
POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Responsible Unit	Acadia Sustainability Office
Last Reviewed/Updated	29 March 2018
Approving Sector Head	Vice-President Finance & Administration and CFO
Policy	Plastic Bag Reduction Policy

Purpose

Acadia University is located in a coastal community and is concerned about plastic pollution on our campus and in our community, but especially on our shorelines, in the ocean and the associated threat to marine environments, wildlife and human health. Recognizing the proliferation of plastics in the environment along with their financial, social and environmental costs, Acadia University is responding to the call to action by the United Nations for organizations to enact single-use plastic waste reduction policies, to educate the campus community and to encourage changes in habits that contribute to plastic pollution in the environment. This policy aligns with the vision and values of Acadia University to foster an appreciation of our natural environment, to act on sustainability issues, to reduce waste, and to incorporate our commitment to protecting and preserving our natural environment into curriculum. The policy takes effect on Earth Day April 22, 2018.

Definitions

Single-Use Disposable Plastic bag: A bag made from thin plastic film, which is designed to carry goods and intended for single-use.

Biodegradable plastic bag: A bag made from a plant based plastic material that is approved by the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) and is accepted into the organics waste stream at Acadia University.

Policy

1. Single-Use Disposable Plastic Bags

Restricting the distribution of single use disposable plastic bags is considered the most effective management strategy to reduce plastic bag consumption and waste. The distribution of plastics bags is discontinued in regular operations, retail locations, and special events and activities on campus.

2. Alternatives

When bags are necessary, alternatives to single use disposable plastic bags are permitted. The following can be provided:

- 1) Reusable bags made from biodegradable, recycled or cloth material;
- 2) Reusable bags made from non-biodegradable virgin material;
- 3) Paper bags; and
- 4) Biodegradable single-use plastic bags.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Acadia departments as well as external groups and partners operating events or activities at Acadia. The Acadia Students' Union is exempted from the campus policy while the ASU bag fee, implemented on December 1st, 2017, is in place. In absence of a plan or policy to reduce single-use disposable plastic bags the ASU will be subject to the campus policy.

4. Exemptions

Exemptions are permitted, such as for special one-time events, with approval of the Acadia Sustainability Coordinator. Proponents must demonstrate that alternatives have been explored and are either inadequate or unavailable.

5. Education and Engagement

Education and engagement programs for the campus community will be implemented along with the policy at point of sale, in the classroom and through various communications channels to raise awareness about the new policy, the issue of plastics in the environment and Acadia's commitment to reduce plastic waste.