

FAQ on 'nearby vicinity' as applies to service packaging

Service packaging is packaging that is not filled with goods until it reaches the final distributor and that is used in order to enable or support handing over goods to the final consumer (e.g. bakery bags, carrier bags, takeaway coffee cups, takeaway containers, flower wrapping foil, chips trays, cream jars, etc.). However, filling will also be considered to have taken place at the final distributor's if the packaging was not filled directly at the point of sale, but in the **nearby vicinity**, e.g. in a separate production or work room adjacent to the sales area.

The criterion of 'nearby vicinity' is fulfilled if the filling and handing over to the final consumer takes place at the same premises of the final distributor, or up to a few hundred metres from there. It is generally not fulfilled if the filled packaging was transported on a public road between the point of filling and the point of sale / point of handing over to the final consumer.

As an example: where packaging is filled centrally and then transported to various branches, 'nearby vicinity' no longer applies. That is to say, the packaging is not classified as service packaging. For packaging to be classified as service packaging, it does not matter when it was filled. It may be filled before the actual handover to the customer. Usually, however, the packaging will be filled at around the same time that it will be placed on the German market, i.e. handed over to the final consumer.

Final distributors can buy 'pre-participated' unfilled service packaging from a supplier or wholesaler. In this situation, the supplier or wholesaler has already paid for the packaging's recycling. That is called 'pre-participation'. This option is only available for service packaging.

When making use of this option, the final distributor should ensure that the supplier or wholesaler has fully complied with the registration and system participation requirements. It should also be noted that the final distributor's registration and system participation requirements for other service, retail or grouped packaging remain unaffected.

Final distributors placing exclusively service packaging on the German market and buying only pre-participated packaging have to register with the LUCID Packaging Register starting 1 July 2022. They will need to confirm the pre-participated nature of the purchase during the registration process. To do so, they have to check the box that says 'Exclusively pre-participated service packaging' when providing details on their packaging types. (Refer to ['What is service packaging?'](#) and ['What special provisions apply to service packaging?'](#)) Further information can be found in our ['Service packaging'](#) knowledge base.