



Guidelines to obtaining a **MOBILE FOOD DISPENSER** license

Please refer to the Chicago Municipal Code at www.cityofchicago.org/BACP, for the complete ordinance.

What is a Mobile Food Dispenser?

A Mobile Food Dispenser (MFD) is any person who, by traveling from place to place upon the public ways from a mobile food vehicle, serves individual portions of food that are totally enclosed in a wrapper or container and which have been manufactured, prepared or wrapped in a licensed food establishment. Such food may undergo a final preparation step immediately prior to service to a consumer in conformity with the rules and regulations of the board of health.

Mobile Food Vehicle (MFV) Defined

A motorized vehicle registered as a commercial vehicle and shall not be used for any purposes other than a mobile food dispenser or mobile food preparer business.

Application and License Fee

\$700 application fee; 2-year term.

License Application Requirements

- Complete Business Information Sheet to include applicant's full name, residence address, business address, e-mail, telephone number(s), date of birth and Social Security Number.
- Government-issued photo ID from ALL applicants, owners, and business entity controlling persons and registered agents;
- Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN), State of Illinois File Number; Illinois Department of Revenue Account ID.
- Name and address of the licensed commissary where the vehicle will be cleaned and serviced and if the vehicle will not be stored at the commissary, the name and address of the place where the vehicle will be stored when not in use.
- A retail food establishment or shared kitchen user license if the mobile food dispenser is producing food for sale.
- A certificate of commercial general liability insurance with limits of not less than \$350,000.00 per occurrence, required for applicants that will use a propane tank or natural gas in the mobile food vehicle.

Health Consultation Requirements

At time of application at the BACP, the applicant must complete a consultation with a Sanitarian from the Department of Health to review the following:

- Proposed menu including a list of all food items the applicant intends to serve.
- Blueprints (plans) of the vehicle.
- Specification sheets on equipment installed and used within the vehicle.
- Inspection report from within the last 90 days from the state or local health authority where the food source or commissary is located, if the applicant is from outside of Chicago.
- If the mobile food vehicle has a propane or natural gas system, fire suppression hood, and/or generator, then applicants must also submit a Mobile Food Vehicle (MFV) Fire Safety Permit application to the Chicago Fire Department (CFD) for approval.

Fire Safety Permit

All MFVs with a gasoline or electric generator, propane, compressed natural gas or a fire suppression hood will need a Fire Safety Permit.

FIRE SAFETY PERMIT APPLICATION

Applicants must submit a completed "MFV Fire Safety Permit Application" along with:

- A \$100.00 check or money order made payable to the "City of Chicago" for the MFV Fire Safety Permit Application Fee, and
- Any required documents. Please refer to the "MFV Fire Safety Permit Consultation Packet".



- **APPLICATIONS WITH PROPANE/NATURAL GAS SYSTEMS**

Applicants with a propane or natural gas system installed on their MFV, must register the MFV operator(s) for the required Fire Safety Class (FSC).

- A Driver's License, State ID, or another Government-issued photo ID will have to be presented before the start of the class.
- If unable to attend the FSC class that you are registered in, reschedule with BACP.

- **APPLICATIONS WITH FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM**

Applicants with a Fire Suppression System (FSS) installed on their MFV must:

- Have the COMPANY that designed/installed their vehicle's fire suppression system submit vehicle plans, on company letterhead, to the CFD at the Bureau of Fire Prevention Headquarters, 444 N. Dearborn, 2nd Floor.
- Forward a \$150.00 check, or money order, made payable to the "City of Chicago" for the FSS Plan Review.

- **ONSITE INSPECTION**

- An onsite inspection of the applicant's mobile food vehicle will be conducted with CDPH at 2133 W. Lexington, Chicago, Illinois.
- Onsite inspections will be scheduled by BACP.

- **PERMIT ISSUANCE**

A Fire Safety Permit will be issued once the following has been verified:

- The vehicle has passed the onsite inspection.
- The owner and employees (MFV operators) have attended the Fire Safety Class (FSC).
- All fees have been paid.

Inspections

- **On-Site Inspection:** After payment of the application fee, the mobile food vehicle must be made available for inspection by the Department of Health, and if applicable, the Fire Department.
- **Operational Inspections:** Like any other restaurant or food establishment, after issuance of the license, mobile food vehicles will be subject to routine sanitation inspections at the discretion of the Department of Health. Such inspections will also include a fire safety compliance evaluation if using a propane or natural gas system, fire suppression hood, and/or generator.
- At time of license renewal, all Mobile Food Vehicles are required to be inspected.

