
City of Boston Inspectional Service Department × Harvard University DPI 663 Tech and Innovation in Government

Insights Presentation

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

March 2020

Amy / Emily / Gavin / Ian / Nico

1010
MASS
AVE

B
CITY of BOSTON

Agenda

- /1 Project Overview
- /2 Problem Statement
- /3 Research Overview
- /4 Insights
- /5 Personas
- /6 Next Steps

/1 Project Overview

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

Our Team

Harvard



Emily Chi
HKS



Ian Cutler
HKS



Nicolas Diaz
HKS



Gavin Jiao
GSD&SEAS



Amy Villaseñor
HBS

City of Boston



Kelly Mackey
ISD



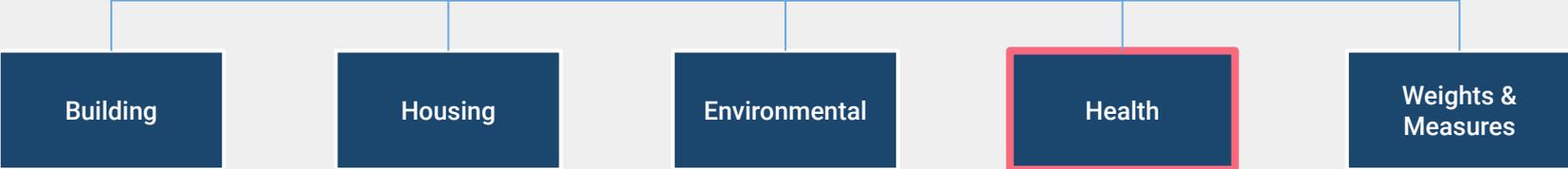
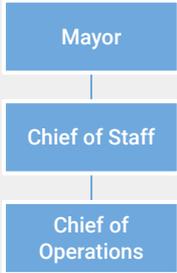
Lisa Timberlake
ISD



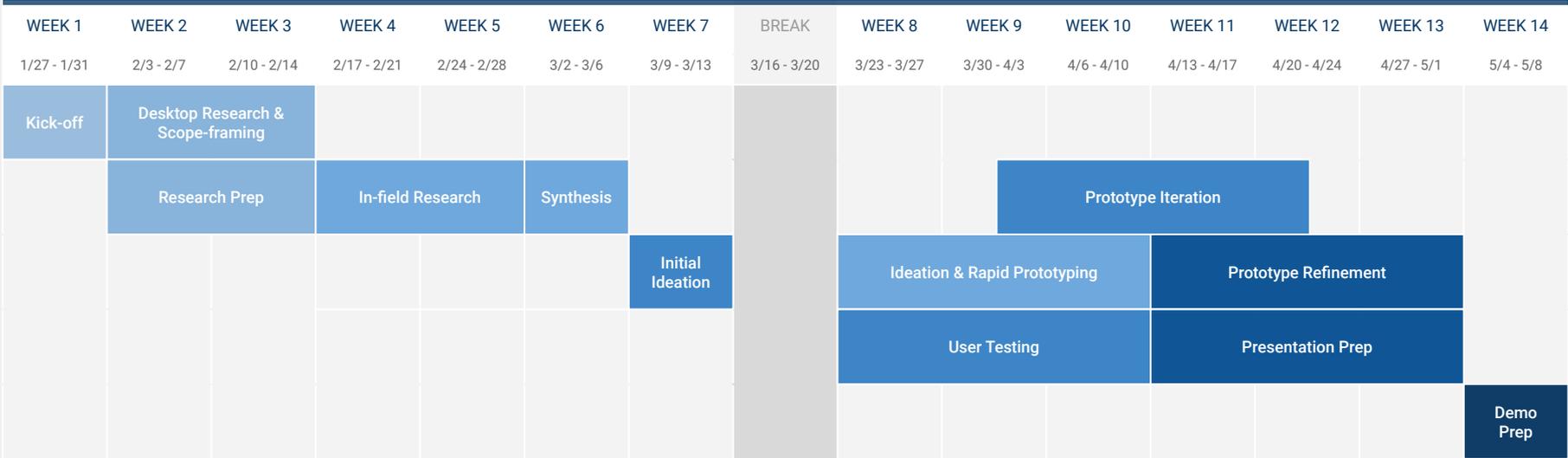
Reilly Zlab
Digital Team

Our Client: Inspectional Services Department

ISD's mission is to serve the public by protecting the **health, safety,** and **environmental stability** of Boston's business and residential communities.



Project Plan



Milestones

▲
Kick-off
Intro
1/31

▲
Where
We Are
▲
Research Insight
Presentation
3/6

▲
Demo
Day
5/8

Assignments

Blog I
Framing your design challenge

Research Plan
Interview Guide

Research Insight Deck

Blog II

Blog III

Blog IV
Practice Presentation Deck

Final Presentation Deck
Individual Reflection Paper

/2 Problem Statement

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

How can we help provide an **accessible**,
efficient, and **effective** restaurant opening
experience while ensuring compliance with
existing regulations?



