

2025 VENDOR APPLICATION INFO PACKET

TASTE POP-UPS IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS:
JUNE 28 MARQUETTE PARK
JULY 19 PULLMAN PARK
AUGUST 9 ALBANY PARK

IN GRANT PARK
SEPTEMBER 5-7



APPLICATION INFORMATION

This summer, Taste of Chicago will return with special events around the city, including three Taste "Pop-Up" events in neighborhoods and Chicago's favorite, re-imagined Taste of Chicago in Grant Park! Featuring a wide range of culinary choices, Taste of Chicago in Grant Park promises unique beverage experiences, live musical acts, and PLENTY of family fun! DCASE will use its reach and expertise to market your business to a broad local and national audience.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Participants must be located in the City of Chicago. Preference will be given to those participants:

- which exemplify the culinary treasures of the city and/or are a part of Chicago's exciting culinary scene
- who propose to serve unique menu items
- who represent ethnic and culinary diversity

Publicly-held, Chicago-based corporations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Applicants will be selected based on meeting the requirements listed in this application.

Taste management has the discretion to accept applications after the deadline if the participant will enhance the quality of the event.



3-DAY VENDOR INFORMATION
GRANT PARK

1-DAY VENDOR INFORMATION
TASTE POP-UPS
IN NEIGHBORHOODS

1-3 DAY FOOD TRUCK INFORMATION
GRANT PARK &
TASTE POP-UPS
IN NEIGHBORHOODS

FOOD
FUN
MUSIC
ARTS



LICENSE AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

ALL VENDORS participating in this year's Taste of Chicago Grant Park MUST OBTAIN THEIR "180 Day Special Event Food Booth or Food Truck License" from the City of Chicago's Business Affairs & Consumer Protection division by Wednesday, August 13, 2025 to be eligible to participate.

Applicants must:

- Have all necessary City of Chicago and State of Illinois operation licenses and permits
- Be listed as the d/b/a, if applicable, on their City of Chicago License
- Not have any outstanding debts with the City of Chicago or the Illinois Department of Revenue
- Not have any pending cases with the City of Chicago Liquor Commission
- Have a completed City of Chicago Economic Disclosure Statement before acceptance into Taste of Chicago
- Must be willing to obtain a Summer Festival Food Vendor Certificate

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants will be required to provide an original Certificate of Insurance evidencing the following insurance minimums for the dates of June 27–September 9, 2025:

- Workers Compensation and Employers Liability – minimum of \$500,000 \$1,000,000 each accident, illness or disease
- Commercial General Liability – minimum \$1,000,000 per occurrence. \$2,000,000 aggregate Umbrella excess Commercial General Liability
- Automobile Liability – minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence
- Property coverage (Contractor is responsible for loss or damage to city property at full replacement cost)
- Cyber Liability – minimum \$1,000,000 per occurrence*

- Certificate Holder MUST list: City of Chicago, 78 E. Washington, Chicago, IL 60602

Final acceptance is contingent on applicant naming the City of Chicago, the Chicago Park District, the Illinois Restaurant Association, their employees, agents and officials as additionally insured.

Applicants must also submit a copy of the endorsement using ISO form CG 2026 CG 2010 10 01 and CG 2037 10 01 or equivalent.

Applicant's certificate of insurance must also evidence a waiver of subrogation for any loss arising from or related to the agreement. In favor of the City of Chicago, its employees, elected officials, agents or representatives. Strike

Notwithstanding any provisions in the Agreement to the contrary, the City, Department of Finance, Risk Management Division maintains the right to modify, delete, alter or change these requirements.

SKILLS NEEDED

Taste of Chicago is looking for participants that can prove they have the ability to sustain both Taste and their home base operations. It is critical to have participants that can produce at a high volume and withstand production in an outdoor environment under very restrictive conditions.

Participants applying for Taste are expected to effectively maintain (both outdoors on event grounds and at their home bases) the highest possible standard in terms of sanitation practices, proper food handling, professionalism and personnel training. In advance of acceptance, DCASE will work closely with the Chicago Department of Public Health to analyze past health inspection reports and warnings that may provide some information in making a decision on whether to accept or reject a certain participant.

Since the majority of food preparation and cooking for Taste should take place at the participant's normal place of business, each participant will need to make sure they have the proper arrangements in place to cook, transport and store the food in compliance with standard

food sanitation practices. A careful and detailed plan and schedule should be assembled by all participants to ensure that all of the deadlines can be met pre-event. Equipment rental, refrigeration rental and commissary prep should be scheduled as soon as your business has been accepted into the event. Also, participants will need to make their suppliers aware of delivery restrictions on Taste grounds for the duration of the event.

MENU ITEMS

To best showcase your food, all menu items must be consistent with the character of your establishment, and a copy of your menu offerings is required in the application process. As you plan your menu, we encourage you to serve more "Taste of" items! You may submit a list of (2) to (6) total menu items that best represent your establishment.

There should be no more than (6) items on your menu:

- If you have (6, 5, 4 or 3) menu items, at a minimum (2) must be "Taste of" portions
- If you have (2) menu items, at a minimum (1) must be a "Taste of" portion

"Taste of" portions should not be priced higher than \$6.00.

