

Food Code Snippet #1

REFILLABLE REUSABLES



Refilling Returnables: Industry provided & Consumer owned

- WAC 246-215-03348 allows options for refilling reusable containers owned by consumers
 - No restrictions for filling containers with water at vending
 - **Option 1** – Establishment provides reusable, cleaned container
 - No restrictions on the customer
 - **Option 2** – Consumer-owned multiuse beverageware refilled with drink, **including TCS**, if contamination-free
 - **Option 3** – **Opt-in** & under an **approved** plan
 - Consumer provides visibly clean container
 - Consumers may fill using contamination free process
 - ◆ Non RTE bulk food, packaged, and nonTCS RTE food if gravity flow
 - Employees may fill with any food

Scientific Rationale

Refillable
Reusables

“Contamination-free process”

Such as a method that ensures the transfer of food to a consumer’s reused container will not cause contamination (biological, physical or chemical) to the original food or beverage.

Note: Term is not defined in the food code.



Toolkit: Refilling of Consumer-owned Containers

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Except for situations listed in Section 3, retail food establishments may not refill consumer-owned containers without a written, approved plan as required in WAC 246-215-03348. **Note:** A separate plan is not required for dine-in customers to fill a personal container with their portioned meal from their individual meal service (such as a dinner entrée on their plate).
Note: Use this document to help your establishment maintain AMC. Be sure to work with your [local health jurisdiction](#) for any additional information or approvals as needed.

Section 1: Food Establishment Information			
Establishment Name		Phone	
Street (Physical Address)	City	ZIP	Email
Contact Name	Title / Position		

Section 2: Refilling Consumer-Owned Containers Requires Separate, Approved Plan	Section 3: Refilling Must Follow Guidelines but Does Not Require Separate, Approved Plan
<p><small>*Complete Section 4 for each option checked.</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 1: Nonready-to-eat or packaged food*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonready-to-eat bulk foods (such as dry rice, uncooked pasta, uncooked beans). Nonready-to-eat produce (such as whole, unwashed fruits and vegetables). Packaged or wrapped food (such as bagged salad mix). <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 2: Ready-to-eat food in protective dispensers*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unpackaged, ready-to-eat foods (such as granola, honey, spices). Dispensed through a gravity flow or other chute-delivery system that protects the bulk food supply from accidental contamination. <p><input type="checkbox"/> Option 3: Ready-to-eat food in open containers*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unpackaged, ready-to-eat foods in open containers (such as deli counters, salad bars, bulk food bins with scoops). Only food workers may refill consumer-owned containers with ready-to-eat, unpackaged food not in dispensers. 	<p><small>Check each additional process used in your facility.</small></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Container for refilling by food processing plant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection unit and area for empty containers may not attract pests or cause a nuisance. <p><input type="checkbox"/> Container refilled at water vending station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any consumer-owned container may be refilled by the consumer at a water vending station. <p><input type="checkbox"/> Consumer-owned beverage container</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Container is only refilled with a drink for the owner. Container is designed to be easily cleaned. Container can be rinsed with fresh, running hot water at the food establishment. Container is refilled by an employee or the container's owner if using a dispensing system that prevents contamination, such as a fountain drink machine. <p><input type="checkbox"/> Container provided by the food establishment for refilling and washed by the food establishment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Containers must be designed for repeated use (not single-use/disposable). Containers must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized at the food establishment before refilling. Containers may be refilled with any food.

Section 4: Application Submission Checklist

For establishments choosing to allow retail options listed in Section 2 above, the following must be submitted.

Consumer Education: Food establishments must educate consumers on approved options for refilling. Ensure consumer education includes the types of containers they may refill, the need for containers to be cleaned, the types of foods that can be filled, how to notify a worker if risks are observed, and any other facility-specific requirements.
Provide copies of educational materials to be used, such as signage, stickers, or other printed material.

Containers Allowed: Indicate the types of containers that can be refilled.

