

Information for people who use plastic straws



Information for plastic straw users



Straws are very important for people who need them to eat and drink **independently**.

Independently means on their own or with some support.



This information says where people can get **single-use** plastic straws.

Single-use means the straw can only be used once.



The Scottish Government is doing work that helps Scotland to be a place where things are not thrown away and are used for as long as possible.

This means using things again instead of throwing them away after using them once.



For some people single-use plastic straws cannot be replaced with something that is better for the environment

What are the new rules?



There are new rules for some single-use plastic items.

The rules start from 1 June 2022.



Exempt means something does not have to follow the rules.

Single-use plastic straws are **exempt** from the rules to help if people need them:

- to eat and drink independently
- for medical use.

There is [information in another document](#) to help businesses understand how single-use plastic straws should be available.

Business should continue to follow the duty to make **reasonable adjustments** under the **Equality Act 2010**.



Reasonable adjustments are changes businesses must make to treat disabled people fairly and give them the same choices and chances.



The **Equality Act 2010** is a law that protects people from discrimination and helps to make sure people are treated fairly.

Where can I get a single-use plastic straw?



Single-use plastic straws will be available from:

- places serving food or drink that will be eaten or drunk straight away.

This means places like restaurants, canteens, clubs and cafes.



Pharmacy

- pharmacies including:
 - pharmacies in a building
 - online pharmacies
 - a **distance selling service**



A **distance selling service** would be a pharmacy that gets a prescription in the post and deliver the medicine to you after speaking to you on the phone.



- care homes
- prisons
- schools
- places for early learning and childcare, day care or childminding

There is also an exemption when straws are:



- needed for medical use
- needed by a support service that gives personal care or personal support.

This means any person giving care can get or give single-use plastic straws.

This means a paid or unpaid carer.



Any carer can buy single-use plastic straws from a pharmacy.



More information about exemptions is in the Scottish Government's [Regulatory Guidance](#) online.

How do I ask for a straw?



When you ask for a straw or a packet of straws you **do not** need proof that you need one.



Businesses are not allowed to:

- offer straws to customers
- let you help yourself to straws
- or have them on display



It is important that customers who need straws feel confident to ask for one.



If it helps customers to feel more confident, this communication card can be used to help you ask for a straw.



You do not need this card to get a straw.

You do not need to have a letter from your doctor or the government to ask for a straw.



You can download a digital and print version of the card at:

<https://www.zerowastepartners.org.uk/s-traws-exemption>

If you do not have a printer you can find free or cheap printing services at your [local library](#) or [Citizens Advice Bureaux](#).



This information was made with disabled people and their organisations including:

- [Inclusion Scotland](#)
- [Disability Equality Scotland](#)
- [Birds of Paradise Theatre Company](#)
- [Glasgow Disability Alliance](#)