/3 Research Overview

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

What we have done



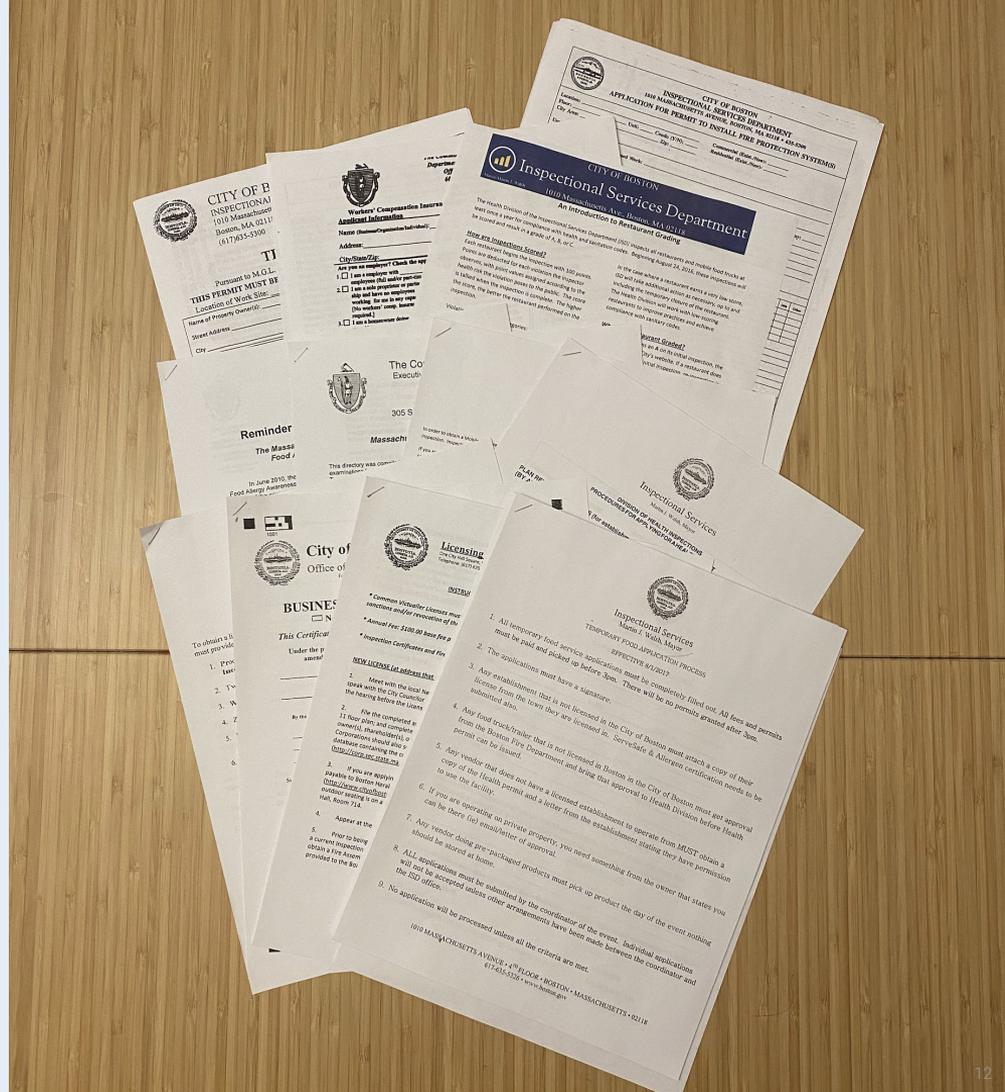
/4 Insights

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

Manual, disjointed, paper-based process is difficult for owners to navigate

"If you go in there blind, you're gonna be lost."

"You need to get a paper receipt in person for everything."



No single source of truth: conflicting information across departments & online resources

"The most frustrating part...is being passed on to different departments for a simple question and not being able to get a straight answer."

"You get bounced from one desk to another."





“Restaurant permitting process Boston”

restaurant permitting process boston

About 11,900,000 results (0.55 seconds)

www.cityofboston.gov › business › restaurants › permitting

Permitting | Restaurant Roadmap | City of Boston

Type of Permit, Associated Fees. Certificate of Occupancy ISD Building Division & BFD Fire Prevention Division, \$50. Certificate of Inspection ISD Building ...

You've visited this page 4 times. Last visit: 2/13/20

www.cityofboston.gov › business › permitguides

Small Business Permitting Guides | City of Boston

Thank you for opening a small business in our city and investing in Boston! ... This checklist describes the **restaurant-specific permitting process** in the City of ...

www.boston.gov › departments › inspectional-services › how-get-foo...

How to get a food service permit | Boston.gov

Jul 15, 2016 - If your **restaurant** is under construction, you can still start the **process** to get a food service **permit**. We need to first review your plans and then you can get the **permit**. You need to pay a fee when you apply. We take checks or money orders made payable to the City of **Boston**.

You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 2/13/20

www.boston.gov › departments › inspectional-services › health-division

Health Division | Boston.gov

Dec 16, 2019 - retail food stores; **restaurants** and caterers; daycares, hospitals, and ... Part of the **permitting process** is to get certified as a food manager.

clinics.law.harvard.edu › tlc › files › 2015/05 › boston-guide-to-resta... PDF

Boston Guide to Restaurant Permitting and Licensing

restaurant permitting process in the City of **Boston**. Inside you will find an overview of the **process**, including fees and inspection criteria. If you would like more ...

You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 2/13/20

Missing page and redirected...

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development offers a one-stop resource for all businesses in the City of Boston.

We promote policies that help businesses grow while fostering economic inclusion and equity.

The Boston Strategic Plan sets the long-term vision and provides a road map for the city's future. It is the foundation for all city policies and programs.

The Small Business Development Center in Boston offers free and low-cost assistance to help you start, grow, and succeed in business. We provide a wide range of services, including business plan development, market research, and financial counseling.

Visit us today at www.boston.gov/economic-development

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectional-services/how-get-food-service-permit>

2014 Website

Small Business Permitting Guides

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<https://www.cityofboston.gov/business/permitguide/s/>

2010 Guide on Harvard Law School Webpage

Restaurant Roadmap

Guide to Permits, Licenses & Inspections

A LETTER FROM THOMAS M. MERRIN, Mayor, City of Boston

Dear Friends,

Boston has a long history of culinary excellence, and the great food and beverage establishments are at the heart of our city's diverse and exciting neighborhoods.

Opening a restaurant is a significant undertaking. It is a labor of love that often takes years of planning and preparation. The City of Boston is committed to supporting your success in this industry and ensuring that the process is as smooth and efficient as possible. This **Restaurant Roadmap** is a comprehensive guide to the permits, licenses, and inspections you will need to get started.

From food safety and health department permits to fire and building department permits, this **Restaurant Roadmap** provides a clear path forward for your business. It is our hope that this guide will be a valuable resource for you throughout the entire process.

Thomas M. Merrin
Mayor of Boston

<http://clinics.law.harvard.edu/tlc/files/2015/05/boston-guide-to-restaurant-permitting-and-licensing-201018-165426.pdf>

Insight 03

Information asymmetry leads to difficulty communicating between owners and inspectors

"Inspectors use jargon that we sometimes don't understand, like form C-132, I have no idea what that means."

"The inspectors don't have knowledge about modern kitchens so they miss things they should be focused on but they also focus on things that don't matter anymore with updated tech."



Insight 04

Owners use assistance of lawyers and consultants to navigate the process but not everyone can afford it

"I can't imagine being a single person doing all of this because you may find out too late that you can't open because there is something you had to do that you didn't realize."

"If I could save the money and do it myself, I absolutely would. [Lawyers] charge about \$700 per hour."



Insight 05

Unpredictable delays impose a financial cost on owners

"You need to hire staff, train staff...The guessing game of understanding how much time, how many inspections, how many re-inspections – that process is incredibly difficult to navigate."



Insight 06

Inspectors are constantly switching between the role of educator, regulator, and success partner

"One person chewed me out for not knowing what a proviso is."

"They don't give a shit [about us]."

"It's not their job to be your friend, it's their job to make sure you did things properly."