- Single-use items. Inform customers if clean, single-use containers (such as reclosable zipper bags) may be used.
- Multi-use items. Plastic, stainless steel, or similar food containers that are designed to be washed repeatedly.
- Glass. Include clean up kit for broken glass and training for staff for food discard if glass is broken in the food area.
- Other: _____

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-535-7273. Order of food or beverage containers, please call 1-800-535-7273 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

Active Managerial Control Toolkit: Refilling of Consumer-owned Containers
DOH 333-288 March 2022

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Section 4: Application submission checklist continued

<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Option 1 – Control Measures: Food establishments must ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers or staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions if consumers contaminate the bulk supply of food (such as broken glass in area or inadvertent use of scoop to fill consumer container with ready-to-eat bulk food). <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Option 2 – Additional Control Measures: Food establishments must ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers or staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Dispensing containers used for ready-to-eat foods deter intentional or accidental contamination of the bulk food (provide copy of the dispensing equipment make/model/schematic with application). <input type="checkbox"/> Food workers regularly sanitize (at least daily) frequently-touched surfaces where consumer-containers are filled. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Option 3 – Advanced Control Measures: Food establishments must use additional control measures to ensure the consumer's container does not contaminate a food contact surface or food preparation area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Required employee handwashing or change of gloves after direct contact with a consumer's container. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of paper square or other disposable item to transfer food to consumer's container or otherwise prevent direct contact between the reusable utensil and the consumer's container. <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitize countertops, scales, or other food contact surfaces immediately when consumer's container is removed. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Employee Training: Employees must be trained before refilling consumer-owned containers under an approved plan. Submit materials or procedures used to train employees on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prevention of contamination: Employees must be trained on the risk of germs that can spread from customer containers and how to prevent the spread to food preparation areas or food supplies. <input type="checkbox"/> Proper handwashing and good hygienic practices: Employees must be trained on the increased handwashing frequency required if they will be handling consumer-owned containers. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring and corrective actions: Employees must be trained on how to prevent contamination from refilling consumer-owned containers and how to correct food safety risks.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Examples of Records/Charts: Provide any additional examples of records / logs that will be used to document food employees are following proper procedures and that corrective actions are completed.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>How are employees trained? (Check all that apply.)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Signs <input type="checkbox"/> Read & sign document <input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on demonstration <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>How often are employees trained? (Check all that apply.)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Once <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input type="checkbox"/> Twice per year <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Who will train staff on refilling reusable containers? (Check all that apply.)</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Food Protection Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Person in Charge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Attach separate sheet if needed.

Section 7: Plan Maintenance

<input type="checkbox"/>	Where is the plan kept in the food establishment?
<input type="checkbox"/>	How often is the plan reviewed and updated? <input type="checkbox"/> Annually <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Section 8: Signature

Plan prepared by:

Signature	Date	Printed Name	(xxx) xxx-xxxx Phone
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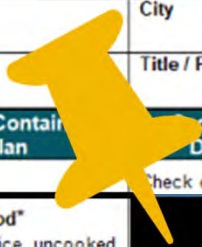
Toolkit: Refilling of Consumer-owned Containers



Except for situations listed in Section 3, retail food establishments may not refill consumer-owned containers without a written, approved plan as required in WAC 246-215-03348. **Note:** A separate plan is not required for dine-in customers to fill a personal container with their portioned meal from their individual meal service (such as a dinner entrée on their plate).

Note: Use this document to help your establishment maintain AMC. Be sure to work with your [local health jurisdiction](#) for any additional information or approvals as needed.

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*Complete Section 4 for each option checked.		Check each additional process used in your facility.	