Mobile Food Vehicle Requirements

- The vehicle shall be enclosed with a top and sides; the floor, walls and ceilings shall be of smooth, not readily corrodible, impervious materials capable of withstanding repeated washing and scrubbing and shall be finished in a light color.
- The vehicle shall not be used for any purpose other than as a mobile food dispenser.
- The vehicle shall contain a hand washing sink with an adequate supply of hot and cold water; shall have a water storage tank that is self-draining and cleaned and flushed not less than twice in each six-month period; shall have liquid waste piped in fixed piping to a liquid retention tank 50 percent larger than the water storage tank, located in a separate area from the food storage or food-contact surfaces and emptied twice daily or more often if necessary an only into a sanitary drainage facility, not onto the public way; shall have adequate mechanical refrigeration equipment that shall be capable of maintaining food or drink at temperature of 40 degrees Fahrenheit or less, if any food or drink is required to be kept cold; shall have adequate mechanical heating equipment that shall be capable of maintaining food or drink at a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit or more, if any food or drink is required to be kept hot, or capable of heating food or drink to a temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit or more, if any food or drink is required to be heated.
- The vehicle shall have the business name and license number legibly painted in letters and figures at least two inches in height in a conspicuous place on each lateral side of the vehicle.
- The vehicle shall maintain a suitable, tight, non-absorbent washable receptacle for refuse. The refuse receptacle shall be adjacent to, but not an integral part of, the mobile food vehicle.



- The vehicle shall be registered as a commercial vehicle and any person who operates such vehicle must have a valid driver's license issued by the state of Illinois or another state, district or territory of the United States;
- The vehicle shall be inspected and maintained by a licensed professional, including mechanics and, if applicable, by professionals who install and maintain fire prevention equipment, and propane tanks, as often as necessary but not less than every 90 days, and copies of the last four maintenance reports must be kept in the vehicle at all times while the vehicle is in use;
- If propane is to be used in the vehicle, there shall be no more than 40 pounds of propane in the vehicle at any time. The design and maintenance of the vehicle must conform to CFD regulations as outlined in the applicant's fire safety permit.

Operational Requirements

- No food that is sold or served from a mobile food vehicle may be stored or prepared in a residential home. All operators must work in conjunction with a commissary or shared kitchen to store and prepare food. All mobile food vehicles must also be stored at a commissary, or a Department of Health approved location.
- Mobile food vehicles shall move from place to place upon the public ways and shall not be operated at a fixed location. Stops shall be made to service customers and shall not exceed a total of two hours or the maximum permitted period for parking, whichever is lesser, in anyone block.
- Hours of operation are 5AM – 2AM, unless otherwise allowed from a mobile food vehicle stand.
- Mobile food vehicles may operate from a designated food stand not to exceed a 2-hour service limit. No other mobile food vehicle may park or operate on such block of the designated stand.
- No mobile food vehicle shall park or stand such vehicle within 200 feet of any principal customer entrance to a restaurant which is located on the street level with the exception of 12AM – 2AM.
- Mobile food vehicles may operate on private property, not to exceed service limits of two hours, as long as; the property meets the applicable requirements of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, and the property owner provides written permission to utilize the property.
- Mobile food vehicles are not allowed on privately-owned vacant lots, or a lot of a vacant building.
- Mobile food vehicles must be in continual compliance with CFD regulations governing the use of a propane or natural gas system, fire suppression hood, and/or generator.
- Each mobile food vehicle must have a permanently installed GPS device which sends real-time data to any service that has a publicly-accessible application programming interface (API). Device must be fully functioning and activated while the vehicle is operational.
 - GPS TRACKING DEVICE GUIDELINES
 - An "active", NOT "passive", device that sends real-time data to a GPS tracking service provider;
 - Permanently installed in, or on, the vehicle;
 - Broadcasting GPS coordinates no less frequent than once every five (5) minutes;
 - Functioning at all times when the MFV is in operation, regardless if the engine is on or off;
 - Accurate no less than 95% of the time.
 - GPS TRACKING DEVICE SERVICE PROVIDER GUIDELINES
 - Must be able to provide, upon request of the city of Chicago:
 - Reports of each transmitted position including arrival dates, times and addresses, and duration of each stop;
 - At least six (6) months of historical information/reports, in a downloadable format (i.e. PDF, CSV or Excel);
 - An application programming interface (API) that is available to the general public.

Currently Licensed Mobile Food Dispensers

- If you ONLY sell prepackaged food that is prepared and packaged at a licensed commissary, you will not be required to apply for a new license.
- If you plan to cook food on a Mobile Food Vehicle, you will need to apply for the Mobile Food Preparer License. Food may not be prepared on the vehicle until the vehicle is inspected and the Mobile Food Preparer license is issued.



- If you use propane or natural gas, a fire safety permit is required in addition to commercial general liability insurance with limits of not less than \$350,000 per occurrence.
- Mobile Food Dispensers will be allowed to provide a “final preparation” of food prior to service to a consumer. In order to do so, you will need to complete a Health Consultation and upgrade your Mobile Food Dispenser license. Contact us at (312) 74-GOBIZ / 744-6249 to schedule an appointment.
- New operation requirements include the installation of a permanently mounted and functioning GPS device in the licensed Mobile Food Vehicle, with the ability to send real-time data to any service that has a publicly-accessible application programming interface (API). GPS devices must be in compliance by October 1, 2012.

How do I apply?

You may apply **in-person** at BACP’s Business Assistance Center, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 800.

- Application intake hours are from 8:30 AM through 3:30 PM, Monday through Friday.
- An appointment is recommended, and can be made:
 - Online at www.cityofchicago.org/bacp > Schedule An Appointment With A Business Consultant, or
 - Call (312) 74-GOBIZ / 744-6249.

