



TAKE BACK EXEMPTIONS WEBINAR QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Please note: All ‘Retailers’ that sell ‘in-scope’ drinks containers have a [legal obligation](#) to register with Re-turn. Following registration with Re-turn, Retailers can then apply for a Take Back Exemption.

Q. How do I know if I qualify for a Take Back Exemption as a hotelier?

A. Please refer to the [Take Back Exemptions](#) document on our website. If you are in Hospitality – Hotel, Restaurant, Pub or café, you will automatically be eligible for a Take Back Exemption and this will be offered as an option during the registration process. This will automatically be granted based on ticking the box for Take Back application and validation by Re-turn that information provided is correct.

Q. Other than registering, if I have a take back exemption, is there anything else I need to do in relation to the Deposit Return Scheme?

As a ‘Retailer’ who sells in scope drinks containers with the Re-turn logo, you must display your Re-turn Membership for all customers to view. If you have a Take Back Exemption, this notice will also provide the Re-turn website address and QR code for customers to locate the nearest Deposit Return point. In addition, please review the [Retailer Toolkit](#) on the Re-turn website regarding obligatory and recommended POS (Point of Sale)

EXAMPLES:

*If charging a deposit, you must show the deposit value as a separate line item on any invoice, receipt etc, as per Regulation 17 (1) (2) of the DRS Regulations. On SEL, we strongly recommend displaying the Product price and the deposit price. For those with Vending machines, there are POS required to displayed on machine.

Q. I have a restaurant and will pay a Producer a deposit for my cans and bottles. Do I have to charge my customers the deposit, in addition to the price of the can or bottle?

A. It depends on whether the product sold is consumed on the premises or whether it is sold for takeaway and off site consumption.

As per Regulation 16 of the DRS Regulations HORECA has an exemption not to charge the deposit where an in-scope product is purchased and consumed on the premises. The rationale for this is that the empty containers remain on premises and are collected on-site.

If a restaurant sells an in-scope product for take away, then it should charge the deposit. Otherwise the restaurant will be at a loss of the deposit if the product is consumed off the premises and the deposit is redeemed elsewhere (i.e. in a retail outlet operating a return point).

Q. I have a pub – do I need to register at all as I will have a Take Back Exemption as part of Hospitality?

A. All 'Retailers' as defined in legislation need to first register with Re-turn and then apply for a Take Back Exemption. When this is granted, you will be issued with a notice showing that you are a Re-turn Member with a Take Back Exemption from Deposit Return.

Q. I have a number of off-licences – can I choose which ones have a Take Back Exemption and can I have an RVM installed if I want?

A. If your off license is 250sqm or under, you should register with Re-turn and then apply for the Take Back Exemption, which should be granted based on the store size.

Should you wish not to apply for a Take Back Exemption, you will then be required to provide a take back service for all consumers who wish to return in scope bottles and cans to your store.

All Retailers providing take back can either opt to take back material;

- via a Reverse Vending Machine (RVM)

or

- via manual return (i.e. over the counter)

The list of approved RVM suppliers may be viewed on Retailer page of [Re-turn](#) website.

Q. To be clear do retailers that do not sell in scope products still need to register and then apply for an Exemption.

A. No, only retailers that sell in-scope products must register with Re-turn. If you do not sell 'in scope' drinks containers, you have no legal obligation to register with Re-turn.

Q. For Cinemas & theatres with large dwell spaces but small retail counters that sell limited in scope products how do we get Take Back Exemption from the scheme? What evidence is required, if any, for a footprint exemption?

A. In mid-October, all 'Retailers' who register will be able to apply for a Take Back Exemption, with criteria outlined, The application will be processed and a decision communicated within 4 weeks.

Q. In case of having a vending machine (owned by another company) on premises, who is responsible for accepting returns?

A. The owner of the vending machine is responsible for applying for a Take Back Exemption for their machines. When granted, a vending machine sticker/notice must be displayed on the machine, indicating membership of Re-turn and displaying the QR code for Deposit Return locations. The vending machine brand guidelines may be viewed in the [Retailer Toolkit](#) brand guidelines.

Q. Would a kitchen also be considered as an area where the consumer cannot go? (since they don't have access to it)

A. No, the kitchen is not included in the 250 sq. metres as the kitchen is not a customer facing area.

Store space includes all retail facing areas including entrance area, aisles, shelf space, deli counters/sections, check out areas and behind till space. It excludes storage and office areas which the consumer does not have access to.

