



News Release

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Phase 1 Reopening: Bottle Bill Redemption Requirements Modified

Provides Additional Flexibility to Grocers to Manage Operations, Maintain Social Distancing

PORTLAND, OR. — As Oregon grocers prepare to re-start accepting empty beverage container returns, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission is announcing additional adjustments in retailer redemption requirements. The move will modify the required hours for Bottle Bill returns in order to provide retailers greater flexibility for managing store operations and customer flow.

During Reopening Oregon Phase 1, the OLCC will refrain from enforcing the requirement that stores accept empty beverage container returns before 8 AM or after 6 PM for stores that are not open 24 hours a day. Stores operating 24 hours a day will be required to accept containers from 7 AM to 11 PM and the OLCC will not enforce the Bottle Bill redemption requirement during the “graveyard shift.”

Previously, on March 15, 2020, in an effort to allow stores to appropriately manage the COVID-19 crisis, OLCC suspended enforcing the requirement for retailers to accept empty beverage container returns for refunds as required by the Oregon Bottle Bill. Starting June 1, 2020, OLCC will link the enforcement of Bottle Bill compliance to the phase a county is in (Baseline, Phase 1).

OLCC will re-start its compliance enforcement in these areas no later than two weeks after a county enters Phase 1. (For example: *counties that entered Phase 1 on May 15 will have to become compliant by May 29.*) Retailers in Phase 1 counties will be required to resume accepting empty beverage containers from customers, both through their reverse vending machines and by hand count.

For counties that remain in the [baseline phase](#), the OLCC will continue to suspend enforcement requiring retailers to accept empty container returns, until the county progresses to Phase 1. If a county reverses direction from Phase 1 to the baseline phase, the OLCC then will re-suspend enforcement for retailers declining to accept beverage container returns until the county re-enters Phase 1.

For retailers required to resume accepting redeemable beverage containers, the number of empty containers retailers are required to accept remains the same as prior to the COVID-19 non-enforcement period, [either 24, 50, or 144](#).

For additional information, please visit our industry partners’ websites, including [Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative](#) and [Northwest Grocery Association](#). The OLCC along with our partners are collaborating to ensure a safe and successful restart of the redemption program. Due to social distancing requirements and high container redemption demand during Phase 1 reopening, retailers may not be able to accommodate all individuals who wish to return containers in a given day.

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