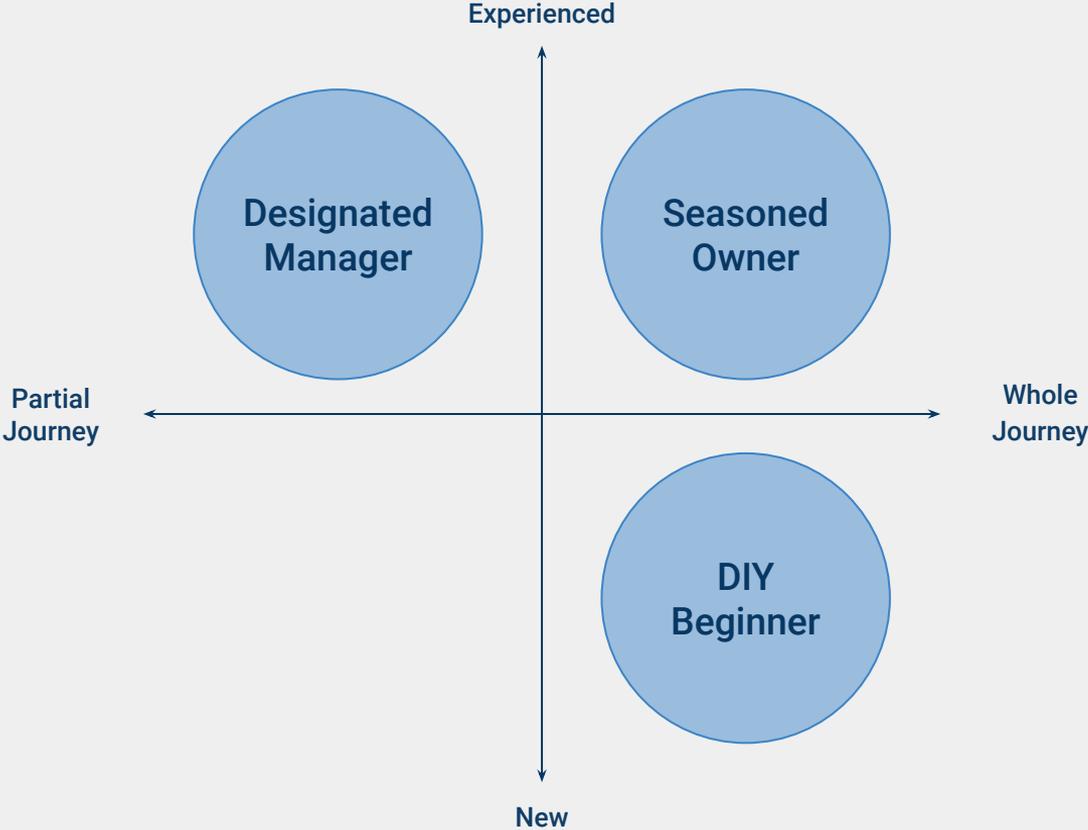
"We want owners to succeed." -- ISD Inspector



/5 Personas

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

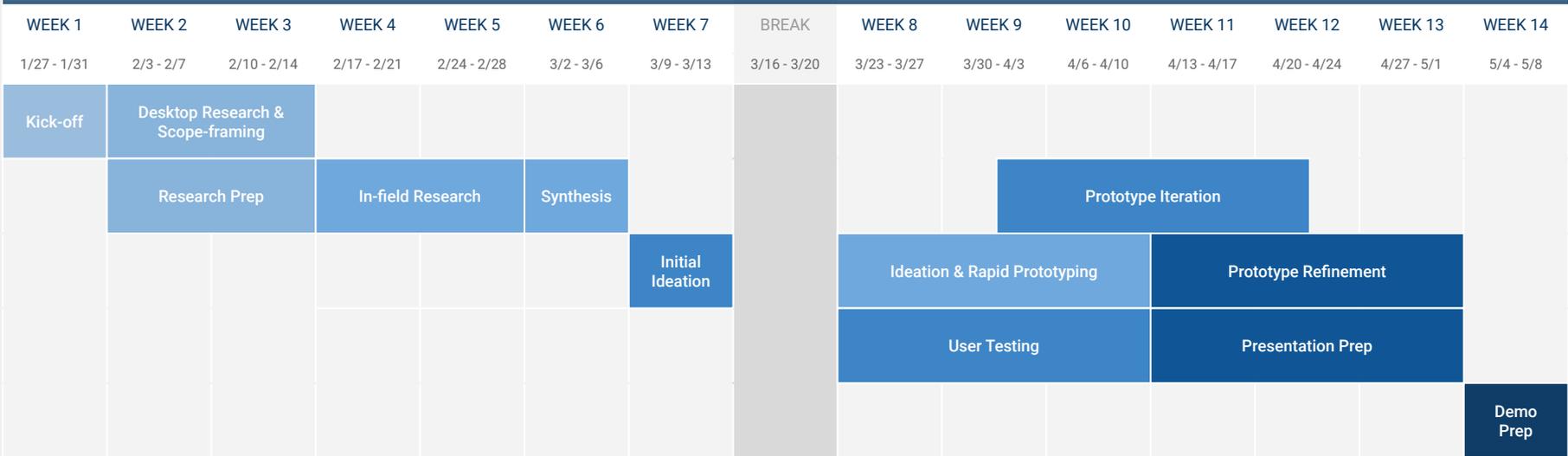
Persona Planning



/6 Next Steps

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

Project Plan



Milestones

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Thank you!

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

Appendix

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

Website Journey Map

Boston Inspectional Services Restaurant Owner Experience

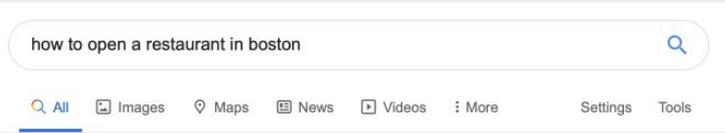
Opening a restaurant in Boston				
Phase	Finding information on how to open a new restaurant			
Step	Look for general guidance	Find out where I apply for permits	Understand Application Process	Apply
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Googled: How to open a restaurant in Boston, result: Restaurant Roadmap (redirected to Econ Development Dpt.), and Boston Guide to Restaurant Permitting (a 2010 pdf on Harvard Law School site) - Learn abt multiple permits needed - Look for info by navigating through Boston.gov - Guides > Starting a business > How to Starting a restaurant > Economic Development Dpt. (missing page) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Googled: restaurant permits Boston, clicked on second result 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read through the long list of steps under each of 1) before you get started 2) get your plans reviewed 3) get your info together 4) give us your info and get an inspection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attempted to fill out some of the forms, specifically the food service application
Touchpoint	- Boston.gov site	- ISD site	- ISD site	- ISD site
Pain-point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No direct portal for restaurant startups / entrepreneurs - Missing page for 'Start a restaurant' on 'Guide to Boston: Starting a business' - Difficult to navigate and find info via department page - No overall guidance on how to start a restaurant or what needs to be done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very long list of instructions - Not sure what other permits need need to be applied besides getting food service permit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The process is too manual and has so many touchpoints with different people at different points in time for appointments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having to print out the form to then submit them in person as well as having to request appointments for plan review
Emotion	- Confused	- Overwhelmed	- Overwhelmed and confused	- Overwhelmed
Link	https://www.boston.gov/starting-business http://clinics.law.harvard.edu/tlc/files/2015/05/boston-guide-to-restaurant-permitting-and-licensing-20101018-165426.pdf	https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectio-nal-services/how-get-food-service-permit		

