



Ministry of Economy

Information for Manufacturers, Sellers, Suppliers and Distributors of Polystyrene (Styrofoam)

Starting from 1 January 2021, the import/export of polystyrene (commonly referred to as Styrofoam) containers, cups, plates, and trays will be banned and further to this, the manufacture, sale, supply and distribution of all polystyrene containers, cups, plates, and trays will cease from 1 August 2021.

1. Why has Polystyrene (Styrofoam) Ban been introduced?

Polystyrene (Styrofoam) has multiple detrimental effects on the environment as well as on human health. The chemical composition of polystyrene products begin to break-down under the stress of heat and over time. This releases toxic chemicals into the environment or may get assimilated into the body if being used for food or beverages. Banning polystyrene is also beneficial to the environment as the creation of expanded polystyrene is often made with hydrofluorocarbons, which are compounds that deplete the ozone allowing harmful ultra-violet rays to come through.

2. When does the polystyrene ban come into effect?

- **1 January, 2021** – Import/export of polystyrene containers, cups, plates, and trays
- **1 August 2021** – Manufacture, sale, supply and distribution of polystyrene containers, cups, plates, and trays

3. What types of Polystyrene (Styrofoam) products are banned?

- Containers;
- Cups;
- Trays; and
- Plates

4. What types of polystyrene (Styrofoam) products are allowed?

This ban does not apply to:

- a) polystyrene material used solely for cushioning packed products such as electrical appliances;
- b) polystyrene products used as building materials, provided they are neatly kept and properly disposed;
- c) polystyrene materials used as cooler boxes; and
- d) polystyrene sponges and foam mattresses

5. What are the penalties for non-compliance with the polystyrene ban?

A person who manufactures a banned polystyrene product commits an offence and is liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding \$500,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 7 years or both.

A person who –

- a) Sells, supplies or distributes banned polystyrene products to another person; or
- b) Makes available banned polystyrene products to a customer for packaging, commits an offence and is liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding \$150,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 2 years or both.

Compliance officials will regularly monitor businesses and take appropriate action including charging the offending businesses/individuals.

6. What has the Fijian Government done to assist this transition?

To support local manufacturers of polystyrene alternatives, duty on the importation of bi-degradable material for core components is decreased to zero percent to encourage transition from polystyrene products. The onus is on businesses to take advantage of these incentives and seize the market opportunity in sustainable packaging.

The Fijian Government has further announced a 7 months grace period on the usage of polystyrene containers, cups, plates, and trays in order to provide an additional transition to the industry as well as consumers taking into account the impacts of COVID-19.

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