



# REUSABLE MADE EASY

Leaflet on the handling of reusable containers in the catering industry

Senatsverwaltung  
für Umwelt, Mobilität,  
Verbraucher- und Klimaschutz

**BERLIN**





In order to reduce the increasing number of disposable containers in Berlin, incentives are to be created for consumers to switch from disposable to reusable. To achieve this goal, the Senate Department for the Environment, Urban Mobility, Consumer Protection and Climate Action launched the Better World Cup, in co-operation with Berliner Stadtreinigung (BSR) and Berlin business and environmental associations.

**It's easier than you think:**

Whether you run a café, snack bar, bakery, petrol station or restaurant, the Berlin Senate Department has compiled an overview of the minimum requirements for food hygiene in this leaflet, outlining how you as a food business operator can meet the hygiene requirements when filling reusable containers.

Reusable instead of disposable is environmentally friendly and easier than you think.

# REUSABLE IN- STEAD OF DIS- POSABLE EAS- IER THAN YOU THINK!

Discarded disposable containers and cups pollute streets, public spaces and nature. In total, around 280,000 tonnes of disposable tableware and takeaway packaging are produced in Germany every year.

Join in and take a stand against environmental pollution and wasted resources – go reusable.

# REUSABLE FOR ALL: NOTES ON DEPOSIT SYSTEMS

When handing out and taking back reusable containers, please observe these hygiene instructions. It must be ensured that food is not adversely affected when handling the reusable containers.

Provide special collection receptacles or collection facilities for the return of reusable containers, preferably separate from the counter and operating area. Heavily soiled or defective containers should be rejected or sent for recycling, according to the regulations of the reusable pool system.

Instructions for cleaning and drying reusable containers should be obtained from the provider of the reusable pool system. As a general rule, returned containers should be rinsed and cleaned promptly, at the latest by the end of the working day. Any food leftovers must be collected separately and sent for recycling.

Clean, dry reusable containers should be stored with the opening facing downwards on a hygienic surface. If possible, they should be covered.

# HYGIENE RECOMMEN- DATION FOR CUSTOMER-SUPPLIED REUSABLE CONTAINERS

Based on good food hygiene practices, the following minimum requirements are mandatory:



## **Attention when filling**

Before filling, carry out a visual inspection for cleanliness and contamination. Lids are to be removed by the customer before filling. In the case of visible contamination, acceptance **must be** refused, or new, uncontaminated reusable containers must be provided for takeaway. Only suitable containers with smooth, easy-to-clean surfaces may be used.



## **Always separate areas**

To prevent customers' reusable containers from entering the immediate hygiene area (area where perishable food is processed or stored), always use a separate counter area.



## **Use a hygiene tray**

Customers place their reusable container on a 'hygiene tray' intended specifically for this purpose. The reusable container is then filled on the tray.



### **Avoid contact**

Prevent direct contact with machine parts as well as other storage locations. Use decanting vessels and/or cup holders and serving utensils. Filling may only be carried out by trained personnel.



### **Clean and disinfect regularly**

Clean or disinfect areas where containers are filled, coffee machines, other equipment, or self-service bar at regular intervals (cleaning and disinfection plan) and as required.



### **Wash hands**

Maintain personal hygiene. Washing hands is mandatory after filling customer-supplied reusable containers and after handling payments.



### **Displays help**

Inform customers in the sales area that only clean and empty reusable containers that have a smooth, flawless surface may be filled.



### **Train the staff**

Regular staff training on this subject is required, along with documentation of work processes pertaining to cleaning and disinfection as and when required, including cleaning and disinfection plans.

Specific questions can be clarified by directly contacting the food control authority in your district.

The conditions under which it is permissible to place beverages and foodstuffs into reusable containers brought into food establishments (e.g., bakeries or restaurants) are decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the individual set-up of the respective premises, and are therefore the responsibility of the local food control authorities.

Contact details for the Berlin district veterinary and food inspection offices can be found under the following link: **[www.service.berlin.de/veterinaer-lebensmittelaufsichtsaeamter](http://www.service.berlin.de/veterinaer-lebensmittelaufsichtsaeamter)**

Hygienic requirements for commercial production, handling and market entry of foodstuffs are regulated in the provisions of the federal Food Hygiene Ordinance (LMHV). This Ordinance stipulates that any adverse effects on food supplied to other consumers must be excluded. The operator of the food establishment bears the main responsibility for this in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 (food hygiene).

Proper handling of food and utensils safeguards against hygiene risks and adverse effects on food.

This recommended action is intended to provide guidance and does not claim to be exhaustive.

Please also note the information provided by the German Food Association (Lebensmittelverband Deutschland e. V.):

**[www.lebensmittelverband.de/de/lebensmittel/sicherheit/hygiene/hygiene-beim-umgang-mit-mehrweg-bechern-behaeltnissen-pool-geschirr](http://www.lebensmittelverband.de/de/lebensmittel/sicherheit/hygiene/hygiene-beim-umgang-mit-mehrweg-bechern-behaeltnissen-pool-geschirr)**

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