



CITY OF BOSTON

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY FIVE

**ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF
BOSTON CODE OF ORDINANCES BY ADDING A NEW PROVISION
TO CHAPTER XXIII, TRASH AND REFUSAL DISPOSAL TO
REQUIRE RAT-RESISTANT TRASH CONTAINERS IN
NEIGHBORHOODS WITH HIGH RODENT ACTIVITY**

WHEREAS, Neighborhoods across Boston — including Allston–Brighton, Dorchester, Chinatown, the South End, Roxbury, East Boston, and South Boston — have consistently logged the highest volume of 311 rodent complaints citywide; *and*

WHEREAS, Unsecured, overflowing, or damaged trash barrels are a major contributing factor to rodent infestations, posing public health, environmental, and quality-of-life risks; *and*

WHEREAS, Beginning in mid-2024, the City launched a pilot initiative deploying fully enclosed, rat-resistant trash containers in the North End and select high-infestation public spaces, including Boston Common and key neighborhoods identified in the Rodent Action Plan; and early feedback suggests these containers reduce rodent access to food waste in dense, high-traffic areas; *and*

WHEREAS, The rodent issue is citywide and urgent, and requires scalable, equitable waste-containment solutions; *and*

WHEREAS, The broader deployment of enclosed, tamper-resistant trash containers in neighborhoods with elevated rodent activity aligns with the goals of the City's Rodent Action Plan; *and*

NOW, THEREFORE, Be it ordained by the City Council of Boston as follows:

SECTION 1.

The City of Boston Code, Ordinances, Chapter 23 Section 10 is hereby amended to include:

SECTION 2. Addition of Section 23-10: Rat-Resistant Container Requirement.

(a) Definitions.

1. “Rat-Resistant Container” means a durable trash container (e.g. ASTM-certified plastic or metal) with a secure, solid lid designed to prevent rodent and vermin entry.
2. “Expansion Neighborhoods” means neighborhoods with high rodent activity per 311 data, including Allston–Brighton, Dorchester, Chinatown, South End, Roxbury, East Boston, and South Boston.

(b) Deployment Requirement.

Within 12 months of this ordinance's effective date, the Public Works Department (in coordination with Inspectional Services) shall implement a transitional program to distribute or subsidize rat-resistant containers to eligible residential and commercial properties within Expansion Neighborhoods.

(c) Shared Container Program.

Properties unable to accommodate a container on-site may participate in a centrally managed, secure shared container program operated by DPW.

(d) Enforcement.

Inspectional Services shall enforce compliance consistent with Chapter 23-10 and integrate assessments into routine Site Cleanliness Inspections, offering education prior to enforcement action.

(e) Reporting.

DPW and Inspectional Services shall submit a joint report to the City Council within 18 months, and annually thereafter. Reports shall cover deployment status, enforcement outcomes, complaint reductions, and deployment cost data.

(f) Funding Support.

The City shall identify funding—via municipal budget, grants, or partnerships—to subsidize containers for low-income households and small businesses. DPW may offer discounted or reimbursable purchase options.

SECTION 3. Effective Date.

This ordinance shall take effect **60 days** after adoption; all implementation milestones will be measured from that effective date.

SECTION 4. Committee Referral.

Refer this ordinance to the Committee on **City Services, Public Works & Environment** for further study and recommendation.

Filed in Council: August 6, 2025