Looking for information



“How to open a restaurant in Boston”

https://www.google.com/search?xsrf=ALeKk02zkeI0dTszBwKO15ym6_343WNt1A%3A1582299812196&ei=pPpXPpHDC4zL_QaCup-oDA&q=how+to+open+a+restaurant+in+boston&og=how+to+op&gs_l=psv-ab.1.0.35i39i2i0l8.157415.168156.170482...13.4.0.122.1047.5i6.....0...1.qws-wiz.....0i71i0i131i0i67i0i273i0i10.f7YBX6mLwtQ



About 299,000,000 results (0.58 seconds)

restaurant.opentable.com › news › features › open-restaurant-boston ▾

How to Open a Restaurant in... Boston - Open for Business

Feb 13, 2017 - **Boston**, in many ways, is a city that lives and dies by its traditions — whether that's in sports, schools, or even architecture. But when it comes to ...

www.cityofboston.gov › business › restaurants › permitting

Permitting | Restaurant Roadmap | City of Boston

Type of Permit, Associated Fees. Certificate of Occupancy ISD Building Division & BFD Fire Prevention Division, \$50. Certificate of Inspection ISD Building ...

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www.bostonrestaurantgroup.com › restaurant-services › opening-a-res... ▾

Opening A Restaurant | Boston Restaurant Group

Opening A Restaurant. Information to consider when drafting a Business Plan for a new restaurant opening: Print This Page. Sources of Information.

www.boston.gov › starting-business ▾

Starting a Business | Boston.gov

Jun 25, 2019 - Use the tools below to start, manage, and grow a business in **Boston**. ... Affairs and Licensing Division licenses entertainment for restaurants ...

Register a Business · Financing and Assistance · Licenses and Forms

www.bdcwire.com › why-its-so-difficult-to-open-a-bar-or-restaurant-i... ▾

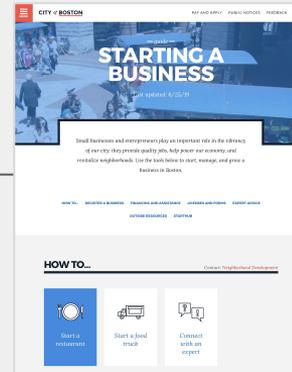
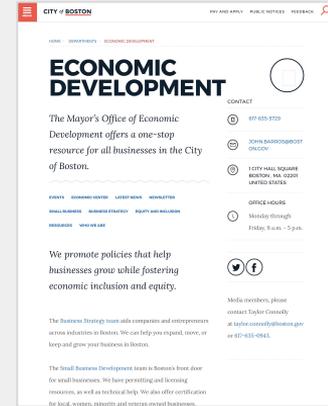
Why it's so difficult to open a bar or restaurant in Boston ...

Nov 18, 2013 - Anyone brave (or foolish) enough to try to open a bar or restaurant in Boston has to jump through a series of hoops to get the licenses and permits they need to operate legally.

boston.eater.com › country-mile-matt-sargent-restaurant-opening-pro... ▾

What It Takes to Open a Small Restaurant in Greater Boston ...

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<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>

CITY of BOSTON | Mayor Martin J. Walsh

PAY AND APPLY PUBLIC NOTICES FEEDBACK

STARTING A BUSINESS

guide
Last updated: 6/25/19

Small businesses and entrepreneurs play an important role in the vibrancy of our city: they provide quality jobs, help power our economy, and revitalize neighborhoods. Use the tools below to start, manage, and grow a business in Boston.

HOW TO... REGISTER A BUSINESS FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE LICENSES AND FORMS EXPERT ADVICE OUTSIDE RESOURCES

STARTHUB

HOW TO...

Contact: [Neighborhood Development](#)

Start a restaurant

Start a food truck

Connect with an expert

STARTING A BUSINESS

HOW TO...

REGISTER A BUSINESS FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE LICENSES AND FORMS EXPERT ADVICE OUTSIDE RESOURCES

REGISTERED A BUSINESS

It's important to register a business in Boston, and it's also to register a vehicle if you are selling, offering, or providing services to the public. The City of Boston has a number of resources to help you get started. For more information, visit [www.boston.gov/starting-business](#).

FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE

Business Development and Finance Department offers a variety of loan and grant programs to help you get started in Boston.

LICENSES AND FORMS

Check out the City of Boston's website for a list of licenses and forms you may need to start your business.

EXPERT ADVICE

Get help from experts who can provide you with the information you need to start your business.

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Check out the City of Boston's website for a list of outside resources that can help you start your business.

STARTHUB

Visit the City of Boston's website for a list of resources that can help you start your business.

DEPARTMENTS YOU MAY NEED

Check out the City of Boston's website for a list of departments you may need to contact.

<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>

CITY OF BOSTON | Mayor Martin J. Walsh | PAY AND APPLY | PUBLIC NOTICES | FEEDBACK

STARTING A BUSINESS

An initiative of City Hall

Small businesses and entrepreneurs play an important role in the vibrancy of our city; they provide quality jobs, help power our economy, and revitalize neighborhoods. Use the tools below to start, manage, and grow a business in Boston.

HOW TO... REGISTER A BUSINESS FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE LICENSES AND PERMITS SUPPORT OFFICE OTHER RESOURCES

HOW TO... [Contact: Neighborhood Development](#)

- Start a restaurant
- Start a food truck
- Connect with an expert


Start a restaurant

Page missing and redirected...

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/economic-development>

CITY OF BOSTON | PAY AND APPLY | PUBLIC NOTICES | FEEDBACK

HOME > DEPARTMENTS > ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CONTACT

617-635-5729

JOHN.BARROS@BOSTON.GOV

1 CITY HALL SQUARE
BOSTON, MA 02201
UNITED STATES

OFFICE HOURS
Monday through
Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

EVENTS ECONOMIC CENTER LATEST NEWS NEWSLETTER

SMALL BUSINESS BUSINESS STRATEGY EQUITY AND INCLUSION

RESOURCES WHO WE ARE

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development offers a one-stop resource for all businesses in the City of Boston.

We promote policies that help businesses grow while fostering economic inclusion and equity.

Media members, please contact Taylor Connolly at taylor.connolly@boston.gov or 617-635-0943.

The Business Strategy team aids companies and entrepreneurs across industries in Boston. We can help you expand, move, or keep and grow your business in Boston.

The Small Business Development team is Boston's front door for small businesses. We have permitting and licensing resources, as well as technical help. We also offer certification for local, women, minority and veteran owned businesses.

