a quote for necessary work.



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You must provide evidence that you have the finances in place to meet start-up costs and any ongoing costs that are not recoverable through the handling fee.

For start-up costs this could include a letter from your bank regarding a loan facility, evidence that funds have been raised through donations, confirmation that a grant has been secured, etc. If you have a plan to raise the money but need approval first, you should tell us this and we may grant approval conditionally and ask you to provide the evidence once it is available.

For any ongoing costs not covered by the handling fee you should show us that these can be met from within your budget or that you have plans in place to manage these.

Section C: Operating as a voluntary return point

- In this section, you should confirm whether you intend to act as an alternative return point, on behalf of retailer(s) nearby seeking an exemption. If you agree to act as an alternative return point for other retailer(s) and you grant permission to be contacted to verify this, you should select this option.
- You must then list all the retailer(s) that your application will act as an alternative return point for. Those retailer(s) seeking an exemption must complete a separate [Proximity Exemption Application Form](#).
- If you will not act as an alternative return point for another retailer, you should select that option.

Zero Waste Scotland will assess your application against the eligibility criteria and pass it to the Scottish Ministers to take a decision.