



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 25, 2012

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**CITY COUNCIL APPROVES MOBILE FOOD ORDINANCE TO EXPAND FOOD TRUCK INDUSTRY  
ACROSS CHICAGO**

*Ordinance Allows Food Truck Operators to prep and cook onboard and park for free throughout the  
City*

CHICAGO – Today, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance to expand food truck operations in neighborhoods across Chicago. Food truck operators will now be permitted to prepare “food to order” on board their trucks and have the opportunity to park for free in newly created “food truck stands” in highly congested areas as well as legal metered spaces that are 200 feet from a retail food establishment. Currently, food truck operators are only allowed to sell food packaged in a commercial kitchen and park in metered spaces that are 200 feet from a retail food establishment. The new law will further encourage this creative industry that spurs small business development and a diverse and vibrant cultural scene across the city.

“This ordinance is a fair and workable compromise that will allow the food truck industry to grow across Chicago, after years of unnecessary restrictions, as a full part of our city’s vibrant food culture” said Mayor Emanuel. “The years of debate are over: commonsense changes like these allow job growth and small business development for Chicagoans.”

The ordinance is a practical compromise developed after months of conversations with restaurateurs, the food truck industry, and local aldermen. Input from all of the stakeholders and a study of best practices from other major cities helped to create smart and workable requirements



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for food trucks that provide additional parking opportunities and expanded operations to foster this growing industry. The ordinance also protects maintains public health standards and safeguards communities from congestion and public safety issues.

“Chicago deserves a thriving food truck industry. This ordinance opens doors for food entrepreneurs by expanding options for cooking, parking and business hours.” said Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection Commissioner Rosemary Krimbel.

The ordinance legalizes expanded food truck operations while maintaining public health standards and includes:

- **“Food to Order”:** Food truck operators will be allowed to provide “food to order” for their customers, or fresh meals prepared directly on board a truck.
- **“Food Truck Stands” Across the City:** In addition to the legal parking spaces food trucks currently use, food trucks will now be allowed to park at designated Food Truck Stands across the city. These locations will be selected through an open and collaborative process in each ward by aldermen, the business community, and residents. Similar to a traditional loading zone, these dedicated locations will help food truck operators to park safely, especially in high-congestion areas where parking is scarce.
- **Increased Hours of Operation:** Food trucks may operate from 5am-2am, 7-days a week. Each food truck will be able to park at one food stand or other legal parking spot for up to 2 hours.
- **Regular Health Inspections and Trainings:** Food trucks must adhere to the highest health standards, the same standards as traditional restaurants, and will undergo regular inspections through the Chicago Department of Public Health. At least one employee trained and certified in food sanitation, must be present on the truck at all times to further ensure the health safety of their food.
- **GPS Data:** Data on food truck locations will be available online to the public. Food truck operators will be required to use mounted GPS devices in each truck so that the City and consumers can follow their locations.



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The ordinance was co-sponsored by Aldermen Tom Tunney, Joe Moreno, Scott Waguespack, Brendan Reilly, Emma Mitts, Michele Smith, and Walter Burnett.

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### COMMENTS FROM ALDERMANIC CO-SPONSORS

"Local restaurants are the cornerstone of our neighborhoods and food trucks are a promising trend nationwide. I am proud that we were able to bring so many stakeholders to the table to reach this compromise that addressed food safety and to support this innovative industry alongside our city's world-renown restaurants. Once the program is put into place, we can continue to modify and adapt the law working with our community residents and businesses."

*Alderman Emma Mitts, 37<sup>th</sup> Ward and Chairman of the Council Committee on License and Consumer Protection*

"Chicago entrepreneurs and small businesses alike will benefit from the flexibility, safety and innovation in this new mobile food licensing ordinance, and I am energized by the support this compromise measure has received today from the Chicago City Council."

*Alderman Walter Burnett Jr., 27<sup>th</sup> Ward*

"This ordinance provides a great opportunity for new businesses to get started and for existing businesses to expand and get greater exposure."

*Alderman Proco Joe Moreno, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward*

"This is not a perfect ordinance, but ultimately, it's fair and realistic. Legitimizing food trucks in our city has been talked about for years. I was elected to get things done, not to beat my chest and talk in circles. Compromise isn't a dirty concept and I'm proud to be a co-sponsor of this ordinance."

*Alderman Michelle Smith, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ward:*

"I am excited that we have taken the first step forward in ensuring that we are active participants in innovate and modern dining experiences without sacrificing the brick and mortar restaurants responsible for making Chicago one of the nation's premier food hubs."



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*Alderman Tom Tunney, 44<sup>th</sup> Ward*

“Local restaurants are the cornerstone of our neighborhoods and food trucks are a promising trend nationwide. I am proud that we were able to bring so many stakeholders to the table to reach this compromise that addressed food safety and to support this innovative industry alongside our city's world-renown restaurants. Once the program is put into place, we can continue to modify and adapt the law working with our community residents and businesses.”

*Alderman Scott Waguespack, 32<sup>nd</sup> Ward*

“This ordinance is a great step forward for the City, opening new doors of creativity and excitement for Chicagoans. This will help move the culinary industry forward while creating hundreds of jobs, building new aspects of the food industry, expand commissaries and kitchens and put Chicago back at the top of the food truck movement. I am glad to have the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Mayor’s staff, restaurant owners, and business organizations throughout the City to move this ordinance forward.”

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