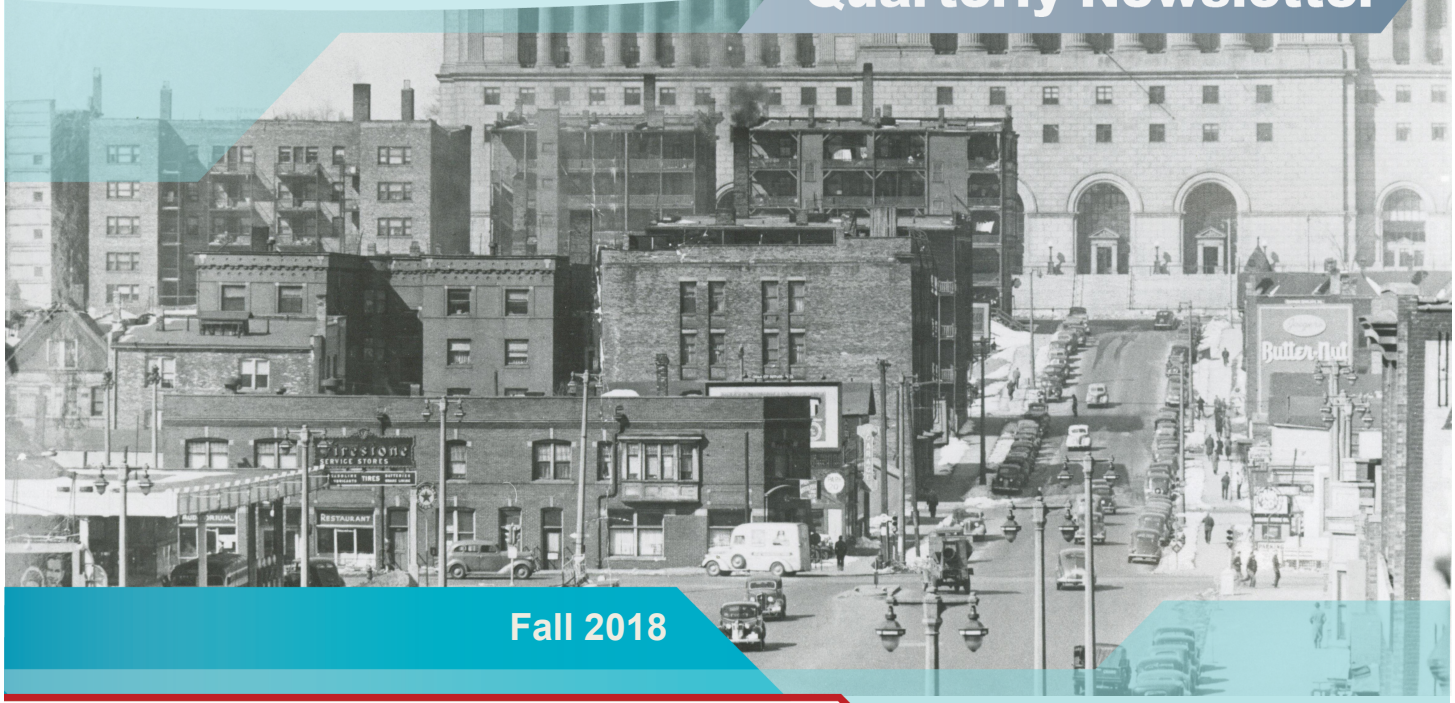
City of Milwaukee

License Division

Quarterly Newsletter



Fall 2018

From the License Division Desk

Here in the License Division, we take pride in our relationship with Milwaukee's businesses. Perhaps we aren't your first thought when you think about starting, improving or expanding your business, but our increasing array of programs and resources can be an invaluable part of your planning and preparation.

We've highlighted some of our past work in previous issues, including our Red Tape Rescue initiative, but in this issue I want to take a moment to look to the future. Specifically, I want to highlight three improvements we're hoping to launch in 2019.

First, we are in the process of updating all our applications and information sheets. In addition to a cleaner design and more concise content, we also will be launching a "quick-start guide" to help license applicants better navigate the entire licensing process.

Second, we will soon be launching a new webpage to help businesses "shop" for licenses.

Finally, we have just begun work on incorporating our licenses into the City's existing Land Management System. When complete, you will be able to apply for a license, review the status, upload documents, and pay online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

These updates will take time, but will improve your experience with the License Division. As these changes are implemented, we would – as with any of our services – appreciate your feedback.

