

Downtown Vending Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Thank you for your interest in vending in Downtown Buffalo. The information on these pages is intended to answer questions potential vendors often have. Please review this information as well as the Application/Information Packet and Map. If you have questions after reviewing the information you should contact W. Morgan Smith at Buffalo Place at 856-3150 or msmith@buffaloplac.com

The granting of licenses to vend in Downtown Buffalo is done by the City of Buffalo, Division of Licenses. Buffalo Place helps the City manage the vending program, but does not have issue or revoke licenses.

Q: What area is included in the Downtown Special Vending District?

A: Basically, it is Downtown south of Edward/Goodell between South Elmwood and Ellicott. The Vending District Map has the exact boundaries. Questions about vending anywhere else should be directed to the Division of Licenses, Room 313 City Hall, 851-4200

Q: Are there vending sites available?

A: Yes. The most desirable food vending sites are taken, but there are still a few sites available. (There are currently no vending sites available on or near Chippewa Street.) The Vending District Map has a listing of all sites, with occupied sites crossed out. Vendors occupying these sites are allowed to renew their licenses annually.

Q: When can I apply for a license?

A: Applicants may apply for vending sites at any time in the year. Annual Licenses expire on April 30 each year so most applications are filed in April or May. If you apply for a license more than half-way through the vending year the license fee will be discounted 50%. If more than one person applies for a site at the same time, a lottery is held to determine who will occupy the site.

Q: Can I get a license if I don't have my cart yet?

A: No. You must be prepared to start vending before you will be issued a license. Proof of application for Health Department Inspection is acceptable in place of an approved health permit, but you cannot get a license for a site in advance of purchasing your cart.

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Q: Do I have to have a cart to vend?

A: Yes. Vendors may not sell from tables, vans or trailers parked at the curb, from the ground, etc. Buffalo Place has a limited number of cart suitable for non-food merchandize available for short or long-term lease.

Q: What licenses and permits do I need?

A: In addition to a license for the vending site, anyone working at the cart needs a valid City of Buffalo Peddlers license. Food vending carts and the places where they are stored and food is prepared have to be inspected by the Erie County Health Department. A complete list of required documents is in the information/application packet.

Q: Can I vend food other than hot dogs and sausages?

A: We encourage vendors to serve a variety of foods. If you plan to serve something other hot dogs and sausages you should contact the Erie County Health Department to ensure that your food preparation plans will be approved. Contact Marilyn Tuberdyk at 961-6800.

Q: How do I find out about vending at the Italian Festival, Allentown Art Festival, Friendship Festival, etc?

A: You must contact the organizers of the individual festivals directly.

Q: Can I vend at Thursday at the Square?

A: No. Vending at Thursday at the Square is done only by supporting act sponsors of the event.

This listing is not intended to list all the rules and procedures required for vending or completing an application. Please refer to the Application/Information Package for additional information.