There are no other portion/pricing requirements! Historically, many vendors have found the majority of items sold on-site are "Taste of" portions so if you would like to serve a menu of all "Taste of" portions, that would be welcomed.

IT'S UP TO YOU!



ALL SALES ARE CREDIT CARD ONLY. **There are no Taste food or beverage tickets.**

NEW: All vendors will be required to use the City's centralized POS system to manage food sales. Cash can no longer be accepted at the vendor booth. All menu prices must include sales tax and be rounded to the dollar, for example, \$4, \$5, \$6 etc. Although maximum limits for

main menu pricing will not be instituted, it's recommended that your pricing be consistent with an event which promotes "sampling" from multiple Taste vendors. The concept provides attendees with a sample of your product, not a full dinner portion. There will not be a limit on the average price per menu item. To be clear, it is perfectly acceptable to have a menu of all "Taste of" portions.

COSTS OF PARTICIPATING

The FEE to participate in Taste of Chicago Grant Park as a 3-DAY FOOD Vendor is \$2,000. 3-Day Food vendors will be invoiced for this amount upon acceptance and the fee must be paid by the due date on the invoice.

The FEE to participate in the Taste of Chicago Grant Park as a FOOD TRUCK Vendor is \$200 per day. Food Truck vendors will be invoiced for this amount upon acceptance and the fee must be paid by the due date on the invoice.

NEW: The City will retain 10% of gross sales in addition to sales tax. Vendors will receive net payment within 15 business days after the close of the 2025 Taste of Chicago.

For Taste of Chicago Neighborhood Pop-Up Events:

STIPENDS will be provided to food vendors and food trucks participating in the neighborhood Pop-Up events. DCASE will provide a \$500 stipend to food vendors participating in (1) day of Taste Neighborhood Pop-Up events. Food Truck vendors will be provided a \$100 per day stipend to participate in Taste Neighborhood Pop-Up events.

- All vendors must have their own POS and cash collection systems in place to manage food sales at these events.
- All menu item pricing is AS SHOWN. There is not to be tax or tip added on top of it.
- The City will NOT collect any commissions from your sales
- For the Taste of Chicago Neighborhood Pop-Up: DCASE will provide generators but you must supply your own propane gas, refrigerated storage, cooking equipment, and fuel.

For Taste of Chicago in Grant Park: Your vendor fee will include the regular use of propane gas, refrigerated storage rental, equipment hook-ups and repairs, fuel, electricity, and other services. Any egregious or unnecessary over use of these resources will result in an invoice being issued to the vendor.

VENDOR PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE:

- Up to a 20'x20' tent canopy (not food trucks)
- Two menu signs (not food trucks)
- Basic electrical power, (One ((1)) 40amp, 120volt circuit) per vendor
- Virtual vendor training seminars to assist you in making Taste beneficial for you and the City of Chicago
- Propane
- Ice
- Refrigerated trucking
- Up to (4) POS devices

KEY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Rules and regulations, as well as other vital information, will be discussed at the first Vendor Meeting to be held in Spring 2025. This meeting is MANDATORY for each participant's key contact person and on-site event manager. It will be hosted virtually by the Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events.

Attendance at all training seminars is MANDATORY for all key contact persons of each participant. There are no substitute or make-up sessions.

Choose your key contact person carefully as that person will need to be available at all times from the point of acceptance through the end of the Taste event.

Prior to the first Vendor Meeting, all accepted participants will receive a contract packet detailing the information and documentation due at the first Vendor meeting.

Participants and their employees must maintain the highest degree of cleanliness and professionalism in their booths and on Taste grounds at all times.

Extensive publicity and promotions are planned for this year's event. Taste vendors may be called upon to participate in pre-event promotions.

All vendors are responsible for building/installing their own booths. The appearance of the event as a "whole" is extremely important, including the design of the food booths, so please provide a

picture or a design of the booth which you plan to use for 2025.

If your establishment is selected to participate in the event and your booth does not meet the event appearance requirements, the event will provide a uniform facade and counter for use. The participant

will incur a rental set-up and take down fee. Under no circumstances will participants be allowed to use additional structures, signage, tents or booths unless reviewed and approved by event management in writing, prior to the event.

Menu prices or signs may not be altered during the event. Any alterations will result in your booth being closed down for the day.

Participants may not sell beverages of any kind at Taste of Chicago in Grant Park event. However, vendors are encouraged to sell beverages at the Neighborhood Pop-Up events. Recycling is a vital part of Taste. Use of recycled/recyclable products is highly recommended and encouraged.

READY TO APPLY?

On-line applications for this year's Taste of Chicago can be completed **HERE:**

You will also be required to submit:

- 1 - A copy of your City of Chicago Food Business License
- 2 - A copy of your State of Illinois Certificate of Registration
- 3 - A copy of your most recent City of Chicago Health Inspection
- 4 - Your establishment's menu
- 5 - A picture or rough design idea/plan for your booth space

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2025



QUESTIONS?

Neal Heitz

Taste of Chicago Program Director
 Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events
 312-744-9215

Neal.Heitz@cityofchicago.org