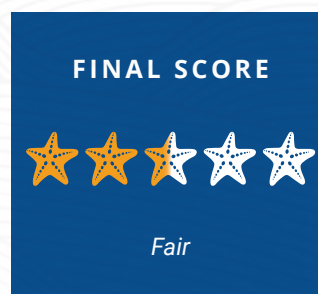
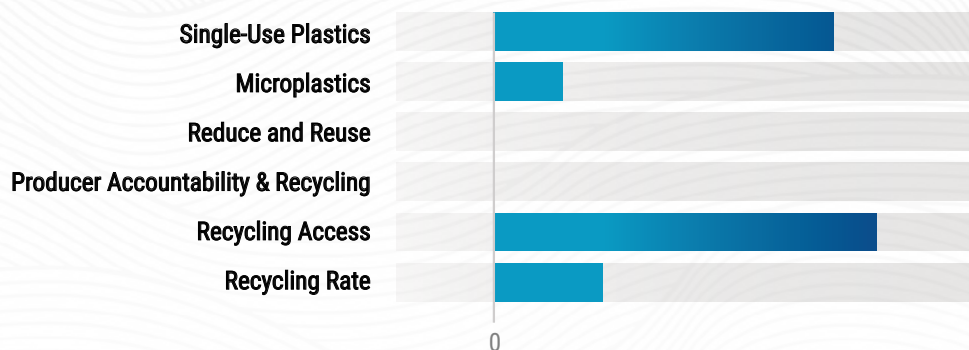


# United States OF PLASTICS

## New Jersey

MID-ATLANTIC

New Jersey's deep connection to the ocean is evident in its nearly 2,000 miles of shoreline,<sup>1</sup> vibrant shore communities and extensive network of rivers and estuaries, including the Delaware River and Raritan Bay. These waterways are central to the state's economy, supporting commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, shipping and coastal industries. The Jersey Shore, famous for its boardwalks and beaches, draws millions of visitors annually and provides critical habitat for migratory birds and marine species. Many endangered and threatened species reside in New Jersey's coastal marshes and shores that play a key role in maintaining the state's ecosystems. New Jersey has a vital connection to its coastal waters, and the state has taken action to address the growing threat of plastic pollution. However, many opportunities remain for continued progress.



<sup>1</sup> ["Shoreline Mileage of the United States."](#) NOAA Office for Coastal Management. Accessed May 2025.





### Single-Use Plastics

New Jersey has phased out expanded polystyrene foam foodware and single-use plastic bags and requires that plastic straws be provided to consumers only by request.<sup>2</sup> The state also prohibits smoking on or in any public beach or park.<sup>3</sup>



### Microplastics

The state has enacted a law supporting research on microplastics to inform future actions.<sup>4</sup>



### Reduce and Reuse

The state has not enacted any laws relating to plastic reduction or reuse.



### Producer Accountability and Recycling

The state does not have extended producer responsibility (EPR) or deposit return programs (DRS) for packaging or beverage containers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Given the amount of beverage container-related pollution in the top ten most commonly collected items in the state, New Jersey should consider a comprehensive approach to EPR by combining a DRS program for beverage containers, which is known to immediately and significantly decrease beverage container pollution as well as overall litter, with an EPR program for packaging to increase recycling rates.
- Since tourism is a major driver in New Jersey's economy, the state has an opportunity to champion sustainable tourism by phasing out single-use plastics for personal care products in hotels. Reducing the use of unnecessary single-use plastics by tourists in New Jersey could lead to a significant reduction in waste and pollution.

## Top 10 Items Collected by ICC Volunteers

- 1 Cigarette Butts
- 2 Bottle Caps (Plastic)
- 3 Straws, Stirrers
- 4 Food Wrappers (Candy, chips, etc.)
- 5 Beverage Bottles (Plastic)
- 6 Grocery Bags (Plastic)
- 7 Beverage Cans
- 8 Lids (Plastic)
- 9 Other Plastic Bags
- 10 Bottle Caps (Metal)

<sup>2</sup> N.J. Stat. §§ 13:1E-99.126 et seq.  
<sup>3</sup> N.J. Stat. §§ 26:3D-56 et seq.  
<sup>4</sup> A 4821/4823, Sess. 2022-2023 (2024).