



CAMBRIDGE LICENSE COMMISSION

831 MASSACHUSETTS AVE, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

NICOLE MURATI FERRER
CHAIRPERSON | BOARD MEMBER

BRANVILLE G. BARD, JR.
POLICE COMMISSIONER | BOARD MEMBER

GERARD E. MAHONEY
FIRE CHIEF | BOARD MEMBER

ELIZABETH Y. LINT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD VOTE REGARDING LICENSE RENEWAL FEES

DATE: September 28, 2020

RE: Changes to 2021, 2021-2022 License Renewal Fees Due to COVID-19

On September 28, 2020, the Board of License Commissioners (the "Board"), during its administrative meeting, voted by roll call for a one-time, non-precedent setting reduction in renewal fees for licenses for the year 2021 (inclusive of those that renew in the Spring of 2021) in light of the COVID-19 Pandemic and the negative effects it has had on most of our licensees. Specifically, the Board voted as follows.

(1) 40% reduction on the total license renewal fees for all license types except: Pole & Conduit, Waste Haulers, Leaf Blowers, and Flammables Only. This means there would be a 40% reduction of the renewal fee for all of the following license types: alcohol (restaurant, club, hotel, general on premises/bar), common victualler (restaurant a/k/a CV), entertainment (a/k/a ENT), innholder, lodging houses/dormitories, letting of motor vehicles, used car dealers, garages, open air parking lots, second hand good stores (antiques and junk), hawker/peddler (food trucks), jitneys, and liveries. The Board will continue to waive all fees for the renewal of taxi driver licenses and medallions as it was doing pre-COVID-19.

(2) For all alcohol licensees:

- (a) If the business is open/operating, provide the licensee the option to pay the full reduced alcohol license fee by November 30, 2020, or pay 15% of the alcohol renewal fee due by November 30, 2020 with the rest of the balance of the alcohol renewal fee due May 31, 2021,¹ the corresponding CV and ENT, if applicable, would either have to be paid in full by November 30, 2020, or the licensee could choose to pay 15% of the fee by December 11, 2020 with the remainder due on May 31, 2021.²
- (b) If the business is not open/operating, provide the licensee the option to pay the full reduced alcohol license fee by November 30, 2020, or pay 15% of the alcohol renewal fee due by November 30, 2020 with the rest of the balance of the alcohol renewal fee due May 31, 2021. The CV and ENT fees, if applicable, would not have to be paid until the business reopens at which time the total reduced fee would be prorated.³

¹ This would be a deviation from our current procedure which is that at least half of the alcohol renewal fee needs to be paid in November with the other half due in June.

² This would be a deviation from our current procedure which requires full payment of the CV and ENT fees in November/December.

³ This would require a deviation of our current process which is to only prorate fees over \$100 and for new licensees only.

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- (c) If the business does not reopen in 2021 because the phase in which we are in does not allow the business to reopen⁴, the licensee would have two options – surrender the license, or pay the full reduced alcohol renewal fee by May 31, 2021. If the alcohol license fee is not paid by May 31, 2021, the license will expire, be deemed not properly renewed, and/or be subject to cancellation/revocation pursuant to the provisions of G. L. c. 138.

(3) All businesses that do not have an alcohol license:

- (a) If the business is open/operating, provide the licensee the option to pay the full reduced license fee by December 11, 2020, or pay 15% of the renewal fee due on December 11, 2020 with the rest of the balance of the renewal fee due May 31, 2021. If a Spring renewal, provide the licensee the option to pay the full reduced license fee by April 16, 2021, or pay 15% of the renewal fee due on April 16, 2021 with the rest of the balance of the renewal fee due October 29, 2021.
- (b) If the business is not currently open/operating but is hoping to conserve the license, accept the renewal without the payment, without imposing penalties for late payments, and when they are ready to open, pro-rate the license fee by the # of months which it will operate.
- (c) If the business does not open during the calendar year for which it seeks to renew because the phase we are in does not allow the business to reopen, the licensee would have two options – surrender the license, or pay the full reduced license fee by May 31, 2021 (for Fall renewals) or by October 29, 2021 (for Spring Renewals). If the license is sought to be “renewed” regardless of it not being allowed to reopen, the renewal must be accompanied by proof of the right to occupy the space (this would ensure that businesses are not holding spaces/landlords “hostage” while they get to re-open).⁵

(4) In light of the above-mentioned recommendations, and for the limited purpose of renewals, the Board allow pro-rating of license fees as explained above.

(5) Based on health expert advice that being outdoors is better than indoors, reduce all annual patio fees for 2021 to \$25.00 for private patios and \$75.00 for public patios.

(6) Continue to suggest to the City of Cambridge absorb the credit card processing fee for the payments made through ViewPoint.

(7) The Board wants to stress that this is a one-time, non-precedent setting reduction or change in policy, procedures and processes due to the state of emergency declared by the Governor of

⁴ Please note that this would only be for businesses which are not allowed to be open. It does not account for businesses which decide not to open regardless of being allowed to do so.

⁵ We would ask that a letter from the landlord be provided in support of the renewal.

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Massachusetts pursuant to the COVID-19 Pandemic. As always, the Board will continue to the enforce and regulate all licenses pursuant to the state laws and City Ordinances.