

New CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy in Effect: Did you hear...Plastic Straws Are a Thing of the Past

After many months of collaboration between the Chancellor's Office and CSU campus representatives, and considering multiple rounds of stakeholder feedback, the California State University has released its [new policy on single-use plastics](#).

The policy went into effect on January 1, 2019 and calls on all CSU campuses to eliminate the distribution and/or sale of plastic straws, plastic carryout bags, Styrofoam and bottled water. This is a phased in policy, with straws and plastic carryout bag elimination in effect now and Styrofoam and bottle water in the coming years.

CSUSM is on our way to reaching our goal of Zero Waste by 2025. We have already been engaged with some of what is stated in the policy. A year ago, CSUSM held "Straw Free February" and after the success of that month, all straws within dining and at Jazzman's became available upon request. Moving forward, we are using compostable straws at most locations. In the meantime, the campus has eliminated single-use plastic bags at Panda Express, the Market and the University Store. Lastly, Panda Express transitioned from Styrofoam clamshells to a compostable product last year.

Beyond the specific products mentioned, the policy intends to encourage and support campuses' efforts to phase out a wider array of single-use plastic items, which make up a significant proportion of the waste sent to the landfill.

HOW CAN YOU HELP CSUSM REACH OUR ZERO WASTE GOAL?

- Bring your own reusable straw, silverware, water bottle and coffee cup to campus
- [Learn what is and what is not recyclable](#)
- Please help us by not using Styrofoam and Plastic Straws in your offices or events

Did you know that air pillows in your mail deliveries, plastic bags and plastic cutlery are not recyclable? Please put those in trash.

While the new policy represents a change for all of us, the overall benefits related to resource conservation and pollution reduction outweigh the challenges. Most single-use plastic items can be replaced with more sustainable, reusable alternatives; it is simply a matter of adjusting the practices we are used to, adopting new habits, and finding creative new solutions to old problems. Over time, we will all get used to a "new normal," together. Policies like this one can provide an important and much needed step toward a less wasteful future.

Read the policy [HERE](#).