

Recycling and Waste Collections

Exemptions Policy

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Background – Waste Vision

A Waste Vision was adopted by the Council in 2016 in which the future of waste management in the Borough is one where:

- Waste is managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, so that waste is prevented and minimised where possible
- Reuse activity is encouraged in households and businesses
- Recycling activity increases the quantity of recyclable material and produces high quality materials that are required by reprocessors
- The environmental impacts of the whole system of waste management are minimised
- The recycling and waste collection service provided by the Council provides value for money for its customers.

The full [Waste Vision is available on our website](#).

Aims of the Exemptions Policy

The Colchester Waste Collection Strategy was approved at Cabinet in December 2016. The [full report is available on our website](#). The key aim of the Strategy is to focus on recycling more and cut down what goes to landfill. Details of the [new Waste Strategy](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) relating to this are on our website.

The Exemptions Policy has been developed to help those who are unable to meet the requirements of the waste collections, for example because of the size of the household, or due to large quantities of offensive waste. This policy sets out the alternative measures to be put in place to ensure waste and recycling collections meet the needs of affected residents. The Council reserves the right to review households on exempt collections, and if deemed no longer appropriate, to withdraw this service.

Definitions of Waste

Definitions of 'household', 'clinical' and 'offensive waste' are key to establishing what should be collected and by who. For clarity, the legal definitions have been interpreted and simplified as follows.

Household Waste

Waste generated by a property used for domestic purposes will be collected through normal domestic waste collections.

Offensive Waste

Household waste containing bodily fluids, secretions, or excretions, which are not infectious and does not require treatment for disposal. Examples include: dressings, gloves, nappies, incontinence pads and sanitary products.

This waste can be collected through the normal domestic waste collection as long as it is appropriately bagged and sealed.

Clinical Waste (including sharps/needles)

Waste containing infectious material, such as something for which antibiotics may be prescribed, produced by a healthcare activity in the home is the responsibility of the authority giving the treatment to remove from the property.

This material **must not be placed in with household waste collections.**

Sharps boxes are available on prescription (FP10) and can be returned to the healthcare trust free of charge. Local Authorities currently have a duty to collect and dispose of clinical waste and make a charge to cover the cost of collection. This will continue to be the case going forward.

Collection of offensive waste from the home

Colchester Borough Council will continue to collect offensive waste as part of normal residual waste collections either in black bags or wheeled bins.

Residents that qualify for an exemption as a result of large quantities of offensive waste will be provided with a collection of this additional waste **only**. Stickers will be provided to residents by the Council which will need to be placed on the bags containing offensive waste placed out for collection. **Only** bags with the appropriate stickers will be collected.

Numbers of bags being collected will be monitored and qualifying circumstances will be reviewed at least yearly to ensure the service is still required.

Collection Methods and Limits of Waste

This policy is specific to those properties receiving a kerbside collection for recycling and waste. It is not applicable to properties with communal storage areas.

Collection methods

The implementation of the new Waste Collection Strategy means that wheeled bins will be introduced to some areas of the Borough. From June 2017 there will be two methods of collection in the Borough:

- Black bag collections
- Wheeled bins for residual (non-recyclable) waste and garden waste

The collection methods for other recycling and food waste will remain unchanged.

Frequency of residual waste collections and limits

From June 2017, residual (non-recyclable) rubbish will be collected fortnightly, either from black bags or a wheeled bin. The limits for residual waste will be as follows:

- In black bag areas: A maximum of 3 black bags per household per fortnight (totaling no more than 180L)
- In wheeled bin areas: A maximum of one standard 180L wheeled bin per household per fortnight

Extra black bags, or other material that has been left out of the wheeled bin, will not be collected.

Flats and Communal Bin Stores

Some properties within the Borough have communal wheeled bin storage areas. These areas will not be affected by the changes to collection methods.

Assisted Collections

Assisted Collections do not form part of this policy, however, an [Assisted Collection](#) service is available for residents who have mobility issues and need assistance with presenting their waste at the kerbside or collection point, whichever collection method the resident has.

Residents who are currently entitled to receive the Assisted Collection service will continue to receive this, subject to usual reviews of the service. For residents for whom the changes represent a potential issue, an [application form for Assisted Collections](#) is available on our website or by phoning our Customer Service Centre on 01206 282700. Assisted Collection service users may also qualify for further exemptions as detailed in this policy.

Criteria for Exemptions

The Council recognises that some households may find the capacity and frequency of the new waste collections challenging. The purpose of this Exemptions Policy is to put measures in place to ensure recycling and waste collections meet the needs of affected residents. It is expected that residents will recycle all recyclable materials before considering applying for an exemption.

You may qualify for an exemption if:

- You already recycle everything you can, and

In black bag areas

- You have a large quantity of non-recyclable rubbish which means you are unable to meet the fortnightly limit of three black bags per household (totalling no more than 180 litres). For example, you need to dispose of large amounts of 'offensive waste' or you have a large family.

In wheelie bin areas

- You have a large quantity of non-recyclable rubbish which means you are unable to fit it into the standard 180 litre wheelie bin per fortnight. For example, you need to dispose of large amounts of 'offensive waste' or you have a large family.

Residents who qualify for an Exemption will be provided with the following:

In black bag areas:

- Stickers to identify the additional black bag(s) to be collected fortnightly alongside normal residual waste, or a weekly collection for offensive waste

In wheeled bin areas:

- A 240L wheeled bin to be collected fortnightly

The kind of exemption you get will be based specifically on your households need. At the time of applying advice will be given to help you recycle everything you can and guidance on any items of waste you are unsure of.

Once your exemption has been granted, we will get in touch once a year to ask if

you have had any changes in circumstances such as a new baby, moving home, or changing name. You can contact us at any point on 01206 282700 if you need to update your information. Please do also let us know if your waste situation changes and we can take another look at the best exemption for you.

Exemptions will last for as long as the household needs them based on their individual circumstances. The Council reserves the right to review households on exempt collections, and, if deemed no longer appropriate, to withdraw this service.

How to apply

Applications for an Exemption can be made online at: www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling or by phoning our Customer Service Centre on 01206 282700.

The Customer Services Advisor will make a decision based on the individual circumstances of the household. It is expected that residents will recycle all recyclable materials before considering applying for an exemption.

You may need to be visited by a Community Zone Warden if you have a very large household or complex needs to make sure we get the right solution for you.

Appeals

Applications for Exemptions are reviewed on an individual basis. Applicants are permitted to **one** appeal, to a Recycling and Waste Manager.

Appeals can be made [online](#) or by phoning our Customer Service Centre on 01206 282700.

A decision will be made within 14 days. If you are refused an exemption, you may not re-apply for 6 months unless you have had a significant change in your household circumstances.

Equality and Diversity

A full [Equality Impact Assessment](#) for the Recycling and Waste Service is available on our website.

Policy Review

The Council reserves the right to review households on exempt collections, and, if deemed no longer appropriate, to withdraw this service.

This policy is subject to review and the latest version can be found on our website www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling