

## **How to Obtain a Common Victualler (Service of Food) License in the City of Cambridge**

To operate a restaurant in the City of Cambridge you must apply for a Common Victualler License. Every establishment with the capabilities for cooking, preparing, and serving food and which provides seating for the immediate consumption therein, is required to have a Common Victualler License. Take out only establishments do not need a Common Victualler License. Markets/convenience stores that offer prepared foods and have no seating or which gross revenues from the prepared food does not exceed 10% of the annual store revenue, do not need a Common Victualler License.

Applicants may simultaneously apply for Alcohol and Entertainment.

If applying for alcohol, you must ALSO complete the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission's ("ABCC") application. The application is located at [www.mass.gov/abcc](http://www.mass.gov/abcc). Your application for an alcohol license CANNOT be considered until you complete and submit the ABCC's application and the License Commission's application. You will NOT be approved to serve/sell alcohol until you receive FINAL approval from the License Commission, ABCC, and the license is issued.

### **STEP 1:**

Go to the [Online Application Portal](#) and complete the [Common Victualler, Alcohol and/or Entertainment](#) application online. Please note you will be asked to submit supporting documentation as attachments to your application.

### **Documents you may need to complete your application:**

- Floor plan on 8 ½" X 11" size paper *only*, showing the seating/standing arrangement, proposed capacities, and layout of the premises, including location of the entertainment equipment, if any.
- Business Certificate, either:
  - Stamped Articles of Organization, if a Corporation. LLC Agreement if a Limited Liability Company. Partnership Agreement if a Partnership; or
  - A Business Certificate or D/B/A certificate from the City Clerk's Office, first floor of City Hall (617-349-4260).

If seeking an alcohol license you must also submit:

- [Criminal Record Information Form\(s\)](#) for the applicant, owner(s) of the business, and manager of the business;
- a signed lease; for all other licenses, a signed lease or a letter of intent.

### **STEP 2:**

The application will be review by License Commission staff for completeness and accuracy. Inspectional Service Department (ISD) Staff will review to confirm proper zoning. If additional information or documentation is needed, you will receive a message from the reviewing staff member.

### **STEP 3:**

Once reviewed, the applicant must submit the hearing fee (\$100), and if applicable, advertising fee (\$75).

**STEP 4:**

The applicant will receive notice of the hearing date. The notice is received via the system as well as a letter that is emailed to the applicant's email as provided in the application submitted online. The hearing date letter will provide details of any notifications the applicant has to make to abutters or any additional paperwork known to be necessary for the hearing.

**STEP 5:**

The applicant must attend the hearing, unless informed otherwise through the hearing date letter. At the hearing, testimony from the applicant, proposed manager of record and any other necessary party will be taken. Members of the public may also testify at the hearing. Persons in support or opposition to the application may have an opportunity to speak at the hearing. The Board's vote on the application will be made known to the applicant and public on the date of the initial hearing or at a future hearing. The applicant will also receive the Board's vote via correspondence with any further instructions for fulfilling outstanding requirements.

Applicants are entitled to bring legal counsel to the hearing and witnesses in support of the application.

**STEP 6:**

If the applicant is approved by the Board\* at the hearing for Common Victualer and/or Alcohol license the must then submit:

- Approval from the Building Department (this is an electronic approval through Viewpoint).
- Approval from the Health Department (this is an electronic approval through Viewpoint).
- Proof of Worker's Compensation

On Premise Alcohol license ONLY:

- Proof of Liquor Liability.

**\*License Commission approvals are only valid for six months from the decision date and you MAY NOT operate until the license is issued and posted in your premises.**

**STEP 7:**

Once you have submitted all final paperwork and/or received all final approvals, the license fee will be calculated. You may pay online via credit card or e-check (there is a processing fee set by the vendors). You can also pay at our office 831 Massachusetts Avenue via check or cash (no processing fee).

**STEP 8:**

License Issued. You may now operate. You must print the license and expose in a conspicuous place on premise.