

Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit FAQ

Who can apply?

Any Chamber of Commerce, Special Service Area Agency, Business Association, or three (3) or more restaurants on a contiguous block may apply for a street closure. Individual restaurants with their own parking lots may apply by themselves to expand into their own lot.

How do I apply?

Please visit www.chicago.gov and follow the link to the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) webpage. The DCASE website can be accessed directly at www.chicago.gov/DCASE. The direct link to the Permit Portal is <https://ipi.cityofchicago.org/Profile>.

What activity is allowed with this permit?

The Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit allows establishments with valid Retail Food Establishment Licenses to temporarily expand operations into the street or other private property (i.e. parking lots).

How many blocks of street closures can be applied for?

The blocks of street closures will be determined on a case by case basis and reviewed with all relevant City departments. The closures must be managed by the applicant, so you are encouraged to think strategically about the blocks closed and the impact on other businesses in the area.

When do application submittals close?

There is currently no closing date for the applications, although this program is dependent on acceptable weather.

What documents are required for the application submittal?

The required documents can be found on the DCASE website. They required documents are:

- Floorplan/site plan
- Security Plan
- Emergency Action Plan (ie severe weather, fire, medical emergency)
- Certificate of Insurance
- Liquor License (if serving alcohol outside) with applicable dram shop insurance
- Waste management plan

How long does it take the City to review the application and respond back to the applicant?

Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit FAQ

The initial review of the application will be conducted by all departments involved in providing services, permits or licenses within five (5) business days. If the initial application is not complete or more documents are needed, it may take longer than five days. Final issuance of permits is contingent on the success of the six initial pilot locations (public safety, health, etc).

How departments are responsible for processing these permits?

Staff from the following departments will process these applications and oversee the program:

- Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE)
- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protections (BACP)
- Chicago Police Department (CPD)
- Department of Finance (DOF)
- Chicago Fire Department (CFD)
- Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
- Office of Emergency Management and Communication (OEMC)
- Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)

How does this permit interact with existing sidewalk cafe permits?

Sidewalk café permits and Expanded Outdoor Dining Permits are two separate processes.

The sidewalk café permit is an existing permit that allows restaurants to operate on the sidewalk directly adjacent or in close proximity to the licensed establishment. Applications should be submitted to BACP – more information can be [found here](#).

The Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit allows restaurants to expand their operations into streets and private property, such as parking lots.

Will restaurants with parking meters in front of their restaurants be eligible?

Yes, applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis on impact to parking.

How long does the permit last?

Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit FAQ

The permit is good for up to 180 days, as long as the restaurant follows all rules and guidelines. The City reserves the right to cancel the pilot program and future Expanded Outdoor Dining applicants for public health, safety, or any other reason.

How many days a week and what hours may I operate?

For the first two weeks of the permit, the City will permit the closure of the streets for Friday, Saturday, and Sundays. Hours of operation will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Who is responsible for closing the street?

The applicant is responsible for Type III Barricades required for street closures.

Who will be responsible for security?

CPD will review the security plan and the applicant is responsible for implementing security for the expanding outdoor dining.

Who is responsible for waste?

The applicant is responsible for all waste removal. The City will provide street sweeping.

If I have questions on a traffic plan and the re-routing of traffic, who do I contact?

The Chicago Department of Transportation will assist the applicant regarding any questions they have regarding the street closures and re-routing of traffic. Please email: cdotpermitsupport@cityofchicago.org.

Will OEMC provide Traffic Control Aides (TCA's) to manage traffic?

OEMC will not provide this service.

Can I erect a tent in the public right of way for my restaurant?

No. Tents will not be allowed on the right of way. Table umbrellas are encouraged as a way to mitigate sun and rain.

Where can I find information on social distancing requirements for restaurants?

Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit FAQ

The guidelines for food service establishments can be [found here](#). More information can be found at www.chicago.gov/reopening.

What if my restaurant does not belong to a Chamber of Commerce, Business Association, or Special Service Area Agency? Who can I contact to address my issues?

Restaurants in proximity to others can apply in groups of three or more. If you would like more assistance or have questions, please contact: Chidining@cityofchicago.org.

Where can I find contact information for my local Chamber of Commerce, Business Association or Special Service Area Agency?

Information for local Chambers of Commerce or Business Associations can be found at www.chicago.gov/nbdc. Information about Special Service Area agencies can be [found here](#).

What if my local Chamber/Business/SSA is not participating in this program?

Applications can be accepted from three restaurants within a contiguous block.

How much does it cost to submit my application and are there permit fees that a business needs to pay?

There are no fees for the application or street closure. Restaurants may be required to pay the relevant State and City temporary liquor permit fees.

Do I need to apply for a temporary food vendor license?

No. A valid Retail Food License is required for the kitchen where the food will be prepared.

If I have any liquor license questions, who should I contact?

Please submit liquor license questions to the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP). Please contact Bryan Knipper at bryan.knipper@cityofchicago.org or 312-744-1183.

Can I expand my existing outdoor sidewalk cafe outside of my approved site plan?

The Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit Process is not applicable for an expansion of a sidewalk café permit. Please [click here for more information](#).

Can I expand into an adjacent lot / private property and do I still need a permit?



Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit FAQ

Yes, you must submit for this use through the Expanded Outdoor Dining Permit.

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