10 Things to know about New Bedford’s single-use plastic bag ban

On Thursday, the New Bedford City Council unanimously voted to approve an ordinance change that will ban single-use plastic bags.

Here are 10 things you need to know about the ban:

1. On January 9th, 2020, the New Bedford City Council voted 11-0 to approve an ordinance that prohibits businesses from giving single-use plastic bags to customers within the city of New Bedford.

2. It will impact businesses with retail space of 10,000 square feet or larger, or businesses that have at least two locations under the same name or ownership.

3. Non-profits are also included in this ban.

4. Single-use plastic bags are defined as: “A plastic film-type bag with or without handles, which is 4 mils thick or less, provided at the point of sale to customers at a business location.”

5. Bags for loose produce or for products that are placed by a consumer to deliver items to the point of sale or check out area are not considered prohibited single-use bags.

6. Single-use plastic bags are prohibited regardless if they are free or available for sale. Businesses can sell the thick plastic bags intended for multiple uses.

7. The existing stock of single-use plastic bags must be phased out within six months of the ban.

8. Violations for businesses are counted by day, not per incident.

9. The first offense is a $100 fine, second offense is $200 and third/subsequent offenses are $300 each.

10. The single-use plastic bag ban goes into effect the moment Mayor Jon Mitchell signs it. Once the mayor receives the ordinance change, he has 10 days to sign, veto it or do nothing, which allows it to go into effect without his signature. According to the mayor’s office, Mayor Mitchell intends to sign it.