



Disposable plastic takeaway containers

By 2024, more than 130 million plastic lids were being used in WA each year. Many would end up as litter or contaminate recycling. To reduce this impact, the WA government introduced a ban on plastic lids and containers used for takeaway and dine-in food.

On 1 September 2024, disposable plastic takeaway food containers and their lids were banned in WA.

Pre-packaged or Pre-packed or Other

While most plastic takeaway food containers and lids are now banned in WA, they are allowed in specific situations. Businesses need to ensure they clearly understand the ban correctly. Penalties may apply for non-compliance.



Pre-Packaged

Food packaged and sealed before arriving at your store that is not modified prior to sale.

Examples include:

- Packaged meals from a supplier
- Sealed drinks/cans
- Factory-packed food

Plastic containers and lids are not banned.



Pre-Packed

Food packed in-store and placed on display before sale or supply.

Examples include:

- Sushi, salads or pasta packed and displayed in-store
- Food in display fridges
- Meals packed earlier for grab-and-go

Plastic containers are banned but lids can be plastic.



Other

Most takeaway or dine-in food is neither pre-packaged or pre-packed.

Examples include:

- Food packed after the customer orders or selects it
- Made-to-order meals
- Self-serve stations
- Delivery orders

Plastic containers and plastic lids are banned.



Remember: Fibre-based containers and lids with a plastic or bioplastic lining must be certified compostable to Australian Standards.

Is it takeaway or eat-in food?

Items that are NOT likely to be considered takeaway food (and not likely to be included in the ban) include:

- Foodstuffs which are typically used as an ingredient or component, unless this is part of a takeaway/eat-in meal offering (e.g. sauce sold in a bottle is not takeaway food but sauce provided with chips is takeaway food).
- Food that needs further preparation, cooling or heating before eating (e.g. cold lasagna for heating at home).
- Food not typically consumed whole or in one setting. Multi-serve or family-size takeaway meals are included in the ban.



Disposable plastic takeaway containers

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Temporary exemption ending soon

Plastic takeaway containers **used solely for hot, liquidy food** were provided a temporary class exemption to allow additional time to source alternatives, however this exemption will expire on **31 August 2026**.

All businesses supplying plastic takeaway containers and their lids must comply with the ban and penalties may apply for non-compliance.

Temporary exemption rules

Businesses can temporarily supply plastic food containers or lids until 31 August 2026 only if the takeaway food meets **BOTH** requirements of the exemption:

- ✓ food is soupy or liquid (can be poured)
AND
- ✓ served over 60°C OR intended to be reheated over 60°C

Examples of temporarily allowed use

- Hot soup
- Laksa
- Curry
- Gravy-based dishes



If the takeaway food does **not** meet both requirements, plastic food containers and plastic lids are already banned.

Examples of items that do not meet the exemption

- ✗ Food that is less than 60°C
- ✗ Food that is not liquid or soupy, such as rice, beans, salads, or pasta
- ✗ Food consumed at the premises.
- ✗ Hot or cold drinks



Alternatives

From 1 September 2026, business will need to use alternative solutions to package hot and soupy takeaway food.

- Consider different shapes, sizes, and lid combinations that are different to how you currently serve these foods.
- Check that both the container and lid provide adequate heat and leak resistance so your food can be safely handled and transported.
- Speak to several suppliers and test some samples to find the best solution for your business.
- Check the BanSolutionFinder website for alternatives: bansolutionfinder.org



The ban does **not** apply to:

- ✓ containers or lids made solely from fibre
- ✓ containers or lids made primarily from fibre with a plastic coating where the whole item is certified to Australian composting standards
- ✓ containers or lids proven to be designed for long-term washing and reuse
- ✓ food that is not considered takeaway or eat-in, or food that was pre-packaged offsite.

Food that is pre-packed and placed on display is allowed to use plastic lids so the food can be seen and selected by customers, but it must have a non-plastic container base. Plastic lids are **not** allowed for takeaway or dine-in food which is self-serve or packed to order.

Unsure? Contact our tollfree hotline for advice.