Jessica Celella

License Division Manager

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We strive to make your experience at City Hall as quick and easy as possible.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please call 286-2238 or email license@milwaukee.gov

Who are we?

The License Division is a branch of the Common Council-City Clerk's Office. We process applications for over 100 different licenses and permits, and assist the Common Council in its deliberations regarding license matters.

The License Division can assist you with questions like: Do I need a license? What does my license allow? What is the status of my license?

More information is available on the License Division website at milwaukee.gov/license.

Tell us what you think!

We love getting feedback about this and other License Division content. Whether you have questions or suggestions, would like to contribute to a future newsletter or just feel like sending us a digital high-five, you can provide feedback using our online survey or at any of our social media pages.

Not on our mailing list?
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Need to Know

Have you ever wished you had a simplified guide to navigating the City's licensing process? In our new recurring series, we highlight 5 quick tips from various City and State departments to help your business succeed.

Five Quick Tips From: The Milwaukee Police Department

1. Practice the "3 Steps" to Success

When an incident occurs, ask yourself these 3 questions:

- What could I have done to avoid the incident?
- How did I respond to the incident?
- What have I done to avoid similar future incidents?

2. Cooperate With Law Enforcement

It is in your best interest to work with MPD. Be sure to:

- Provide security footage.
- Acknowledge mistakes & clarify misunderstandings.
- Meet in-person to discuss any issues.

3. Know the Law

Review the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances and be sure to call the License Division or MPD with any questions. Citations can be very expensive and negatively impact future issuance of your license.

4. Work With Neighbors

Every business in every location can succeed. Have a relationship with your neighbors, Council Member, and City officials. Participate in BIDs, block watches, crime and safety meetings, and other neighborhood events.

5. Be Proactive

Don't wait for a problem to occur. Take steps today to get your business operating at its best. For instance, through the MARTS program, you can sign up for mystery shoppers to see if your employees are carding.

Briefs

New and important information you need to know.

City Code Changes

- **File #180529:** In accordance with state law, creates a licensing requirement for "micro markets" and exempts vehicle tank meters and vehicle scales from the weights and measures licensing requirement.
- **File #160379:** Identifies various permits and requirements required for installation of a parklet.
- **File #170441 & File #180606:** Prohibits operation of dockless bicycle share systems and outlines local regulations for the operation of dockless motorized scooter systems.
- **File #180592 & File #180607:** Directs the Department of Public Works to conduct dockless bicycle share system and dockless motorized scooter pilot studies.

Soundbites

A Conversation With: Janice Wagner

Ever wondered how the License Division has changed over the years? We recently sat down with our License Coordinator, Janice Wagner, to discuss all things past, present, and future. Below is an excerpt of the conversation.

Editor: To begin, you've been with the License Division since 1999. Can you give us an idea of how things have changed since then?

Janice: *The biggest change I've noticed over the years has been technological. When I first started we were transposing information by hand! The internet and email have definitely made our interactions with customers both easier and faster, and I foresee things only getting better.*

Editor: Interesting. You are often in a position to hear first-hand the challenges facing existing businesses in Milwaukee. Do you find that it's gotten easier or harder for the City's established businesses over the years?

Janice: *Definitely easier. For instance, we've made it so that businesses holding several licenses can align expiration dates so they only need to file renewal paperwork once per license period. We've also tried to ease certain regulations, where appropriate. Proof of insurance now only needs to be submitted at the time of application, for example. Improvements likes these allow us to spend less time on clerical work and more time with customers.*

Editor: Looking forward now, can you provide any examples of how the License Division is continuing to improve things for our 'regular' customers?

Janice: *We have a "Process Improvement" team that meets weekly to address that very issue. We daily gather input from staff and customers, and we regularly review policies that may be making the license process unnecessarily complicated. The team has taken on such a prominent role in what we do that it's led to the creation of our Red Tape Rescue initiative.*

Currently, our team is looking at how we might consolidate certain license types, and we are re-working all of our forms and applications to make things more intuitive. I'm also happy to announce that our new license and permit webpage will soon be up and running, making it easier for businesses to find the information they need.

Editor: A lot goes into the decision to expand a business. Briefly, what advice do you have for anyone looking to take that next step?

