

NEW EXPEDITED RESTAURANT LICENSING PILOT PROGRAM

With the passage of the Chi Biz Strong Initiative (SO2021-5292A), the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) now has the authority to expedite the issuance of Retail Food Establishment licenses for restaurants if the premises and applicant qualify for this pilot program.

Under the Expedited Restaurant Licensing (ERL) pilot program, a Retail Food Establishment business license can be issued without the need of an on-site Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) inspection prior to license issuance. CDPH would instead conduct a consultation with the applicant to verify a self-inspection process; CDPH would then conduct an on-site inspection within the first six months of the license having been issued. This could allow the restaurant to open its doors up to 14 days sooner.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPEDITED RESTAURANT LICENSING

- The prior business operating at the premises needs to have been a properly licensed restaurant, and have been successfully inspected on-site by CDPH on or after July 1, 2018;
- The square footage of the business location is substantially equivalent to the previous restaurant; and
- No changes requiring a building permit have been made or are being made to the structural, plumbing, ventilation or electrical systems at the business (repairs to these systems are acceptable for purposes of ERL eligibility).

DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR EXPEDITED RESTAURANT LICENSING

- Completed [Self-Inspection Checklist for Expedited Restaurant Licensing](#), found at [Chicago.gov/SBC](#);
- Copy of the new restaurant's menu; and
- [City of Chicago Sanitation Certificate](#), found at [Chicago.gov/CDPH](#)
- Lease or proof of ownership of the property.

HOW TO PURSUE AN EXPEDITED RESTAURANT LICENSE

- Review eligibility criteria above to determine whether the business premises might qualify;
 - Business licensing and inspection history is available on the [City's Data Portal](#), found at [data.cityofchicago.org](#):
 - [Business Licenses](#)
 - [Food Inspections](#)
- Review, complete, and bring the above required documents to BACP's Small Business Center, located at 121 N. LaSalle St., Room 800 to discuss with a Business Consultant. Appointments are recommended for in-person license applicants and may be made by calling 312-74-GOBIZ (744-6249).

The ERL pilot program is available until December 31, 2023.

For Additional information about the ERL pilot program, please visit [Chicago.gov/SBC](#)