



City of Santa Ana
20 Civic Center Plaza, Santa Ana, CA 92701
Staff Report
May 5, 2026

TOPIC: Self-Service Checkout Stations in Drug and Food Retail Establishments

AGENDA TITLE

Ordinance Establishing Staffing and Operational Standards for Self-Service Checkout Stations in Drug and Food Retail Establishments

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt an ordinance of the City Council establishing staffing and operational standards for self-service checkout stations in drug and food retail establishments within the City of Santa Ana.

ORDINANCE NO. NS-XXXX entitled AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA ANA ADDING ARTICLE XXIV TO CHAPTER 8 OF THE SANTA ANA MUNICIPAL CODE REGULATING THE STAFFING OF SELF- SERVICE CHECKOUT OPERATIONS

GOVERNMENT CODE §84308 APPLIES: No

DISCUSSION

Self-service checkout systems have become increasingly prevalent in grocery stores and other retail establishments. While these systems offer convenience, their widespread use has raised concerns related to retail theft, employee workload, and access to staffed checkout services.

This item is brought forward at the direction of the City Manager, in consultation with the Mayor, to address growing concerns related to public safety, employee workload, and equitable access to staffed checkout services.

In August 2025, the City of Long Beach adopted a first-in-the-nation ordinance establishing staffing requirements and operational limitations for self-service checkout stations. More recently, the City of Costa Mesa adopted a similar ordinance and additional jurisdictions are actively considering comparable measures. These policies reflect a growing trend among local governments to regulate self-service checkout

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systems as part of broader efforts to enhance public safety and maintain service accessibility.

The proposed ordinance is designed to address several key issues related to the operation of self-service checkout systems. Increased employee presence in checkout areas improves oversight and may deter retail theft, which has been identified as a growing concern in retail environments. Establishing minimum staffing ratios reduces the burden on employees tasked with monitoring multiple transactions simultaneously and helps mitigate workplace conflicts. Maintaining staffed checkout lanes ensures that all customers, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those who require assistance, have access to traditional service options. Additionally, public notification requirements and defined enforcement mechanisms promote transparency and accountability by providing customers and employees with clear expectations and recourse in the event of noncompliance.

The proposed ordinance provides a balanced and enforceable framework to ensure that self-service checkout systems operate safely, responsibly, and serve the needs of Santa Ana residents, workers, and businesses. Adoption of this ordinance will align with emerging regional standards while preserving flexibility for local implementation.

Staff will conduct outreach to affected businesses to support compliance and minimize disruption.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

There is no environmental impact associated with this action.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

EXHIBIT(S)

1. Draft Ordinance

Submitted By: Sylvia Vazquez, Deputy City Manager

Approved By: Alvaro Nuñez, City Manager