



Street Vending Regulations in NYC

An overview

All Vendors

- May not vend (display or sell) without a license – if you do, you are subject to arrest and confiscation of your goods / pushcart which you may not ever get back, even after you pay your fine. License fees range from \$25 - \$200 per year. To apply for a license you must be a U.S. citizen or show valid work authorization.
- Must display license and tax ID at all times while vending.
- Sidewalk have a 12 foot wide clear path before you put your table/cart there. Must place your table/cart within 18 inches of curb. May not vend on any restricted street (see various lists) or your cart/ goods may be seized and forfeited.
- Table/cart may only be 8 feet long and 3 feet wide, and you may not have any boxes beside cart or poking out from underneath. You may only sell from a table or cart (not the ground)
- May not vend within 20 feet of store entrance, within 10 feet of subway entrance, or within 10 feet of crosswalk.
- Table/cart may not touch any street furniture such as phone booth, fire hydrant, tree, etc.
- May not vend if ordered not to by a police officer because of an emergency such as a parade, fire, or unusually heavy pedestrian traffic. May not block pedestrians so as to significantly impede ped. traffic.
- May not vend in any park without a special parks permit (except First Amendment vendors).
- Selling counterfeit goods is a crime which may lead to arrest and confiscation of goods.

1st Amendment Protected Vendors

- No license needed to vend books, magazines, news- papers, or art. But you must have a valid tax ID.
- Art includes painting, prints, photos, sculpture, and some crafts (but craft vendors often receive wrongful tickets).
- May not vend on any street that is restricted to both food and general vendors (unless there is a disabled veteran vendor on the block).
- Any goods seized by police must be returned to vendor, regardless of outcome of case.

Food Vendors

- In addition to a license, must also have permit for your pushcart. There is no limit on licenses, but the limited number of permits (3,000 city-wide) makes it very difficult to obtain one. Each person may have only one permit.
- May not vend on any of approx. 120 restricted streets (see list)
- Must abide by NYC Health Code regulations governing restaurants, as well as 20 special regulations for mobile food vendors. One person at cart must have taken the Health Dept. food protection course.

General Vendors

- Limit on licenses (853 city-wide) makes it nearly impossible to obtain one – except for military veterans, who are not included in the cap.
- May not vend in midtown (30th to 60th Street, 2nd Ave to 9th Ave) or in any C4, C5, or C6 zoning area.
- May not vend on any of approx 300 restricted streets (see list).
- Must display prices of goods. Must offer receipt for every purchase. May not vend on any subway grating.

Disabled Veteran Vendors

- Disabled veterans are covered by NY state law rather than city law.
- The most senior 60 disabled (“blue license”) vets are given the special privilege of vending on most streets (not avenues) in midtown. All other disabled (“yellow”) license vets may vend 1-per-block on all other streets and avenues city-wide.