



**Office of**  
**Representative Carole Fiola**  
**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

## DEP Press Release on March 19, 2020

### **Massachusetts to Temporarily Suspend Bottle Redemption Enforcement**

BOSTON – Out of an abundance of caution due to the spread of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office are suspending enforcement of the requirements for retailers to accept beverage containers that have a deposit effective immediately until further notice or until the current state of emergency is terminated.

This action is being taken because many grocers, supermarkets, and other retail operations have indicated that they are overwhelmed with an unprecedented volume of customers purchasing provisions so they can spend time at home to help in the effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Temporarily suspending enforcement of these requirements will allow individual retailers to assess their operations and, if necessary and appropriate, shift staffing to enable smoother operations. This action will also limit any contamination that potentially could occur from staff handling used beverage containers.

Consumers are encouraged to hold on to their deposit containers for redemption at a later date or to recycle those containers with existing household recycling.

MassDEP and the Attorney's General Office will assess the situation on an ongoing basis and notify grocers, supermarkets, and other retailers when redemption services must resume and the temporary enforcement suspension ends.

Under state regulations, retailers are usually required to accept for redemption all containers of the same size, type and brand they sell to the public that carry the five-cent deposit and, without the suspension announced today, failures to redeem those containers can subject retailers to enforcement and potential penalties under the statute.

MassDEP’s Bottle Bill Hotline is available at 617-556-1054 for questions and information requests.

For information about the Baker-Polito Administration's ongoing efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, please visit the Department of Public Health's (DPH) [website](#).

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[www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov)

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

[www.fallriverma.org](http://www.fallriverma.org)

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