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**DATE:** November 7, 2023

**TO:** Executive Facilities Officers  
Campus Dining Operations

**FROM:** Lindsey Rowell   
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Capital Planning, Design, and Construction

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**SUBJECT: CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy**

This memo provides clarification regarding the CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy (previously SUAM 5236, effective December 17, 2018, and in the CSU Contracts and Procurement Policy Section D.3 effective April 1, 2020).

Plastic bottled-water, regardless of serving size or volume, is subject to the CSU Single-Use Plastics Policy, and thus should not be sold at CSU-owned facilities or by entities operating on state property.

The following supporting information is provided to assist campus staff in successfully implementing the Single-Use Plastics Policy and mobilizing toward the CSU's robust zero-waste goals.

- “Single-use plastics” is a term specifically referencing plastic containers or products that are not marketed as “reusable” or “refillable”.
- For a product to be considered “reusable” or “refillable”, a product must satisfy various requirements under SB 54, including being explicitly designed and marketed to be reusable or refillable.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=202120220SB54](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB54)

- Plastic water bottles, though commercially recyclable, are shown to be recycled at a rate significantly lower than aluminum counterparts. This rate can be anywhere from 15-29% of plastic bottles being recycled<sup>2</sup>, with the rate dependent on the study's definition of recycling (e.g. acceptance of plastics being "downcycled" into items of lower quality increases the recycling rate).

To maximize waste reduction, we encourage campus staff, auxiliaries, and contractors involved throughout selection, purchasing, management, and disposal of products and packaging to engage in a holistic planning process and to consider zero-waste principles. Zero-waste principles involve cradle-to-grave (including design, purchasing, management, and disposal) coordination to eliminate waste at the earliest feasible opportunity; these principles are represented in the Integrated Waste Management Hierarchy, which prioritizes source reduction, followed by reusables, and then recycling<sup>3</sup>. For example, refillable water bottles paired with thoughtfully placed campus bottle-filling stations prioritize waste avoidance, which is consistent with the growing movement toward zero-waste strategies.

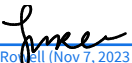
Guidelines were provided at the time of policy adoption and can be found here: <https://calstate.policystat.com/policy/14073723/latest#autoid-vpqq3>

Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Chief of Energy, Sustainability, and Transportation Lindsey Rowell at [lrowell@calstate.edu](mailto:lrowell@calstate.edu).

LMR:JSB

**Distribution:**

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018\\_tables\\_and\\_figures\\_dec\\_2020\\_fnl\\_508.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-01/documents/2018_tables_and_figures_dec_2020_fnl_508.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/stateagency/assistance/4rsguide/intro/>