Janice: *Do your homework. Plan ahead. Talk to other business owners, neighbors and your alderperson. Find out what city departments need to approve. Check out our online tools.*

Editor: Finally, a little fun: Give us three words that best describe you.

Janice: *Hmmm …What would my coworkers say? I think (hope) … Dependable, Expressive, and Sincere. That's what I try to convey.*

Licensing Notes

Upcoming License Committee Meetings:

- November 14
- December 4
- January 2
- January 22
- February 13

For Applicants:

Some licenses may be approved by your local Council Member, but many require a License Committee hearing. A hearing may be scheduled if there is a change to your license, an objection was filed or there was certain police activity involving your premises. Keep this in mind and plan ahead!

The License Committee generally meets every three weeks, except for the month of August, when no meetings are scheduled. In general, expect to wait 6 to 8 weeks for your license to be granted and issued.

For Community Members:

Your voice matters! Your appearance at licensing hearings is a critical factor in all licensing decisions.

If you cannot attend a hearing, but would like to communicate your support or objection to a pending license, email your local Council Member.

Upcoming Events

The schedule for our 2019 Pivot Program will be released in the coming months. In the meantime, visit Milwaukee.gov/Calendar for a list of city-wide programs and events.

Commercial property owners may also want to check out the Department of Neighborhood Services' Landlord Training Program:

- **Tuesday, November 13** & **14**
  5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  East Library, 2320 N. Cramer St.
- **Wednesday, November 28**
  1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
  Zablocki Library, 3501 W Oklahoma
- **Wednesday, December 5**
  9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
  Lake Tower, 4001 S. 6th St.

Directory

City Clerk's Office
License Division

City Hall Room 105
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Phone: (414) 286-2238
Email: license@milwaukee.gov

Common Council

(414) 286-2221

Licensing Committee

- Ald. Nic Kovac (Chair)
- Ald. Terry L. Witkowski (Vice Chair)
- Ald. Milele A. Coggs
- Ald. Cavalier Johnson
- Ald. Chantia Lewis

MPD License Investigation Unit

(414) 935-7430

Department of Neighborhood Services

(414) 286-2268

Health Department

(414) 286-3674

Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement Unit

(608) 266-2772

Dear Andy

Letters to the License Division desk.

Q **Dear Andy,**

I own a small tavern, and sporting events have always been a huge draw for our business. We like to offer specials for Packers, Brewers, Bucks, and Badgers games. I want to start holding larger promotions next year…perhaps some live music or a small tent in our parking lot. I currently have a Class "B" Tavern License. Do I need any additional licenses to get started?

Sincerely,
Alcohol You Later

A **Dear Alcohol You Later,**

Before you take a shot at holding larger events, review the activities currently allowed on your license. Pay special attention to:

- **Hours of Operation** – Businesses must stay within the hours listed on your license. You will need to apply for a Temporary Change of Plan (TCoP) permit to deviate from those hours.
- **Location of the Activity** – Again, a TCoP permit is needed if you plan to hold an activity at a location not listed on your current license. This includes parking lots and tents. You may also need permits from other City departments, especially if you intend to use the public right-of-way.
- **Type of Activity** – Your license only grants you permission to perform those activities listed on your license. For example, if you only have a food or alcohol license and would like to provide entertainment (dancing or DJs, for instance), you will need a Public Entertainment Premises (PEP) license.

Finally, it's always a good idea to reach out to your neighbors ahead of any temporary events. Be sure to keep noise at a respectable level, manage patron parking and behavior, and clean up during and after the event. Most of all, take responsibility for your customers. Don't let someone else's "pour" decision affect your ability to hold future events. I hop that helps. If you have questions, don't hesitate to contact us!

Sincerely,
Andy

Recent Disciplinary Actions

License suspensions and revocations

- **S&S Liquor:** 3200 N. 27th St. File #180271: Non-Renewal (Class A Malt & Class A Liquor Licenses)
- **VIP Lounge:** 828 S. 1st St. File #180271: 10-Day Suspension (Class B Tavern and Public Entertainment Premises Licenses)
- **Evolution MKE:** 1023-27 N. Old World Third St. File #180546: 10-Day Suspension (Class B Tavern, Food Dealer, Sidewalk Dining and Public Entertainment Premises Licenses)
- **Brothers Foods:** 966 N. 27th St. File #180546: 60-Day Suspension (Food Dealer and Weights & Measures Licenses)