**How to Pass Your Facility Inspection:**

1. **Attend a free inspection workshop offered every month at the BACP.** The workshop will allow you to learn first hand how to prepare for inspections from sanitarians, building inspectors and ask questions.

2. **Download a complete list of inspection requirements from the Department of Public Health at www.cityofchicago.org/health under “Food Protection.”**

3. **Visit the Restaurant Resource Center at www.cityofchicago.org/restaurants for helpful tips and information on opening a food establishment.**

4. **New Construction—** If you are planning to build or rehab a new or existing restaurant, grocery store or other food establishment, a City Health Sanitarian will review your building plans to make sure they are adequate for the type and size of business you want to operate. The plan review will help you save time and avoid potential costly mistakes before you begin your construction. Lastly, it will help you be on your way to a speedy opening by passing your facility inspection when you apply for your Retail Food Establishment License. The Plan Review is coordinated between the Department of Public Health and the Department of Buildings during the building permit application process.

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**Restaurant Tax**

Restaurants in the City of Chicago that sell food and beverages will automatically be registered to file and pay the Chicago Restaurant Tax. The 0.25% tax should be filed with and paid to the Chicago Department of Revenue. Visit www.cityofchicago.org/revenue for more information.

**Business Workshops**

BACP offers entrepreneurs a place to learn about starting and growing a business by offering free business educational classes, such as writing a business plan, financing, marketing and much more. Visit www.cityofchicago.org/bacp for the monthly workshop calendar.

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**Top 10 Inspection Tips:**

Health requirements to prepare for your facility inspection:

1. At least one City of Chicago Food Service Sanitation Certificate must be posted on site and in easy view of the public and city inspection personnel. At least one certified food manager must be present during operations.

2. A stainless steel, 3 compartment sink with an attached metal drain board, a grease trap and a preventative back flow device. Commercial dishwashers are acceptable and can be either a high temperature 180 degrees Fahrenheit or a low temp chemical sanitizing, using either chlorine or iodine.

3. A separate hand washing sink in the food prep area, equipped with soap and towels.

4. A utility or slop sink for cleaning purposes.

5. A refrigerator that is capable of maintaining a temp of 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below and a freezer capable of maintaining a temp of 0 degrees Fahrenheit. All coolers and refrigerator must have thermometers.

6. An operating exhaust hood over cooking equipment. Exhaust must ventilate over the roof of any adjacent building.

7. At least one employee restroom. Where both men and women are employed and there are more than two employees of a gender, separate restrooms shall be identified and provided for each. Restrooms must be ventilated and the doors must be self closing.

8. A pest control service contract with a licensed provider and a log book to document service dates.

9. A contract for garbage removal service and a grease dumpster if necessary.

10. A well maintained, clean and sanitary establishment.

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**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Department of Business Affairs & Consumer Protection
Business Assistance Center
121 N. LaSalle St. Room 800 • Chicago, IL 60602
(312) 74-GOBIZ/(312) 744-6249
www.cityofchicago.org/bacp

Department of Public Health
Food Protection Division
(312) 746-8030 • www.cityofchicago.org/health

Department of Buildings
(312) 743-3600 • www.cityofchicago.org/buildings

Department of Revenue
(312) 747-IRIS • www.cityofchicago.org/revenue

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**Chicago’s Guide to Restaurants and Retail Food Establishments**

Retail Food Establishment License (4-8, 7-40)
Chicago has a long history of culinary excellence and is home to many of the greatest restaurants, bars and cafes in the world. Opening a food establishment in Chicago requires attention to detail to ensure you provide the public with a safe and sanitary dining experience.

What is a Retail Food Establishment License?
A Retail Food Establishment License is required any time perishable food is prepared, served or sold to the public. A Retail Food License will only be issued to a commercial location.

Retail Food Establishments include:
- Groceries
- Convenience stores
- Fruit and vegetable markets
- Meat/Fish markets
- Automatic food vending machines
- Cafeterias, delis, bakeries
- Take out/delivery restaurants
- Concession stands

A retail food license is NOT required to sell pre-packaged, nonperishable food such as gum, candy, soda, etc.

APPLICATION FEE: 0-4,500 sq.ft. = $660
4,501-10,000 sq.ft. = $880
10,001+sq.ft. = $1,100

License renewals are based on a 2 year term.

THE APPLICATION:
The following documentation and information is required when applying for a Retail Food Establishment License:
The name of your business, business address, square footage, lease or proof of ownership of the property, Illinois Business Tax (IBT) number, Federal Employers Identification (FEIN) number, ownership information, and a photo I.D.

The first step in applying for a Retail Food Establishment License is to meet with a BACP business consultant who will guide you through the process. Before seeking a license, you should consider the following requirements. You can make an appointment with a business consultant online at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp or by calling 312-744-6249.

License applications are accepted online at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp, in person or by mail.

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ZONING REQUIREMENTS:
Before signing a lease make sure the location you have selected allows retail food service by checking the zoning classification at www.cityofchicago.org/zoning or ask a BACP business consultant.

If you plan to sell liquor or offer entertainment in your food establishment, additional licensing and zoning requirements may apply.

SANITATION CERTIFICATE:
All retail food businesses are required to have at least one employed person on the premises at all times who has a valid City of Chicago Food Service Sanitation Certificate. The food course offers a basic food science background and information on the proper handling of food and maintaining a sanitary food establishment. Courses are available at Harold Washington College, http://hwcc.ccc.edu or the Illinois Restaurant Association, www.illinoisrestaurants.org.

Prior to receiving a license the premises must first pass a public health inspection that focuses on food handling practices, product temperature, personal hygiene, facility maintenance and pest control. See the back page for tips on inspection requirements. See the back of this brochure for tips on passing your facility inspection.

FACILITY INSPECTIONS:
Food establishments with seating are subject to a scheduled “Restaurant Inspection” from the Department of Buildings at the time of renewal and will be billed based on square footage ($100–$550). The Department of Public Health will also conduct unscheduled routine inspections and respond to complaints to ensure continued compliance.

RECURRING INSPECTIONS:

SellinG LICuOR
Selling liquor in your retail food business requires a liquor license. There are different types depending upon the type of business you operate. Applying for a liquor license includes neighborhood sentiment, additional facility inspections, criminal background checks and there may be restrictions depending upon your business location. Plan ahead and speak with a BACP business consultant or visit BACP online for more information.

BYOB
BYOB (Bring Your Own Bottle) is permitted inside a restaurant, however the City encourages business owners to obtain liability insurance to protect against potential lawsuits. There should not be any direct or indirect fees charged for the allowance of BYOB unless the business location has a liquor license. BYOB is not permitted on a sidewalk cafe.

WHAT IS A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE?

A Retail Food Establishment License is required any time perishable food is prepared, served or sold to the public. A Retail Food License will only be issued to a commercial location.

Retail Food Establishments include:
- Restaurants
- Cafes
- Banquet Halls
- Taverns/nightclubs
- Caterers
- Candy manufacturers
- Take out/delivery restaurants
- Concession stands

A retail food license is NOT required to sell pre-packaged, nonperishable food such as gum, candy, soda, etc.

APPLICATION FEE: 0-4,500 sq.ft. = $660
4,501-10,000 sq.ft. = $880
10,001+sq.ft. = $1,100

License renewals are based on a 2 year term.

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