



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON AND DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ANNOUNCE CUT THE TAPE FOR SMALL BUSINESS

The initiative serves to support Chicago's small business ecosystem by making it faster and easier to open and operate businesses in the city.

CHICAGO – Today, Mayor Brandon Johnson and the Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) announced Cut the Tape for Small Business, a comprehensive effort to update and streamline the City's administrative processes in service of making it faster and easier to open and operate a small business in Chicago. Cut the Tape for Small Business is designed to serve as both a strategic framework and a long-term resource for the small business ecosystem. Building on the success of Mayor Johnson's [Cut the Tape](#) initiative, which has advanced more than 100 concrete actions to streamline and expedite housing and commercial development processes, the new program is designed to uplift and empower small businesses across Chicago while building upon the Johnson administration's long-standing work to support entrepreneurs and business owners.

"There is no better way to celebrate Small Business Saturday than by directly addressing the concerns of the small business owners and entrepreneurs who help make Chicago a vibrant, nation-leading economic hub," said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "As my administration continues our work to modernize and enhance the responsiveness of City government, Cut The Tape for Small Business sets a clear direction for how we will engage, serve and partner with entrepreneurs now and into the future."

"Cut the Tape for Small Business demonstrates our dedication to the thriving small business ecosystem across Chicago," said **BACP Commissioner Ivan Capifali**. "Under the Johnson administration, BACP is aligning resources and systems to meet the real-world needs of entrepreneurs in every stage of business. The department is fully focused on being responsive and adaptive to the needs of small businesses across the city."

Cut the Tape for Small Business addresses top concerns while focusing on improving City processes and programs by reducing both cost and time burdens and barriers that small



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businesses face across our neighborhood corridors. From Englewood to Edgewater and Austin to Uptown, the goals are designed to streamline and simplify regulatory processes, enhance transparency and increase access to small business education and resources.

Cut the Tape for Small Businesses priorities:

1. Develop clear guidance for business owners to help them navigate pre-licensing City inspections to ensure clear expectations and requirements.
2. Simplify and digitize licensing and permitting processes to reduce complexity.
3. Streamline the administrative debt check process to reduce bureaucratic hurdles.
4. Develop an interactive online zoning map to provide a user-friendly overlay of business activity types allowed at specific locations.
5. Explore new regulation frameworks for emerging industries to ensure Chicago remains competitive.
6. Leverage cultural storytelling and cross-corridor marketing strategies to unlock the potential of neighborhood tourism.
7. Eliminate information silos between City departments to ensure a cohesive and supportive environment for businesses.
8. Collaborate with City Colleges of Chicago to provide in-community access to education and empowerment programs for entrepreneurs.
9. Launch a digital literacy initiative targeting under-resourced entrepreneurs, bridging the technology gap.

Cut the Tape for Small Business demonstrates a renewed commitment by the City to foster growth and promote long-term success for small businesses. BACP conducted regional roundtables with Neighborhood Business Development Centers, such as Chambers of Commerce and local economic development organizations, and local business owners to identify immediate and long-term priorities of the small business community.

For more information, visit Chicago.gov/CutTheTape.

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