Q. If I'm a food to go outlet which is smaller than 250sqm, should I apply for a size/footprint Take Back Exemption or a food to go Take Back Exemption?

A. Food to Go outlets may apply for a Take Back Exemption based on the size of the outlet being below 250 sq metres.

Q, Would a Take Back Exemption result in the additional charge being applied by the Hotel's supplier not being recouped?

If the additional charge referred to here is the deposit, then as previously mentioned a hotel can avail of the exemption not to charge the deposit for on site consumption, but the deposit should be charged for off site consumption.

The Hotel can redeem deposits by returning bottles and cans to the nearest deposit return point.

Q. If a Hospitality unit sells in-scope products for both eat in and eat out, can they choose to charge the deposit for both customers for ease of pricing?

A. Yes, but customers who pay the deposit and consume the beverage onsite will be entitled to redeem their deposit onsite. If it is a take away sale then entitled to take

away their empty bottles or cans and bring them to a deposit return point to redeem their deposits

*Please note that if charging a Deposit, this deposit charge must be shown as a separate line item on receipts.

Q.If you are a Food to Go retailer that also offers online sales, do you have to apply for both types of Take Back Exemptions, or does one cover both?

A. Only one take back exemption per premises is necessary. Food to Go outlets may apply for a Take Back Exemption if a premises is on or below 250 sq metres.

Depending on the business, if the majority of sales are online, then it would be best to apply for an exemption as an online retailer. As an online retailer, you can apply for a Take Back Exemption, which should be automatically granted after application.

Q. If a German website/online platform sells beer globally, but Irish customers go onto the German website and buy in-scope products and get them delivered to Ireland, does that make the German online retailer a Producer as well as an Online Retailer? Are there any expectations for the non-Irish Retailers operating those global websites to comply with the Irish requirements?

A. If a Retailer outside of ROI wishes to sell in-scope products to the ROI market, they should establish an Irish based legal entity.. They will then need to register with Re-turn as a Producer/. Following registration, the company must then ensure that all in scope products sold to Irish consumers feature the Re-turn logo and that a deposit fee is charged.

Finally, they should flag this to Irish consumers ordering in-scope products on their site.

Q. How should online delivery retailers (like just eat) display their exemption?

A. Online delivery retailers should display their Re-turn Membership and Take Back Exemption notice on their sites and on all sales receipts / documentation with the QR code for Deposit Return locations nationwide.

Q. I am looking to find out about exemptions in hospitality for vending machines present within the premises. Is it possible to qualify for exemption in such case?

A. It is the responsibility of the Vending Machine owner to register with Re-turn. After registration, the vending machine owner may apply for a Take Back Exemption and when granted, must display notice/stickers provided in [Retailer Toolkit](#) as per brand guidelines.

Q. Are exemptions for deposit collection likely to be introduced in future? For example, for non-Irish online marketplace operators operating global/foreign website?

A. As per regulations, all retailers who sell PET plastic bottles and cans in the Republic of Ireland must register with Re-turn.

If a Retailer outside of ROI wishes to sell in-scope products to the ROI market, they should establish an Irish base / company. They will then need to register with Re-turn as a Producer/Retailer and sign the Producer agreement and then apply for a Take Back Exemption. The retailer must charge a deposit for all in scope products and the receipt must show the deposit as a 'separate line item'. All online sellers must provide a QR code for Deposit Return locations on sales documentation.

Q. On the original application form, I didn't see a box to tick for apply for a take back exemption. Where do we get the link to apply for a take back exemption?

A. The option to apply for a Take Back Exemption will be available from mid-October on our [Retailer registration](#) portal.

Q. Is the retail space measured only on the space that a customer can access. Back of the deli counter and till points are exempt from this.

A. As per [Take Back Exemptions](#) document, the store size is defined as: All retail facing areas including entrance area, aisles, shelf space, deli counters/sections, check out areas and behind till space. It excludes storage and office areas which the consumer do not have access to.

Q. Will a retailer get a cert to say I am Take Back Exempt? Notices alone to customers may not be enough

A. All Retailers who register, apply and are granted a Take Back Exemption will be issued with a notice confirming Re-turn Membership of the Retailer. This Take Back Exemption Notice will include name and location of the Retailer, in addition to displaying a QR code for locating Deposit Return points nationwide.

