

## Florida State University Community Waste Station FAQs

### 1. **What is the new FSU waste management program?**

FSU's Sustainability Action Plan identifies Waste Minimization as a strategic initiative to reduce our overall footprint and build a University-wide culture of environmental care.

The new Community Waste Station program calls for operational changes (removal of desk-side bin service and standardized waste collection stations) and increased outreach and educational endeavors to increase personal responsibility and participation in managing our campus waste streams.

### 2. **Why is FSU implementing community waste stations? / Why do I have to empty my own trash? It is not in my job description.**

Florida State University is taking aggressive steps to prevent the spread of disease, such as COVID-19, by minimizing individual interactions while also enhancing its existing cleaning and disinfection practices. This cannot be achieved without the help and understanding of the entire campus community.

To meet campus needs for increased sanitation of common spaces, custodial staff will no longer routinely enter personal office spaces to clean or collect trash from desk-side bins. Multiple units under the Facilities Department are coming together under new shared service arrangements to adapt and innovate, while continuing to provide a high level of service to all.

Additionally, research shows that self-sorting our own waste increases recycling rates and decreases the total amount of waste generated. Desk-side servicing leads to higher contamination rates and more landfill waste, including the disposal of trash can plastic liners, which will be greatly reduced from FSU's supply chain and waste stream because of this change. Other colleges and universities that have implemented similar programs have seen a recycling rate increase of 15-55% and have diverted hundreds of tons from the landfill.

### 3. **Custodians will no longer be emptying my desk-side trash can every day. What will they be doing?**

Custodial staff positions will not be eliminated because of this change. The changes will allow for more effective disease prevention as there will be increased flexibility and availability for cleaning common areas and decreased person-to-person contact.

### 4. **Will my desk-side bin be removed, or can I keep it to hold my waste materials?**

Our preference is for individuals to voluntarily give up their desk-side bins. If you choose to keep it, it will no longer be serviced. Please do not keep any food or food-soiled waste in your desk-side bin overnight to avoid pests and odor. Trash can liners are available upon request at the departmental level by submitting a Work Order to 644-2424.

**5. If I choose to keep a desk-side bin, where do I empty it?**

You can sort the contents of your desk-side bin into the Community Waste Station located throughout each floor of your building.

**6. How far away will I have to carry my desk-side waste to one of the standard waste stations?**

Community Waste Stations have been placed in high traffic areas, including hallways, near kitchen/break rooms, and outside of large classrooms and laboratories.

**7. If I have mobility limitations that make it difficult to carry my desk-side waste bin to a standard waste station, what should I do?**

Please work with your department and building custodial supervisor to determine if there is a readily available solution. Otherwise, formal accommodations can be requested through the [FSU HR Equal Opportunity & Compliance office](#).

**8. What material is accepted in each bin at the waste station? Examples, not limited to:**

LANDFILL: food waste, napkins, plastic wrappers, straws, paper coffee cups

BOTTLES & CANS: drink cans and bottles (all sizes), plastic coffee cups, metal food cans, plastic food cups, single-use plastic food clamshell containers

PAPER: all paper types

*\* Cardboard – break down flat and take outside to closest Cardboard recycling roll-off, usually located in the loading dock area.*

**9. What about the smell or mess from food left in my desk-side bin?**

Please discard food directly into a centralized trash can to prevent any odor or pest issues. To keep a desk-side bin clean, it is recommended that you periodically wipe out bin with a damp paper towel.

**10. What about potential pests?**

Please help eliminate the potential threat of fruit fly and or other pests by removing the source of feeding and breeding:

- Discard or refrigerate ripening fruits.
- Clean any spilled juices, sodas, or other liquids.
- Wash out beverage containers before recycling.

Please call the Facilities Service Center (644-2424) at the first sign of any infestation.

**11. Who will service the waste stations in the common areas of the building?**

FSU Building Services staff will continue to service all waste bins that are not desk-side. The waste stations will be serviced daily for Landfill and Bottles & Cans recycling, and as needed for Paper recycling.

**12. How should we sort waste for conference rooms?**

This new program applies to all conference rooms and large spaces. Please direct meeting attendees to the nearest waste station for proper sorting.

**13. What type of bins will be placed in copy and mail rooms?**

Single Paper recycling bins will be placed in these rooms. Custodial staff will be responsible for servicing these bins as needed.

**14. How will lab waste be handled?**

The lab waste bin service schedule and frequency will vary due to new COVID safety protocols. Senior Custodial Supervisors will coordinate with departmental managers to schedule times for lab waste bin service.

**15. How will restroom waste be handled?**

There are no service changes scheduled for restroom waste, proceed as usual. Feminine hygiene waste should be placed in the designated boxes in the bathroom stalls.

**16. How do I dispose of medical waste?**

Medical waste and/or needles should be taken home and disposed of properly. EH&S does not distribute individual biomedical waste boxes but if you have a personal sharps box, you may [request a pickup](#).

**17. What type of bins will be placed in classrooms and auditoriums, and who is responsible for serving them?**

At the moment, classroom and auditorium trash cans are not a part of the new program and will remain in place. This will evolve as COVID-related needs change. Custodians will service classroom trash cans daily.

**18. Can I be provided a trash or recycling bin for my office?**

No. All university buildings will eventually be provided standardized bins in convenient locations.

**19. How can I get a waste station for my office space or building?**

Community waste station locations were identified to provide easy access to both building occupants and custodial staff. All stations must be in high-traffic, easily accessible areas while also meeting fire and life safety requirements. Location maps will be made available. Any changes to your building's Community Waste Station locations must be reviewed and approved by Building Services ([fsubuildingservices@fsu.edu](mailto:fsubuildingservices@fsu.edu)). New bin standards have been developed during this process. Departments that wish to purchase additional waste and recycling bins must submit a request to Design & Construction for approval.

**20. What should I do about hard to recycle items?**

Electronics: all FSU-owned electronic waste must be routed for proper handling and processing through FSU Surplus. E-waste may contain proprietary or sensitive information, and may contain materials that are regulated under environmental, health, and safety laws. FSU rigorously seeks to recycle all electronic waste to the highest standards. Please visit the [FSU Waste Management](#) website for more information.

Ink/toner cartridges and batteries: please collect these materials and submit a Work Order (644-2424) for pick up.

**21. How can I plan events that support this new initiative?**

FSU's [Green Office Certification](#) program outlines ways to participate in the university's sustainability goals. Sustainable Campus also provides a [Green Event Guide](#) to help you plan greener events. Get certified and earn recognition for your efforts!

**22. How can I request a presentation to my department or office?**

Contact FSU's sustainability office at [sustainablecampus@fsu.edu](mailto:sustainablecampus@fsu.edu) to request a presentation.

**23. Whom should I contact if I have questions about this new program?**

Your building custodians are our front-line ambassadors for this effort. They have the on the-ground knowledge of the service changes and can help direct you to the closest waste station. Additional questions, concerns, and feedback can be sent to [fsubuildingservices@fsu.edu](mailto:fsubuildingservices@fsu.edu).

*Additional resources are in development.*