<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>

CITY of BOSTON | Mayor Martin J. Walsh | PAY AND APPLY | PUBLIC NOTICES | FEEDBACK

STARTING A BUSINESS

Small businesses and entrepreneurs play an important role in the vibrancy of our city; they provide quality jobs, help power our economy, and revitalize neighborhoods. Use the tools below to start, manage, and grow a business in Boston.

HOW TO... REGISTER A BUSINESS FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE LICENSES AND PERMITS SUPPORT OFFICE OUTSIDE RESOURCES

HOW TO...

Contact: [Neighborhood Development](#)

- Start a restaurant
- Start a food truck
- Connect with an expert


Start a food truck

*Relatively a central place
for information*

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/small-business-development/food-truck-lottery>

CITY of BOSTON | Mayor Martin J. Walsh | PAY AND APPLY | PUBLIC NOTICES | FEEDBACK

FOOD TRUCK LOTTERY

Learn the annual lottery and site selection process.

Still have questions? Contact:
SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
617-635-0355
NATALIA.URTUBEY@BOSTON.GOV
26 COURT STREET
7TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02108
UNITED STATES

HOME | DEPARTMENTS | SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT | FOOD TRUCK LOTTERY

Site Rules | Site Lotteries | Adding and Dropping Shifts

SITE RULES

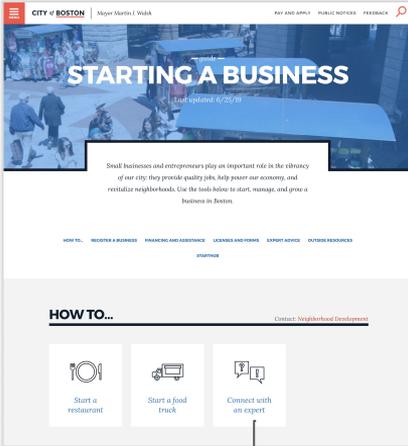
ZONE 1 SITES
Zone 1 sites are put into a lottery each year. We can't guarantee that any food truck will have a Zone 1 site for more than one year. New sites are considered Zone 2 sites for their first year.

ZONE 2 AND 3 SITES
If you want a Zone 2 or Zone 3 site that is already taken, you have to wait until the site opens up. Zone 2 and 3 sites are put into a lottery every three years. You can renew a spot for up to three years.

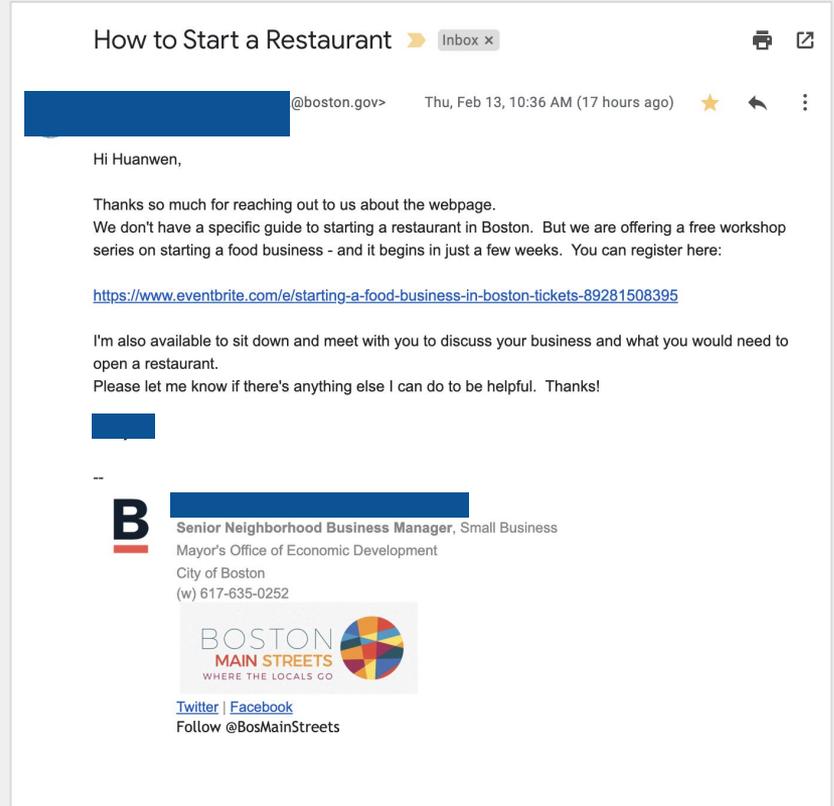
ANNUAL LIVE LOTTERY
Our annual lottery is scheduled for **February 25, 2020**.

Last updated: 1/29/20

<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>



“We don’t have a specific guide to starting a restaurant in Boston.”



<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>

CITY OF BOSTON Mayor Martin J. Walsh Starting a Business PAY AND APPLY PUBLIC NOTICES FEEDBACK

HOW TO... REGISTER A BUSINESS FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE **LICENSES AND FORMS** EXPERT ADVICE OUTSIDE RESOURCES STARTHUB

LICENSES AND FORMS

Contact: [Licensing Board](#)

WHO ISSUES LICENSES?

The Licensing Board issues and regulates licenses related to alcohol, food, and lodging in Boston.

The Consumer Affairs and Licensing Division licenses entertainment for restaurants and nightclubs.

[SEE ALL LICENSES](#)

WHERE DO APPLICATIONS GO?

You'll submit applications and any fees to the Licensing Board, the Office of Consumer Affairs and Licensing, or, if needed, the State's Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission.

Depending on the application, you might need to meet with neighborhood associations and have a hearing in front of the Licensing board.

COMMON FORMS AND APPLICATIONS.

Liquor License: For any food service establishment wanting to serve alcohol.

1-Day Liquor License: For any business or nonprofit wanting to serve alcohol at a one-day event.

Annual Live Entertainment License: For any consumer business wanting to have live music or other entertainment.

Common Victualer License: For any food service establishment wanting to cook, prepare and/or serve food.

EXPERT ADVICE

Contact: [Neighborhood Development](#)

CONNECT WITH AN EXPERT

Get answers about permitting and licensing, developing a business

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Free counseling, advice, and information on starting a small business

STARTING A BUSINESS

How to start a business in Boston, from getting a license to finding a location.

HOW TO...

101 How to Start a Business in Boston

REGISTERED A BUSINESS

How to register a business in Boston, from getting a license to finding a location.

FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE

How to get financing and assistance for your business in Boston.

LICENSES AND FORMS

How to get a license for your business in Boston.

EXPERT ADVICE

Get answers about permitting and licensing, developing a business.

OUTSIDE RESOURCES

Find a collection of useful links for your business.

STARTHUB

How to start a business in Boston, from getting a license to finding a location.

DEPARTMENTS YOU MAY NEED

Find the department you need for your business.

