

VILLAGE OF OAK LAWN

RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT CHECKLIST

Dear Retail Food Establishment License Applicants,

Thank you for choosing Oak Lawn as a place of business. As part of Oak Lawn's ongoing efforts to improve the licensing and inspection process for our community businesses, we are pleased to offer this guide for your use and reference.

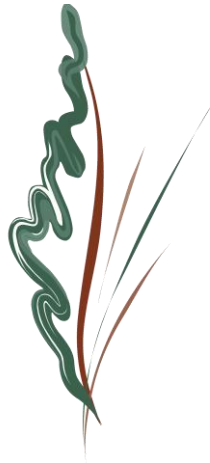
Through communication and preparedness, the Village of Oak Lawn and the licensees can work together to provide a clear, timely, and successful vehicle for the licensing and inspection progress. It also allows us both to focus on our shared goals ensuring that food served in Oak Lawn continues to meet the high safety standards that our residents have come to enjoy in our community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (708) 499-7804 or email dbrennan@oaklawn-il.gov

Sincerely,

Dan Brennan

Dan Brennan
Licensing Administrator



THE VILLAGE OF
OAK LAWN

Coordinated Village Departments

Several Village departments may have a role in the licensing of a new retail food establishment based on the overall business activities. Although each department has a distinct role, we work as a team in delivering an integrated service and licensing process to our businesses.

Licensing Division

The Licensing Division processes the license application and issues the actual license. A retail food license is tied to the Business License certificate. Village of Oak Lawn licenses are non-transferable. Each food business and each location must have its own license in order to operate. The legal name of your business, business address, square footage, Illinois Business Tax (IBT) number, ownership information and proof of a valid Food Service Sanitation Certificate is required. All retail food businesses are required to have at least one employed person on the premises at all times who holds a department of health certificate of registration in food handling and sanitation. The food course offers a basic food science background and information on the proper handling of food and maintaining a sanitary food establishment. Courses are available via the Illinois Restaurant Association www.illinoisrestaurants.org.

Building Department

The Building Department processes and issues building permits. Please remember a building permit will be required for any structural, electrical, or plumbing work of any business. Structural work includes, but is not limited to, plumbing, electrical, natural gas line, HVAC, drywall, demolition, or construction. It is important to note when seeking to open a food establishment as the site of a previous food establishment that the building and/or fire code requirements may have changed since that previous food establishment was licensed. As a new licensee, you must meet the new requirements of the building and/or fire code.

Fire Department

Oak Lawn's Fire Prevention Bureau is the department which processes and approves the fire safety aspects of any business. Fire regulations require that businesses properly post their address on all exterior doors (both front and rear). A Fire Life & Safety inspection will be required before a Business License is issued.

Village Planner

One of the responsibilities of our Village Planner is to administer the Village's zoning code. Please check to ensure that the location where you wish to operate a food establishment is properly zoned for that purpose. You may contact the Licensing Administrator to help determine what type of license is required for your proposed business activity and if there are any restrictions based on your business location.

Health Inspector

The role of our Health Inspector as it relates to retail food establishments is broad and extensive. No retail food establishment license may be granted until that establishment has successfully passed a food safety inspection. The food safety inspection focuses on food handling practices, product temperature, personal hygiene, and facility maintenance and pest control. **A menu of proposed food must be available at time of onsite inspection.** Furthermore, all licensees are subject to routine and periodic food safety inspections. A passing grade on an inspection from our licensed Health Inspector does not automatically mean that a business can immediately open to the public, conduct other non-food activities, or not be subject to other legal or licensing requirements. A business may not operate until a business license is issued by our Licensing Administrator and is properly posted on the premises.

**BEFORE YOU SCHEDULE YOUR HEALTH INSPECTION PLEASE
NOTE THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:**

1) *Have all your construction completed*

Please be sure all the walls, flooring and ceiling are installed and finished. Holes, gaps, and unsealed joint-points can contribute to potential infiltration of pests, insects, debris, dust, and contaminants and therefore pose a significant public health risk.

2) *Have all of your food equipment connected and operational*

The inspector needs to check all equipment to ensure that they are in proper working order and are operational at the proper temperature levels. Make sure thermometers are in place in all refrigerators, coolers, and freezers. If the necessary equipment is not ready for inspection it will receive a “Fail” grade. Equipment, including but not limited to, gas and electric cooking equipment, sinks, refrigeration and freezing units, cold storage units, food warming or cooling units, required lighting and required plumbing, must be operational in order to be inspected. For refrigeration, warming, and items which need time to reach to the required temperature levels, please leave yourself enough time for those items to ramp up prior to your inspection date.

3) *Have your establishment clean and clutter-free*

Cleanliness is a critical aspect of public health safety as well as the safety of patrons and workers. Dusty and/or dirty establishments and equipment do not present well for a public health inspection. Clutter is also a health and safety hazard.

4) *Have all the necessary paperwork, including your pest control and waste control contracts, compiled and readily available*

Documentation is also a critical aspect of public health safety. The inspector will need to verify that the establishment has an employee with a valid Food Service Sanitation Certificate, a contract for pest control, a contract for waste removal, a menu, and other required documents. While missing documentation may be turned in after the inspection, it may also delay the issuance of a Business License.

5) *Be Code Compliant*

The food safety provisions of the Village of Oak Lawn’s Municipal Code were enacted to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents and the visitors to our community. While not all code violations, such as not having No Smoking signs posted or a missing contract page may result in a “Fail” grade, code violations which cannot be corrected on the spot and which pose an immediate risk of food contamination or food borne illness, will result in a “Fail” grade.

6) *Be ready to take corrective action on the spot if necessary*

If a situation presents itself which may constitute a code violation, be prepared to take corrective action on the spot. If staff is needed to clean, connect, fix, or retrieve an item, have them there with you at the time of inspection. Have the numbers of your suppliers, pest control, and waste control contractors and other contractors available in the event that you need a document sent over. Be prepared and be flexible.

Please do not make the mistake of treating your initial health inspection as a consultation. If there are questions or if the applicant is not ready for an inspection, then the best course of action is to request that the inspection be rescheduled prior to your inspection date.

Below are a few of the more common reasons why applicants fail the initial inspection.

- **Not ready for Inspection**
 - Physical build-out not completed
 - Food equipment not installed and/or not operating properly
 - Cooking ventilation system not installed and/or not operating properly
- **Lack of three-compartment sink in food preparation areas for proper wash, rinse, and sanitizing of multi-purpose equipment, i.e., utensils, dishes.**
- **Lack of utility sink for housekeeping practices**
- **Lack of plumbing back-flow devices at various plumbing fixtures**
- **Lack of hot water at sinks or dishwashers**
- **Unsealed gaps in walls, joints, and piping**
- **Inadequate refrigeration** (temperature is above 40 degrees Fahrenheit in refrigerators/coolers/and above 0 degrees Fahrenheit in freezers)
- **Restrooms are not operational**
- **Lack of adequate hand washing**
- **Pest on site, not pest control log available**

We hope that you find this checklist/guide helpful in improving efficiency, timeliness and transparency of the licensing and inspection process while maintaining the high standard of public health and safety in our Village's food establishments.

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