



HI-5 Program Facts

Weighing and Counting Options

The Department of Health (DOH) would like to ensure that the public receives the correct information regarding the calculation of deposit beverage container refunds based on count or weight.

Under DOH rules, certified redemption center site operators must inspect each customer's load of containers to verify eligibility and quantity. Operators will then pay refunds either by physically counting or weighing the load. The DOH inspects redemption centers to ensure proper procedures are followed. The operator must count up to 200 containers when requested by the customer. It is up to the operator to decide if they want to count more than 200 containers. The operator may decide to weigh the remaining containers. If the operator chooses to weigh the remaining containers, or the customer chooses to weigh their entire load, the refund will be determined using a weight to refund conversion rate (also called a "segregated rate"). Because the conversion rate is an average, the customer may receive more or less refund than they expect, depending on the size and weight of the containers.

The DOH establishes the conversion rate based on statewide statistical studies of containers being redeemed at redemption centers. The rate is a statistically valid factor that converts the weight of a load of containers, segregated by material type, to a corresponding number of containers. The rate is obtained by sampling customer loads at redemption centers around the state to arrive at an average number of containers per pound for each material type. Since the conversion rate is an average, the actual distribution of container sizes in a given customer load may yield more than, less than, or an equal number of containers per pound compared to the conversion rate. This is particularly true for plastic containers, which have a wider range of container sizes and weights. The DOH established a conversion rate for small plastic containers (17 oz. or less), so consumers have the option of sorting out small containers and redeeming them separately for a higher rate.

In order to ensure an exact refund for each container, customers can redeem smaller loads by count or use a Reverse Vending Machine (RVM).

The HI-5 Program allows for two methods of deposit redemption to provide customers with more options and increased convenience. There are pros and cons for both methods. Counting usually results in more accurate refunds, but may take longer. Weighing is more convenient, but less accurate. Customers must decide which method is best for them.

To help you decide, we have provided the pros and cons fact sheet on the back of this page.

Count vs. Weight: Pros and Cons Fact Sheet

The HI-5 deposit beverage container program allows for two methods of deposit redemption. There are pros and cons to both methods.

Counting

- Consumers may request that the redemption center operator count their containers.
- Redemption center operators must count loads up to 200 containers, if requested by the consumer.
- Consumers with larger loads may ask the redemption center operator if they are willing to count larger loads during a less busy part of the day.
- Redemption center operators may count loads larger than 200 containers.
- Consumers may use Reverse Vending Machines to get refunds based on count.

Pro: Consumers get back the deposit on every container.

Con: Consumers spend more time in line while waiting for operators to count loads.

Weighing

- Consumers may request their containers be weighed for refund.
- A segregated rate is used to calculate deposit refunds on weighed loads of containers.
- The segregated rate is an average number of containers per pound by material type (plastic, glass, aluminum, bi-metal), multiplied by the deposit. The average will not convert each load's weight to a precise count.
- The purpose of the weighing option is to provide a fast, convenient way to get refunds back on large loads. (Loads considered too large to reasonably be counted by hand).

Pro: Consumers spend less time waiting in line for deposit refunds.

Con: Consumers may receive more or less refund than they expected.

For more information contact:

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