<https://www.boston.gov/starting-business>

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/licensing-board/common-licensing-board-forms-and-applications>

The screenshot shows the 'Licenses and Forms' page on the City of Boston website. The header includes the City of Boston logo, Mayor Martin J. Walsh's name, and navigation links for 'Starting a Business', 'PAY AND APPLY', 'PUBLIC NOTICES', and 'FEEDBACK'. A secondary navigation bar lists 'HOW TO', 'REGISTER A BUSINESS', 'FINANCING AND ASSISTANCE', 'LICENSES AND FORMS', 'EXPERT ADVICE', 'OUTSIDE RESOURCES', and 'STARTUP'. The main content area is titled 'LICENSES AND FORMS' with a contact link for the 'Licensing Board'. It is divided into three columns: 'WHO ISSUES LICENSES?', 'WHERE DO APPLICATIONS GO?', and 'COMMON FORMS AND APPLICATIONS'. Each column contains text about the relevant department and application process. A blue button labeled 'SEE ALL LICENSES' is positioned at the bottom of the content area. Below this is an 'EXPERT ADVICE' section with a contact link for 'Neighborhood Development' and two options to connect with an expert: 'U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION' and 'CONNECT WITH AN EXPERT'.

SEE ALL LICENSES

FORMS	FILING OR HEARING FEES	NUMBER OF COPIES YOU NEED
New License for any type of license with alcohol	\$100 hearing fee. We take checks or money orders made payable to the City of Boston.	2
Other forms: Corporate vote form and Criminal Record Information form	\$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order. \$200 Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission fee. You need to give the state a check or money order made payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. You can also pay online.	
Farmer Series Pouring Permit	\$100 hearing fee. We take checks or money orders made payable to the City of Boston.	2
Other forms: Corporate vote form and Criminal Record Information form	\$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order. \$200 Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission fee. You need to give the state a check or money order made payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. You can also pay online.	
Common Victualer License (brewhouse outdoor seating)	No hearing fee.	1
Common Victualer License (brewhouse outdoor seating)	\$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order.	1
Fortune Teller License	\$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order.	1
Innholder (no alcohol)	\$300 hearing fee. We take checks or money orders made payable to the City of Boston. \$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order.	1
Lodging House, Dorm, or Fraternity License	No hearing fee.	1
Pool, Stipps, Billiards, or Bowling Alley License	\$70 advertising fee. You need to give the Boston Herald a check or money order.	1

No food service permit



“Restaurant permitting process Boston”

<https://www.google.com/search?q=resaurant+permitting+process+boston&og=resaurant+permitted+process+boston&aq=chrome..69i57j33.10597j0j4&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

restaurant permitting process boston

All News Maps Images Shopping More Settings Tools

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www.cityofboston.gov › business › restaurants › permitting

Permitting | Restaurant Roadmap | City of Boston

Type of Permit, Associated Fees. Certificate of Occupancy ISD Building Division & BFD Fire Prevention Division, \$50. Certificate of Inspection ISD Building ...

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www.cityofboston.gov › business › permitguides ▾

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www.boston.gov › departments › inspectional-services › health-division ▾

Health Division | Boston.gov

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clinics.law.harvard.edu › tlc › files › 2015/05 › boston-guide-to-resta... ▾ PDF

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city of boston

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https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectional-services/how-get-foo-d-service-permit

City of Boston, gov

Small Business Permitting Guides

How to get a food service permit | Boston.gov

How to get a food service permit | Boston.gov

Restaurant Roadmap

Guide to Permits, Licenses & Inspections

A LETTER FROM THOMAS M. MENDOZA, Mayor, City of Boston

https://clinics.law.harvard.edu/tlc/files/2015/05/boston-guide-to-restaurant-permitting-and-licensing-20101018-165426.pdf

References



<http://clinics.law.harvard.edu/tlc/files/2015/05/boston-guide-to-restaurant-permitting-and-licensing-q-20101018-165426.pdf>

RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS

Completion of this checklist does not guarantee inspection approval. This information is provided to help you prepare for the necessary inspection(s) in starting your restaurant. Please contact the Office of Business Development at 617-635-0355 if you have further questions.

BUILDING INSPECTION – CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

- Emergency lights installed and functional
- Fire escapes in satisfactory condition
- Fire extinguisher tags dates current
- Commercial duct work cleaning on schedule
- Stairs properly railed
- Exits/entrances signs visible and lit
- Sprinklers functioning properly
- Fire alarm system/smoke detectors
- Egress unobstructed
- General conditions satisfactory

FIRE INSPECTION – PLACE OF ASSEMBLY PERMIT

- ISD Certificate of Inspection posted
- Place of Assembly Permit posted
- Flammability permits for all decorations, furnishings, and interior finishes
- Egress plan on site, consistent with layout of furniture
- Fire escapes clear and operable
- See the complete list of BFD requirements at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/fire/inspections/assembly.asp>.
- Door self-closers operate correctly
- Exit doors swing outward
- Exits unobstructed, lead to public way
- Good general housekeeping
- Stairwells clear with proper signage
- Alarm system inspections up to date
- Sprinkler inspections up to date

HEALTH INSPECTION – FOOD SERVICE HEALTH PERMIT

MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

- Person In Charge (PIC) assigned, knowledgeable, performing duties
- Proper, adequate handwashing
- Chemicals stored properly and safely
- Soiled linens stored in proper container
- Mops and brooms stored properly

FOOD SAFETY

- Proper food safety practices in storage, preparation, and service of food
- Proper labeling of food containers and prepackaged foods
- Coolers and/or hot holding units operating at proper temperature levels
- Thermometers available to check food product temperatures
- Food properly protected from contamination in storage, display, and preparation
- In-use food utensils properly stored
- Proper segregation of cooked and uncooked foods
- Non-food contact surfaces properly designed, maintained, installed and unwrapped foods

EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

- Three compartment sink with drainboards OR dishwashing machine operational and properly sanitizing (test kit for chemical sanitizing or proper temperature for high-temp sanitizing)
- Wash water and rinse water are clean
- Wiping cloths used for raw food stored in separate sanitizing solutions
- No waste water back up; proper backflow devices installed
- No evidence of rodents or insects
- Light fixtures above food products have protective shields properly installed
- See the entire list of health code violations at the Mayor's Food Court website at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/health/mfoc/inspection.aspx>.
- Mop sink provided
- Separate handwash sink in food preparation area
- Food contact surfaces properly designed, maintained, installed
- Non-food contact surfaces properly designed, maintained, installed
- Proper storage of pots and pans
- Adequate number of refuse containers, clean and covered
- Handwash sinks with soap, drying device
- Non-food contact surfaces properly designed, maintained, installed
- Kitchen areas properly ventilated

Revised 08/2010

RESTAURANT PERMITTING OVERVIEW

This checklist describes the restaurant-specific permitting process in the City of Boston. Additional business registration requirements are outlined in the Office of Business Development (OBD) [Small Business Resource Guide](#). Links to online applications are available at www.cityofboston.gov/permits/. For questions, please contact OBD at 617-635-0355.

