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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES NEW NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS TEAM TO STRENGTHEN
ENFORCEMENT**

Small business reforms result in 14 percent increase in new business licenses

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) Commissioner Rosa Escareno today announced new efforts to support small businesses and improve the quality of life of residents. BACP is strengthening enforcement with permanent nights and weekends inspections to respond quickly and effectively to issues that may arise outside of regular business hours. In addition, new on-site inspection consultations will help keep businesses in compliance to prevent enforcement action.

"Small businesses are the lifeblood of our neighborhoods and the backbone of our economy," Mayor Emanuel said. "This initiative is the latest in a series of efforts to ensure our small businesses get the around-the-clock support they need to serve their communities, grow and thrive."

The new nights and weekends team is currently training and is scheduled to start in December. A successful pilot program launched in September 2017 with monthly strategic night missions resulted in issuing 504 tickets to problem operators.

"By supporting good businesses and cracking down on problem operators, this nights and weekends team will add to the vibrancy of our neighborhoods," said BACP Commissioner Escareno. "This new business compliance reform will enhance our effectiveness after hours and promote positive behavior, by holding problematic businesses accountable and ensuring all businesses are playing by the rules."

BACP will also be piloting an Active Compliance Program to proactively support good business, increase compliance rates and help BACP target resources on the truly bad actors. Launching in early 2019, BACP investigators will conduct proactive, non-disciplinary consultations with businesses in historically problematic industries. Investigators will also provide business owners with a license checklist to better prepare as well as the opportunity to ask questions and learn firsthand what investigators are looking for and how to remain compliant.

"Under Mayor Emanuel's administration, BACP has become a department that really tries to understand the community it regulates," Rob Karr, President & CEO of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association. "The Active Compliance Program is a good illustration of how the Mayor's office wants

to see the business community thrive and showcases Commissioner Escareno's vision and thoughtful leadership of the department."

This is the latest in a series of business initiatives as part of Mayor Emanuel's [small business reform plan announced in April](#) to reduce costs for businesses, simplify the licensing process, increase transparency, support start-up and innovative businesses, and ease the burden of inspections for all businesses. These reforms build on the Emanuel administration's efforts over the past seven years to cut red tape, increase support resources for businesses, and encourage innovation, entrepreneurship and economic development in every part of the city. Through the Start-Up License Fee as part of these reforms, BACP is offering a two-year Limited Business License for the price of one. So far this year, licensing rates for new businesses have increased by 14 percent since this program came into effect in July.

Supporting new and emerging businesses with the tools they need to launch and grow is essential to neighborhood economic growth and part of the BACP mission. This year, BACP has experienced a 25 percent increase in attendance at free small business workshops, with more than 3,000 entrepreneurs taking advantage of the opportunity to connect with experts and gain new resources to be successful. The next Small Business Center 'On the Road' Expo will be at Malcolm X College on Saturday, October 27 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. The free Expo, designed to support small businesses and grow entrepreneurship throughout Chicago's neighborhoods, offers training workshops, networking opportunities, a vendor fair and features a keynote speech by Raquel Graham Crayton, a marketing strategy, branding, and event management expert. Residents can learn more about BACP programs by visiting us on the website at www.chismallbizexpo.com.

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