

## When is a PPA not required?

- Establishments that provide music and dancing or other amusement and the capacity is less than 100 persons with no admission fee or minimum purchase requirements. Capacity is measured by occupancy determination.
- Banquet halls that possess a retail food license which provide events that are not open or advertised to the public with no admission fee or minimum purchase requirements, such as a wedding or birthday party.
- Orchestras of eight pieces or less without any other performer, including a singer, in a restaurant, hotel, or retail establishment with no admission fee or minimum purchase requirements.
- Health clubs, racquetball or tennis clubs or similar clubs organized on a membership basis for the recreation of its members and guests.
- Amusements presented within a private club or lodge solely for its members and its guests. A private club is a not-for-profit organization active for at least 3 years with an established membership role of at least 50 dues paying members.

## DID YOU KNOW...

- Operating without a PPA license is cause for fines of up to \$10,000 or immediate closure.
- Parties become illegal when an admission fee is collected, liquor is sold or the event is advertised or open to the public without the proper licensing.
- License fees are based on a two-year term.
- You can check the zoning classification of any location in the city online at [www.cityofchicago.org/zoning](http://www.cityofchicago.org/zoning).
- A person who has been convicted of a felony within the past 10 years is not eligible to hold a PPA license.
- Making changes to your business name, location or business ownership requires you to report those changes to the City, ask a BACP business consultant for more information.
- Businesses conducting amusement activity may be required to remit the Chicago Amusement Tax. More information is available at BACP.



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# Chicago's Guide to Entertainment, Performing Arts & Theater Licensing



City of Chicago

Public Place of Amusement License (4-156)



Chicago is one of the top rated cities in the country for its unique theatrics, live music and entertainment. That is why the City's PPA license and its different types of event licenses are designed to meet the various needs of Chicago's diverse entertainment industry. If you are looking to start a theater, host an event, or provide other entertainment, this guide will provide you with some basic information about the City's licensing requirements.

### What is a Public Place of Amusement (PPA) License?

A PPA license is required to produce, present or conduct any type of amusement. Venues charging an admission fee or accepting a donation for any type of entertainment or amusement requires a PPA license. Venues with a capacity of 100 or more people that offer any entertainment or amusement require a PPA, regardless if an admission fee is charged.

**This includes but is not limited to:**

- Live Theaters
- Movie Theaters
- Concert Halls
- Comedy Clubs
- Nightclubs or dancing
- Karaoke
- DJ's providing music
- Sports Stadiums
- Child Activity Centers
- Bowling Alleys
- Pool Halls or businesses with more than 1 pool table
- Arcades or businesses with more than 3 arcade machines
- Renting out a facility for a party or event open to the public

A complete list of activities requiring a PPA license is available in Chapter 4-156 of the Chicago Municipal Code.

**FEE: \$770–\$13,200 based on occupancy**

To get started, make an appointment with a BACP business consultant online or call **312-74-GOBIZ**. Visit [www.cityofchicago.org/bacp](http://www.cityofchicago.org/bacp) for more information.



BACP offers free monthly workshops to help you prepare for your business inspections. Visit BACP online to check out the monthly educational workshop calendar.



## OTHER RELATED AMUSEMENT LICENSES

### Indoor Special Event Class A

This license was created for temporary amusement events that are open to the public on a limited basis. The license applies to events that are offered in a venue with a gross floor area of at least 75,000 sq. ft. or a lot size of at least 2 acres. The license authorizes 30 events per year and is issued on a 2-year term for total of 60 events. The license is required if the premise does not have a Public Place of Amusement license.

FEE: \$6,000.00

### Indoor Special Event Class B

This license was created for not-for-profit organizations offering temporary amusement events that are open to the public on limited basis. It authorizes up to six, 3-day events per year and must be located in a B, C or M zoning district. The license is required if the premise does not have a Public Place of Amusement license.

FEE: \$100.00 / per day

### Performing Arts Venue License (PAV)

The PAV license was created to accommodate Chicago's smaller theaters. This license is required for any establishment providing live theatrical or other live cultural performances in a venue with a maximum capacity of 500. The maximum capacity may be up to 1000 persons if the theater is incidental to the use of a building that is primarily a church, school or other charitable organization.

FEE: \$110.00 for less than 500 seats. \$2.00 per seat for theaters with a capacity of over 500.

### Public Place of Amusement—Juice Bar License

This license is required for establishments that offer live or recorded music, dancing or music videos to minors and persons under 21. This license will not be issued to any establishment that has a liquor license and may not operate between the hours of 2:00 am-11:00 am.

FEE: \$770–\$13,200 based on occupancy

The first step in applying for a PPA license is to meet with a BACP business consultant to determine what type of license is required and if there are any restrictions based on your business location. A BACP business consultant will help guide you through the entire process.

You can make an appointment on-line at [www.cityofchicago.org/bacp](http://www.cityofchicago.org/bacp) or by calling 312-74-GOBIZ/312-744-6249.

#### THE APPLICATION:

Along with the PPA license application, the following is required: Business structure documents; IBT and FEIN tax numbers; a lease; financial disclosure detailing the source of funds used to establish the business; an occupancy placard; a detailed floor plan; and a site plan. A criminal background check is required for any person with at least 25% interest in the business or 10% financial interest.

#### ZONING REQUIREMENTS:

One of the most important things to do before investing in a business that requires a PPA license is to ensure that the zoning designation of the business location permits the activity. A new PPA license will not be issued within 125 ft. of a R1, R2, or R3 zoning district. Depending on your zoning, parking requirements may also apply for establishments over 4,000 sq. ft.

#### RESTRICTIONS:

PPA licenses are not permitted within 200 ft. of a church, school, hospital or building used exclusively for educational purposes. A BACP business consultant will check if your business location is in a restricted area.

#### INSPECTIONS:

Part of the PPA licensing process is to pass inspections to ensure the safety and welfare of the public. BACP inspectors will conduct an onsite inspection to ensure compliance with PPA regulations. Fire inspectors will check for safety measures to ensure your building is fire resistant and easy to evacuate in an emergency. Building inspectors will ensure that the structure of the building is sound for use and will conduct inspections every other year.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD SENTIMENT:

When a new application for a PPA is filed, BACP will mail a public notice within 5 days to the registered voters who reside within 250 feet of the business. The community is granted a 30-day public comment period and may object the issuance of the license. A public hearing may take place when needed.