CHOOSING A LOCATION – ZONING AND OCCUPANCY

- Check zoning online by searching for parcel designation on the Boston Redevelopment Authority's [searchable map](#), then check whether Restaurant, Take-out, Drive-in, or Live Entertainment uses are Allowed, Forbidden, or Conditional in the [Zoning Code](#) (by Neighborhood District in Articles 38-73).
- Check the building's existing legal use and occupancy online through the [Building Permit Search](#).
- To change the zoning or use, file a [Long Form](#) online and appeal to the [Zoning Board of Appeal](#) if it is conditional or forbidden use at that location.
- The Inspectional Services Department (ISD) offers a [Zoning Clinic](#) for zoning-related questions every Tuesday from 9am-12 noon at Plans and Zoning, Counter 2, 1010 Mass Ave., Boston, MA.

DESIGNING THE SPACE – CONSTRUCTION AND BUILDING APPROVAL

- Obtain ISD Health Division approval of restaurant design before construction or alteration. Request a Plan Review appointment at 617-635-5326, then bring a completed [Food Service Health Permit Application](#), equipment specifications, menu, and 3 copies of plans to the appointment.
- For major construction or structural changes, file a [Long Form](#) online. For minor repairs, file a [Short Form](#) online. For more information on building permit types, visit ISD's [website](#).
- The Boston Fire Department (BFD) also requires permits for construction projects. Those specifications and guidelines can be found at the BFD's [Construction Site Safety web page](#).
- Secure the appropriate building/plumbing/gas/electrical/mechanical permits through ISD's [online application system](#). Only licensed contractors may apply. Obtain all required inspections.
- [Certificate of Occupancy](#): If no existing Certificate of Occupancy or if seeking to change the occupancy/use, apply at ISD Counter 3A with signed building card and final cost breakdown. Also see the BFD's [requirements for Certificate of Occupancy](#).
- [Place of Assembly Permit](#) (*if occupancy is 50 persons or more*) is issued by the BFD.
- [Certificate of Inspection](#): Submit 3 sets of plans stamped with capacity approvals from ISD and BFD to ISD Counter 3A; await inspection.

SERVING FOOD – RESTAURANT LICENSES AND PERMITS

- [Common Venues License](#): To apply for an existing CV License, submit a completed application and fee. Applications for a new CV License require attending a scheduled hearing. After approval, bring the Certificate of Inspection and copy of the lease to pick up the CV License.
- [Food Service Health Permit](#): Submit completed application with proper fees and documentation (Certificate of Occupancy, Certificate of Inspection, [Food Safety Manager Certificate](#), Federal Tax ID, and Workers' Compensation Insurance information) to [ISD Health Division](#). Request a health inspection to check conformity to State Sanitary Code and Federal Food Code.
- [Alcoholic Beverages License](#): The number of available licenses is limited by State law; applicants must appear at a hearing to allow for neighborhood input. See the Boston Licensing Board [website](#).
- [Site Cleanliness License](#): Submit dumpster site plan, maintenance schedule, disposal contract, and rodent/pest control contract to ISD Environmental Division, 1010 Mass Ave., 4th Floor.
- [Dumpster Placement Permit](#): If larger than 3 cubic yards, file an [Annual Permit Application Form](#).

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS – ADDITIONAL PERMITS

- [Live Entertainment License](#) ([Annual Seven-Day License](#)) or [Non-Live Entertainment License](#): Available online. If live entertainment does not conform to zoning or is not listed on the Certificate of Occupancy, file a Long Form to add that use and appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeal if necessary.
- [Pool Table License](#): Applications online. For questions, contact the Boston Licensing Board.
- [Sidewalk Cafe Permit](#): Complete all [licenses](#) to apply. Also file a [License Application](#).
- [Valid Parking Permit](#): Available online. For questions, call Daniel Nuzzo at 617-635-4489.
- Clubs: Restaurants which may also be considered clubs due to their use must have the club use stated on their Certificate of Inspection and Place of Assembly Permit.
- Kitchens Exhaust Hoods and Ducts require Health Department review and BFD Certification. See the [BFD website](#) for more information on commercial hood and duct maintenance requirements.

Revised 08/2010

RESTAURANT PERMITTING FEES*

Certificate of Occupancy.....	\$50
(ISD Building Division & BFD Fire Prevention Division)	
Certificate of Inspection.....	\$37.50 + \$1 per seat (ISD Building Division)
Place of Assembly Permit (only if capacity > 50 persons).....	\$100-\$1000, by capacity (BFD Fire Prevention Division)
Common Victualer License.....	\$100 plus \$1 per seat, or \$210 for Take-Out Only (ISD Health Division)
Food Service Health Permit.....	\$200 plus fees for certain menu items (ISD Health Division)
Alcoholic Beverage License.....	\$170 Advertising Fee + \$200 Filing Fee + \$100 Hearing Fee (Licensing Board)
Site Cleanliness License.....	\$50 (ISD Environmental Division)
Dumpster Placement Permit.....	\$420 (BFD Fire Prevention Division)
Live Entertainment License.....	\$425 for instrumental/vocal music not to exceed 3 performers; or \$625-\$2025 for instrumental/vocal music > 3 performers, dancing, DJ and/or karaoke, depending on capacity; or \$1200-\$2400 for instrumental/vocal music > 3 performers, dancing, DJ and/or karaoke and floor show, by capacity (Consumer Affairs & Licensing)
Non-Live Entertainment License.....	\$105 for background music, \$145 for < 5 small TVs, (Consumer Affairs & Licensing) \$180 for > 5 small TVs, \$180 per widescreen TV, \$180 per DVD player
Pool Table License.....	\$170 Advertising Fee + \$50 Primary Fee + \$30 per pool table (Licensing Board)
Sidewalk Cafe.....	Generally \$500 - \$1200 per month (Public Works Department)
Valid Parking Permit.....	\$40 per linear foot of curb space per year + \$150 per sign for five years (BTD Off-Street Parking Division)

CONTACT INFORMATION

AGENCY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Office of Business Development	28 Court Street, 9 th Floor	617-635-0365
ISD Building, Plans & Zoning Division	1010 Mass Ave., 5 th Floor	617-635-5312
ISD Certificate of Occupancy Division	1010 Mass Ave., 5 th Floor	617-635-3223
ISD Health Division	1010 Mass Ave., 4 th Floor	617-635-5328
Boston Licensing Board	City Hall, Room 809	617-635-4170
Boston Fire Department Fire Prevention Division	1010 Mass Ave., 4 th Floor	617-342-3043
Public Works Department Permit Division	City Hall, Room 714	617-635-4910
ISD Environmental Services Division	1010 Mass Ave., 4 th Floor	617-961-3422
Transportation Department Off-Street Parking Division	43 Hawkins Street	617-635-4489
Mayor's Office of Consumer Affairs & Licensing	City Hall, Room 817	617-635-4165
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services	City Hall, Room 808	617-635-3485

*Links to all permit and license applications can be found online at www.cityofboston.gov/restaurants. Additional business registration fees apply. See the OBD's [Small Business Resource Guide](#) for more details.