Q. Will the guidelines for vending exemption also apply to micro-markets? Unattended retail units - usually no larger than 25 sq m? Assuming they must also apply for takeback exemption.

A. It is the responsibility of the Vending Machine owner to register with Re-turn. After registration, the vending machine owner may apply for a Take Back Exemption and when granted, must display notice/stickers provided in Retailer Toolkit as per brand guidelines.

Q. Where can we get a take back vending machine?

A. Presuming that you mean a Reverse Vending Machine, Retailers who opt to use a Reverse Vending Machine must choose from the approved list of RVM suppliers as detailed on the [Re-turn](#) website.

Q. What if a retailers store is marginally outside the 250sqm - will this be considered for exemption?

A. The Take Back Exemption criteria and process are detailed in the [Take Back Exemption](#) doc on the Re-turn website. If a Retailer is applying based on store size, the criteria is 250sqm and under for eligibility. Note the footprint exemption of 250sq mtrs is quite large in comparison to the international norm.

Q. When does the exemption process open?

A. The Take Back Exemption process will be active online from mid-October.

Q. I am hotelier and we don't sell plastic bottles or aluminium cans in house or for take away. Do we need to forward evidence that those items are not available for sale on our premises?

A. No – if you do not sell any PET plastic bottles or aluminium / steel cans, you do not have any obligation to register with Re-turn.

You may be asked to provide evidence of this should there be a spot check of your premises at a later date.

Q. What happens if a Retailer does not hear back after 4 weeks?

A. All Retailers should have confirmation of whether they have been granted a Take Back Exemption after 4 weeks. Should you not hear back, please contact the Retail support team in Re-turn for further details.

Q. If you qualify for an exemption, do you hold onto the deposits paid or is this repaid to re-turn at intervals ?

A. If a Retailer applies and is granted a Take Back Exemption, there is no requirement to take back any in scope bottles or cans or to redeem deposits to consumers..

Q. How can a restaurant owner get the 15 or 25c back on products consumed on site?

A. The Restaurant owner brings back the cans / bottles to their nearest Deposit Return point and gets their deposit refund there.

Q. As we purchase PET Bottles and Cans from suppliers for sale in our Bars, restaurants in-scope, are we being charged a deposit fee for these. At the end of business are we to collect all these items and return to supplier ?

A. As per the [DRS regulations](#), the deposit is charged at all stages of the process. 'Retailers' will be charged a deposit by Producers. The Restaurant / Bar owner then decides if they wish to charge customers the deposit fee (DRS Regulations Regulation 16 - allows for an exemption not to charge the deposit where an in-scope product is purchased and consumed on the premises). or take away sales the deposit should be charged and the consumer owns the bottle/ can and is free to leave the premises with the container and get a refund at the nearest deposit return point.

If a restaurant or bar does not charge a deposit (for onsite consumption, they collect the empty cans and bottles on premises and return them to get their deposit back at any deposit return point. If there are large volumes of DRS material to be returned then a take back exemption may not be the best option. In such cases, there may be a sound business case to justify the installation of an RVM and the collection of the empty DRS material by Re-turn.

Q. Are you saying we no longer put these containers into recycling bin? we need to have separate bin for these products?

A. Yes, DRS material should no longer be placed into the existing recycling bins. All Retailers who sell in scope drinks container to consumers will have to register with Re-turn. You can then apply for a Take Back Exemption if eligible. Should you wish not to apply for a Take Back Exemption, you will then be required to provide a take back service for all consumers who wish to return in scope bottles and cans to your store.

All Retailers providing take back can either opt for an RVM or take back Re-turn logo containers over the counters (manual return). The list of approved RVM suppliers may be viewed on Retailer page of [Re-turn](#) website.

Collections of deposit returns will be based on the take back method chosen and quantities returned.

Q. Are workplace canteens exempt?

A. No. In all instances where in scope drinks containers are sold to consumers, the 'retailer' is obligated to register with Re-turn. If the workplace canteen is under 250sq.m., they can apply for a Take Back Exemption.

Q. What happens if a retailer does not display notices to customers? Will there be spot checks?

A. Yes, there will be spot checks. All Retailers are legally obliged to display the Re-turn Membership notice or in the case of those granted a Take Back Exemption, they must display this notice to consumers. Re-turn are presently finalising the mechanism for compliance with local authorities who will be responsible for enforcement of the DRS regulations.