

## RECYCLING RELAY – FACILITATOR GUIDE

This activity is designed as a fun game that recreates how people make quick decisions about waste sorting.

### Materials:

- Two sets of tubs for sorting material (3 containers in each set). Ideally, these are color-coded: green, blue, black/brown.
- Two sets of materials signs: compost, recycle, landfill
- Mixed materials that are common to participants (milk jug, beverage container, newspaper, cutlery, compostable plastics, toothpicks, coffee stirrer, #6 solo cups, pizza boxes, paper, etc.) At minimum, have enough material so that each person in the game can sort at least 1 piece of waste.

### Set Up:

- Lay out each set of sorting containers in clusters. The sorting containers go on the side where the teams stand.
- Put the signs (compost/recycle/landfill) in front of the containers so they are easily read by the runner.
- On the opposite end of the relay field, create two piles of materials with equal numbers and types of materials (can have exact duplicates or just mixed materials).
- Separate the group into two teams; each team stands behind their cluster of sorting materials.



### The Goal

- Each team will sort the materials as correctly as possible, as quickly as possible.

### The Rules

- When the facilitator gives the signal, one person from each team will run to get ONE item from the pile. They will run back and put it in the bin that they think is correct.
- Your team can help with suggestions for which bin to put the item in, but no one can remove the item once it has been placed in a bin.
- Both teams should finish the sorting activity, even after the first team is done.

### Scoring

- First team to finish = 2 points
- Correctly sorted items = 1 point each



### Facilitator Debrief

- After the relay is completed, set aside items that are not sorted in the right container, then add up the correct items; add the bonus 2 points to the team that finished first.
- Talk through all of the items and explain why the item goes in the correct bin (use the materials guide to ensure you relay the correct information). Spend some time on both items that were correctly sorted and incorrectly sorted, as not everyone may know if it was sorted or not.
- As you go, ask questions:
  - Is this item in the correct bin? Why or why not?
  - This item may be confusing. Is anyone unsure about where to put this item? (Esp. compostable plastics)
  - This item is clean for this activity. Would this item still go in the recycling if it had food waste on it? (to-go box or yogurt container) Or if it was half full with soda? (beverage container)
  - If composting was not available, where would these items go? (Most compostable items, like compostable plastics, napkins, and food, would go in landfill if compost was not available. Clean paper to go boxes and cardboard can go in recycling.)
- Some takeaways to emphasize:
  - Read the signs!
  - Recyclables must be empty, clean and dry.
  - These items should not go in single stream recycling: paper cups, utensils, or plastic bags.
  - Plastic bags and other soft plastics can be recycled by taking them back to the grocery store.
  - Compostable items include all food waste, certified and clearly marked compostable plastics, and food/liquid soiled papers and cardboards.

