

Outdoor Dining FAQs

Norwalk, CT



Introduction

In support of restaurants opening on or after May 20th the City is providing an expedited and streamlined process for permitting. In order to provide clear guidance on how to provide outdoor dining during the pandemic, the City of Norwalk has prepared the following FAQs for establishment's seeking to utilize outdoor dining. Applications will be completed and submitted via an online form that will be live on Monday, May 18th at 12:00 PM. No fees will be associated with your permit or submission.

If you have specific questions related to your application and permit please send an email to **Bryan Baker** at bbaker@norwalkct.org. If you have more general questions please email **Sabrina Church** at schurch@norwalkct.org.

We appreciate your support and cooperation during this time.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are permits required?

Yes, you must complete the Online Application for Temporary Outdoor Dining before you are permitted to have outdoor service. The application will be available on May 18th at 12:00 PM. This FAQ guide will assist you in preparing for your online submittal ahead of time so that you are prepared with required documentation and site plans.

2. Should I self-certify with the State Department of Community and Economic Development ahead of time?

Yes. All Phase I businesses that wish to open on or after May 20th, including those for outdoor dining, should complete their registration for the State Department of Community and Economic Development ahead of time. The self-certification form is available on the states website at: <https://service-ct.force.com/recovery/s/>. Badges must be displayed in a visible location and will be available for printing after the certification is complete.

3. Where will the online application be located?

The online application will be made available on May 18th at 12:00 PM on the COVID-19 Business Resources Page under the Outdoor Dining Section. The link is norwalkct.org/covid19businessresources.

4. What are the submittal requirements?

The submittal requirements differ for those who wish to utilize public property and those who wish to utilize private property for outdoor dining.

For private property:

1. A narrative explaining how any noise, waste management, odor, light pollution and environmental impacts will be handled.
2. Scalable, legible plan, clearly showing:
 - delineated seating area(s),
 - a minimum of 6' between tables, if seating at the table does not back into seating at another table, otherwise a minimum of 9' between tables,
 - no more than 5 seats/table
 - protective barrier,
 - any sidewalk infrastructure or obstructions, providing a minimum of 6' separation between obstructions
 - any proposed tent or canopies, provided they are less than 700 square feet and do not have side coverings. Tents larger than 700 square feet require additional approval from Building and Fire Marshall.

For public property:

1. All of the above listed information required for private property (narrative and site plan).
2. An Insurance Certificate that includes:
 - Commercial General Liability Insurance in the minimum amount of \$1.0 million per occurrence, \$2 million aggregate.
 - Naming the City of Norwalk as an Additional Insured (contact your insurance agent or broker to obtain a certificate of insurance).
 - Dates covering the length of the outdoor dining. A new certificate must be provided if the current expires prior to ceasing of the outdoor dining.
 - Worker's Compensation insurance in such amount as required by law.
 - Liquor Liability insurance in the minimum amount of \$1.0 million, if serving liquor.

5. What happens after I submit my application?

Once the submitted materials have been reviewed and deemed complete, Planning & Zoning staff will forward to the other relevant City agencies for review and approval. Once all approvals are obtained, Planning & Zoning staff will email you back the signed Temporary Permit as well as the stamped, approved Plan for display at your establishment. You must also display the DECD self-certification badge on your storefront.

6. How long will my permit be valid for once approved?

As indicated on the permit form, this approval is in effect only for the time covered by the Governor's and Mayor's respective executive orders.

7. Can I have outdoor music or performers?

No. Outdoor music of any kind is prohibited.

8. Am I allowed to cook food outdoors?

No. Outdoor cooking of any kind is prohibited.

9. Are there time constraints on when I may use my outdoor dining area?

Yes. Outdoor sales must end by 11 PM on Fridays and Saturdays and no later than 9 PM other days of the week.

Note: You are responsible for adhering to the permit conditions and ensuring social distancing requirements of the Governor's executive order are followed. The City will not hesitate to close establishments that do not adhere to these guidelines.

10. What is the fee for submitting an application?

The Mayor has waived all fees at this time.

11. Where can I locate my outdoor dining?

For establishments that have their own parking lot or open area:

You may utilize all your available parking for outdoor dining, provided you do not violate any of the standards listed above. In addition, you may also utilize any existing greenspace or open area on your property, provided a navigable 6' path is provided to entrances and restrooms or other areas utilized for patron access. For establishments with their own parking lots or open areas, you may also request to use City property, after you have exhausted all on-site opportunities or space on adjacent properties. The City will evaluate these requests on a case by case basis in order to ensure that public safety minimums are adhered to.

For establishments that wish to utilize City property:

For all other areas, outdoor dining is permissible on City sidewalks, provided the Outdoor Dining Agreement is completed and the Insurance Certificate is provided. Should any establishment outside of wish to utilize city parking spaces for outdoor seating, the City will evaluate these requests on a case by case basis in order to ensure that public safety minimums are adhered to.

The City continues to explore opportunities to expand outdoor dining on City-owned property. Additional locations and guidance will be released by early next week. The City will work directly with applicants who have previously submitted application should additional locations become available.

12. Can I have a tent and what are the rules regarding tents?

Yes, please note that tents require additional inspections by the Building Department and Fire Marshall and are subject to the following:

- Tents or canopies that do not exceed 700 square feet are permitted as-of-right. Tents greater than 700 square feet require the additional approval.
- You are responsible for ensuring tents are properly secured, especially during inclement weather.
- Tents or canopies cannot have sides and must be open to the outside.
- At no point can any portion of a tent, canopy or umbrella extend or over a city road used for vehicular access or prevent pedestrian mobility.

13. Can I serve alcohol?

Yes, provided you currently have a permit from the State of CT to serve alcohol at your establishment. Alcoholic beverages can only be served in connection with food prepared on premises; no bars, all alcoholic beverages must be served tableside.

Contact List:

Building Dpt.:	203.854.7755
Fire Marshal:	203.854.0248
Health Dpt.:	203.854.7776
Planning & Zoning:	203.854.7780
Public Works:	203.854.7792