



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON AND THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION CELEBRATE AND SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Variety of initiatives designed to encourage residents to shop local, ensure consumer protection and promote Chicago's small business community

CHICAGO –Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) emphasize the positive impact of shopping locally during the holiday season, supported by city programs and events designed to connect residents with local businesses. Small businesses are the heart of communities and by choosing to shop locally, residents and visitors can contribute to a thriving business landscape that directly benefits Chicago's communities. Additionally, BACP consumer protection efforts ensure consumers are protected and informed while making the conscious decision to shop local.

“As we approach the holiday season, I encourage everyone to shop local and support our small businesses, which drive our local economy,” said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. “Every purchase made at a local retailer is an investment in our city's future, building a better, stronger and safer Chicago.”

The holiday shopping season unofficially kicks-off during Thanksgiving weekend with dedicated days like Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, Cyber Monday and Giving Tuesday. This year, Small Business Saturday will be Saturday, November 30th, with small businesses offering a variety of exciting options to holiday shoppers. This is an opportunity to celebrate and support small businesses and all they do for our communities. In 2023, 61% of shoppers said they are likely to return to a small business they visited on Small Business Saturday, according to the 2023 Small Business Saturday Consumer Insights Survey.

“When Chicago residents and visitors shop local, there is direct investment in our communities, job growth and local economy,” said **BACP Acting Commissioner Ivan Capifali**. “BACP is proud to support our small businesses during the holiday season, and year-round. By providing essential programs and services, including business education, personalized licensing consultations and access to local organizations, we are creating a welcoming business environment where small businesses can start and grow.”

To support and celebrate the Chicago's small business community, BACP upcoming efforts include:

- **Highlighting the Shop Local Chicago campaign:** The BACP [Shop Local Chicago campaign](#) highlights the important role small businesses play in Chicago's neighborhoods. The benefits of shopping local including the shopping experience, workforce contribution

and local economy boost. Learn more about the ongoing campaign by visiting Chicago.gov/ShopLocal.

- **Hosting webinars:** On Monday, November 18 at 2:00 p.m., BACP will host a free webinar, “Holiday Success Strategies: Attracting Customers and Boosting Sales.” On Thursday, December 5 at 10:00 a.m., BACP will host a free webinar, “’Tis the Season to be Cautious.” To register for the webinars, visit Chicago.gov/BACPwebinars. Also, BACP hosted, “Crafting a Winning Holiday Marketing Campaign Strategy,” webinar that is available at YouTube.com/ChicagoBACP.
- **Promoting business service organizations:** BACP will promote holiday campaigns produced by the BACP Neighborhood Business Development Centers. The programs and events will foster community engagement and serve to boost spending along commercial corridors, spread good cheer and vibrancy throughout Chicago’s neighborhoods.

“Small Business Saturday is an incredible opportunity for our community to rally around the local businesses that bring so much character and value to our neighborhoods,” said **Nedra Sims Nears, Executive Director of Greater Chatham Initiative**. “There will be live holiday music at Mahalia’s Gift Shop while residents shop amazing gifts from over 40 Black-owned brands from Chicago and around the world.”

“The holiday season is a crucial time for our small businesses, and community support makes all the difference,” said **Christina Pecce, Business Services Manager of Greater Ravenswood Chamber of Commerce**. “We look forward to running our annual Holly Jolly Trolley on Small Business Saturday to take neighbors around our business corridors for free to help them shop local as well as inviting shoppers to participate in our winter rewards program, Unwrap Ravenswood!”

Additionally, BACP reminds businesses and consumers to be diligent about their rights and responsibilities. By arming consumers with the resources and tools they need to make informed decisions, BACP aims to foster a marketplace of fairness and accountability. The campaigns include:

- The **[BACP Be Informed. Be Protected.](#)** campaign provides consumers with tips and resources across a wide array of topics. The series of flyers are geared toward protecting consumers from fraud and informing them of the actions they can take if they have become a victim of fraud. Learn more by visiting Chicago.gov/Consumer Protection.
- The **[BACP Ride Smart Chicago](#)** campaign provides safety and consumer awareness information for passengers of taxicabs, ride-hail and other public passenger vehicles. Visit Chicago.gov/RideSmart for tips, including how to spot licensed versus unlicensed taxicabs.

For more information on BACP’s programs and services, visit Chicago.gov/BACP.

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