Revised 08/2010

restaurant permitting process boston



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www.cityofboston.gov › business › restaurants › permitting

Permitting | Restaurant Roadmap | City of Boston

Type of Permit, Associated Fees. Certificate of Occupancy ISD Building Division & BFD Fire Prevention Division, \$50. Certificate of Inspection ISD Building ...

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www.cityofboston.gov › business › permitguides

Small Business Permitting Guides | City of Boston

Thank you for opening a small business in our city and investing in Boston! ... This checklist describes the restaurant-specific permitting process in the City of ...

www.boston.gov › departments › inspectional-services › how-get-foo...

How to get a food service permit | Boston.gov

Jul 15, 2016 - If your restaurant is under construction, you can still start the process to get a food service permit. We need to first review your plans and then you can get the permit. You need to pay a fee when you apply. We take checks or money orders made payable to the City of Boston.

You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 2/13/20

www.boston.gov › departments › inspectional-services › health-division

Health Division | Boston.gov

Dec 16, 2019 - retail food stores; restaurants and caterers; daycares, hospitals, and ... Part of the permitting process is to get certified as a food manager.

clinics.law.harvard.edu › tlc › files › 2015/05 › boston-guide-to-resta... PDF

Boston Guide to Restaurant Permitting and Licensing

restaurant permitting process in the City of Boston. Inside you will find an overview of the process, including fees and inspection criteria. If you would like more ...

You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 2/13/20

“The Health Division enforces food and sanitary laws for Inspectional Services. Learn about our team approach to protecting public health.”

Less of a voice from a partner for restaurant startups

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectional-services/health-division>

HEALTH DIVISION

The Health Division enforces food and sanitary laws for Inspectional Services. Learn about our team approach to protecting public health.

MAYORAL ADVISORY

The City of Boston Licensing Board Board of Public Health and Safety Management of the Bureau of Health

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT

FOOD SERVICE REGULATIONS AND CODES

FOOD SERVICE REGISTRY

FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

RESTAURANT PERMIT APPLICATION	FOOD SERVICE PERMIT APPLICATION	FOOD SERVICE PERMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION
FOOD SERVICE PERMIT APPLICATION	FOOD SERVICE PERMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION	FOOD SERVICE PERMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION
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<https://www.boston.gov/departments/inspectional-services/how-get-food-service-permit>

Finally something informative, however, it takes a long time to digest.

“Do I need any other permits besides the Food Service Permit?”

HOW TO GET A FOOD SERVICE PERMIT

You can apply for a permit while your business is being built, or get a permit for an existing business.

1 BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

The owner applies for a permit and get an inspection before construction begins the plan. The inspect food service (restaurant or food stand) system food safety three per year. For all businesses or an other food service or inspection.

If your restaurant is under construction, you can still start the process to get a food service permit. We need to first review your plans and then you can get the permit.

The monthly fee when you apply. The fee checks on money orders made payable to the City of Boston. Here are the permit fees:

- For plans submitted with no table seat 5000 square feet or less for 100 seats, then 15% for each seat above 100.
- For plans over 5000 sq ft and over 5000 sq ft, then 15% for each seat above 100.
- For plans over 5000 sq ft and over 5000 sq ft, then 15% for each seat above 100.
- For plans over 5000 sq ft and over 5000 sq ft, then 15% for each seat above 100.
- For plans over 5000 sq ft and over 5000 sq ft, then 15% for each seat above 100.
- For plans over 5000 sq ft and over 5000 sq ft, then 15% for each seat above 100.

2 GET YOUR PLANS REVIEWED

Please call us at 617-635-5200 to schedule an appointment to look over your plans. We will get together on several occasions, including:

- Plan (preliminary) food service permit application - manufacturer
- Plan (final) permit application
- Copy of your menu with restaurant address(es) they apply to your plan
- Building permit signed by our inspectors. You'll receive your permit application and working application in our building division and your building permit from us.

If all other your plans are reviewed and approved, the application in the Health Division to complete your plans will start. In some cases, you may need to make some minor changes and come back to us after.

3 GET YOUR INFO TOGETHER

When we make your plans, you'll need to bring several documents to our office to apply for the permit including:

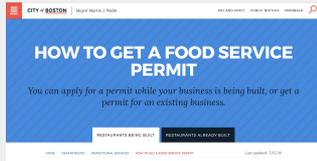
- Certificate of insurance with a list of all the required items for building Division

4 GIVE US YOUR INFO AND GET AN INSPECTION

You'll bring your completed application, documents, and payment to:

Applying for permit

<https://www.boston.gov/departments/inpectional-services/how-get-food-service-permit>



A manual process

1 BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

- You must apply for a permit and get an inspection before you can serve food to the public. We request that you schedule an inspection at least 30 days before you start serving food to the public. We will schedule an inspection for you if you do not schedule one before you start serving food to the public.

- The license fee is \$100 and the inspection fee is \$50. The total fee is \$150. There is a \$10 fee for each inspection.

- The license fee is \$100 and the inspection fee is \$50. The total fee is \$150. There is a \$10 fee for each inspection.

- The license fee is \$100 and the inspection fee is \$50. The total fee is \$150. There is a \$10 fee for each inspection.

2 GET YOUR PLANS REVIEWED

- Review all of your plans with us before you start construction. We will review your plans and provide you with a list of items that need to be corrected before you start construction.

- Your completed food service permit application must be reviewed by us before you start construction.

- A copy of your plans will be returned to you after we have reviewed them.

- If you have any questions about your plans, please contact us before you start construction.

3 GET YOUR INFO TOGETHER

- When you receive your plans, you will need to bring several documents to our office to apply for the permit.

4 GIVE US YOUR INFO AND GET AN INSPECTION

- You can bring your completed application, documents, and payment to...

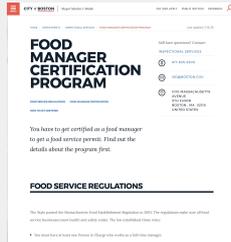
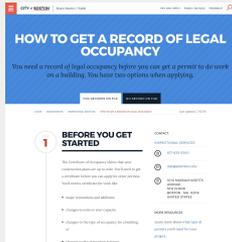


Food service permit application



Floor Plan Review Worksheet

Document size not printing friendly.



Record of Legal Occupancy

Food Manager Certificate

Victualler License

More applications