

## Medford Pay As You Throw Program (PAYT) FAQ

Medford is moving toward a Pay As You Throw (PAYT) program for trash collection. The PAYT program will apply to recipients of municipal collection service. **Starting July 1, 2027, residential 64-gallon trash carts will be collected every other week** by WM alongside 96-gallon recycling carts. Food waste in 12-gallon carts will continue to be collected weekly by Garbage to Garden. Leaves and yard waste will continue to be collected 20 weeks per year by Casella.

### Why are we doing this?

- **The PAYT program is the next step in the modernization of Medford's municipal collection system**, which will:
  - **Reduce the City's waste program budget** by collecting trash every other week, saving the City over \$1 million dollars per year at the same time as trash disposal costs are rising
  - **Reduce air pollution and wear and tear on roads** in our neighborhoods by reducing heavy-duty garbage truck traffic by 1/3, benefiting public health and the City's street maintenance budget
  - **Encourage the proper management of what Medford residents throw away** through waste reduction, reuse, composting food and yard waste, and recycling
  - **Clean up our recyclables and trash by removing food waste**, which is heavy and wet, ensuring cleaner recycling streams and reducing the cost of trash disposal
  - **Mitigate rat populations** by ensuring food waste is secured in latching carts collected every week rather than left loose in unsecured trash carts, by reducing rat habitat by providing 20 weeks of yard waste collection, and eliminating trash bags in all of the City's Business Districts
  - **Help prepare residents for a proposed 2030 statewide [food waste disposal ban](#)**
  - **Move the City toward Zero Waste** as part of implementing the 2022 [Climate Action & Adaptation Plan \(CAAP\)](#)
- **Free, weekly food waste collection** will be available to all municipal collection service recipients prior to the launch of the PAYT program. Sign up now at: <https://medfordcomposts.com/>
- **The PAYT program was discussed in July 2023** with the Medford [Committee of the Whole](#) and the [City Council](#) at which time the implementation of every-other-week trash collection was described as a future evolution of Medford's municipal collection program
- **162 communities in Massachusetts—and more than 9,000 nationwide—have implemented PAYT programs**, which is a common name for many different programs designed to create an incentive to reduce residential waste
- **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) awarded Medford a \$200,000 PAYT grant to purchase organics carts** supporting the expansion of the City's curbside organics collection program in preparation for every-other-week trash collection

### What is it going to cost me?

- **The PAYT program will cost you nothing if you use the basic level of service.** Starting July 1, 2027, the basic level of service per household will be:
  - One 12-gallon food waste cart collected weekly

- One 64-gallon trash cart collected every other week
- One 96-gallon recycling cart collected every other week, and
- 20 weeks of leaf and yard collection per year, a 25% increase from the previous contract
- **You can go beyond the basic level of service, if necessary, by leasing additional carts and/or purchasing overflow bags:**
  - \$12.43 per additional 64-gallon trash cart per month starting July 1, 2027
  - \$5.54 per additional 96-gallon recycling cart per month starting July 1, 2027
  - \$9.99 for five 33-gallon overflow trash bags starting July 1, 2027
  - \$9.00 per additional 12-gallon food waste cart per month + one-time \$22.50 cart fee

## What will I do with my trash?

- **Starting July 1, 2027, you will set out your 64-gallon trash cart every other week on the same collection day as your recycling.**
- The new baseline for trash service will equate to 32-gallons per household per week, which meets Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) service volume threshold for a PAYT program.
- Medford's PAYT program will build upon the existing 64-gallon trash cart collection system, a feature of the program that is both convenient for residents and fiscally conservative
- If you decide you need more volume to manage your trash, you can lease an additional trash cart or purchase overflow bags.

## When will the PAYT program start?

- **The PAYT program starts on July 1, 2027**
- On your first day of service in July, 2027, your residential **64-gallon trash carts will be collected every other week** along with 96-gallon recycling carts. Food waste in 12-gallon carts will continue to be collected weekly by Garbage to Garden.

## Will I have the option to get trash collected weekly when PAYT starts?

- **You will not be able to receive weekly trash collection service under the municipal contract once the PAYT program begins.** However, you can increase the volume of your trash collection by leasing additional trash carts and/or purchasing overflow bags.
- The financial benefit of Medford's PAYT program relies upon the collection of trash on an every-other-week schedule.

## How can I prepare for the PAYT program?

- **Reduce wasted food and start composting.** [Food waste is 21.6% of trash in Massachusetts](#), by weight, which makes it the single largest category of the state's solid waste stream. Food waste is one of the heaviest items in the trash. Composting food waste directly lowers trash disposal costs, which are also calculated by weight. **Sign up for Medford's residential weekly curbside composting program** at: <https://medfordcomposts.com/>
- **Make sure you are recycling right.** Not sure how? Check out the [Smart Recycling Guide](#) for clear instructions in 12 languages.
- **Learn ways to reduce the amount of materials you need to throw away.** Visit the [City of Medford Waste and Recycling page](#) for more information.