<input type="checkbox"/> Option 1: Nonready-to-eat or packaged food* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonready-to-eat bulk foods (such as dry rice, uncooked pasta, uncooked beans). • Nonready-to-eat produce (such as whole, unwashed fruits and vegetables). • Packaged or wrapped food (such as bagged salad mix). 	Option 1 – Control Measures: Food establishments must ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers or staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions if consumers contaminate the bulk supply of food (such as broken glass in area or inadvertent use of scoop to fill consumer container with ready-to-eat bulk food). <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer-owned beverage container <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Container is only refilled with a drink for the owner. • Container is designed to be easily cleaned. • Container can be rinsed with fresh, running hot water at the food establishment. • Container is refilled by an employee or the container's owner if using a dispensing system that prevents contamination, such as a fountain drink machine. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Container provided by the food establishment for refilling and washed by the food establishment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containers must be designed for repeated use (not single-use/disposable). • Containers must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized at the food establishment before refilling. • Containers may be refilled with any food.
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Section 4: Application Submission Checklist	
✓	For establishments choosing to allow refill options listed in Section 2 above, the following must be submitted.
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Containers Allowed: Indicate the types of containers that can be refilled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Single-use items. Inform customers if clean, single-use containers (such as reclosable zipper bags) may be used. <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-use items. Plastic, stainless steel, or similar food containers that are designed to be washed repeatedly. <input type="checkbox"/> Glass. Include clean up kit for broken glass and training for staff for food discard if glass is broken in the food area. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-515-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

Option 1 Key
Inform customers of available options and limitations



Toolkit: Refilling of Consumer-owned Containers



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		Option 2 – Additional Control Measures: Food establishments must ensure the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers or staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Dispensing containers used for ready-to-eat foods deter intentional or accidental contamination of the bulk food (provide copy of the dispensing equipment make/model/schematic with application). <input type="checkbox"/> Food workers regularly sanitize (at least daily) frequently-touched surfaces where consumer-containers are filled. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ 	
		refilling and washed by the food establishment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Containers must be designed for repeated use (not single-use/disposable). Containers must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized at the food establishment before refilling. Containers may be refilled with any food. 	
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Containers Allowed: Indicate the types of containers that can be refilled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Single-use items. Inform customers if clean, single-use containers (such as reclosable zipper bags) may be used. <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-use items. Plastic, stainless steel, or similar food containers that are designed to be washed repeatedly. <input type="checkbox"/> Glass. Include clean up kit for broken glass and training for staff for food discard if glass is broken in the food area. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ 		



Option 2 Key
Protect the bulk supply of ready-to-eat foods

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Option 3 – Advanced Control Measures: Food establishments must use additional control measures to ensure the consumer's container does not contaminate a food contact surface or food preparation area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Staff ensure container is visibly clean prior to refilling. <input type="checkbox"/> Required employee handwashing or change of gloves after direct contact with a consumer's container. <input type="checkbox"/> Use of paper square or other disposable item to transfer food to consumer's container or otherwise prevent direct contact between the reusable utensil and the consumer's container. <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitize countertops, scales, or other food contact surfaces immediately when consumer's container is removed. <input type="checkbox"/> Staff trained on allowable procedures and proper corrective actions. <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ 			
Section 4: Application			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For establishments choosing to allow refill options listed in Section 2, establishments must do the following:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Education: Food establishments must educate consumers on approved options for refilling. Ensure consumer education includes the types of containers they may refill, the need for containers to be cleaned, the types of foods that can be filled, how to notify a worker if risks are observed, and any other facility-specific requirements. Provide copies of educational materials to be used, such as signage, stickers, or other printed material.			
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Option 3 Key
 Protect potential contamination of food contact surfaces and worker hands

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IN SUMMARY

1. Several refilling options are **already available** without an additional plan

1. Processing plant
2. Water vending
3. Beverage containers
4. Washed by food establishment

2. Expanded refilling options for consumer-owned containers is **opt-in**

3. Three **new options** for customer-owned containers available with an **approved plan** and **capacity** to be 'contamination-free'

Option 1: Nonready-to-eat bulk/packaged

Option 2: Gravity-flow/chute delivery

Option 3: Employee-only open foods



Refillable Reusables Key Points

Want to opt in?

- ✓ Review capacity & determine which option
- ✓ Get plan approved
- ✓ Prepare signage & educational materials
- ✓ Train employees & customers
- ✓ Monitor & improve