



# General Vendor Licensing Law: Educational Highlights and Tips to Help Understand the Regulations

*Do you sell, lease, or offer to sell or lease goods or services, excluding food, in a public place like a street or sidewalk?*

## About the General Vendor License Law:

- There is no limit on the number of licenses issued to veterans or their surviving spouses or domestic partners. The number of licenses issued to non-veterans is limited to 853.
- General Vendors who hold the Citywide Specialized vending license (Yellow) or Midtown Core Zone vending license (Blue) can vend in certain restricted areas and have priority to locations over other vendors. These licenses are for veterans with a service-related disability. The number of Blue licenses is limited to 105. There is no limit on the number of Yellow licenses that can be issued.
- You do not need a General Vendor License to sell items covered by the First Amendment, including written materials (newspapers, periodicals, books, pamphlets) and artwork (paintings, photographs, prints, sculptures, face paintings, balloon animals). You must follow the vending regulations even if you do not need a General Vendor License.

**For your convenience, each category below includes the relevant section of law and/or rule, so you can refer to it for more information. The KEY below describes the legal citations and symbols used in this document.**

**This document does not apply to food vendors, vendors who operate in or next to any park, or shoeshine vendors.**

KEY	
<b>NYC Code:</b> NYC Administrative Code <b>RCNY:</b> Rules of the City of New York <b>§:</b> Section <b>§§:</b> Sections	
Licenses	
<b>1</b>	You must have a valid Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP, formerly Consumer Affairs) <a href="#">General Vendor</a> license.  <b>Tip:</b> Food vending requires a license from the <a href="#">Department of Health and Mental Hygiene</a> .  <b>Tip:</b> Selling merchandise at an authorized Street Fair (e.g., street fair, block party, or festival) requires a <a href="#">Temporary Street Fair Vendor Permit</a> .
<b>NYC Code §20-453</b>	
<b>2</b>	General Vendors must wear their DCWP license so it is visible to the public and enforcement officers (e.g., Sanitation Police Officers, police officers) at all times.  <b>Tip:</b> Blue and Yellow specialized license holders must wear both their General Vendor License (White) and their specialized license.
<b>6 RCNY §2-309</b>	



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<b>Location</b>	
<b>Area restricted to all vending with no exceptions</b>	
<b>3</b>	You cannot vend in the “World Trade Center Zone” below (including the border streets) in Manhattan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East border: eastern side of Broadway</li> <li>• South border: south side of Liberty Street</li> <li>• West border: west side of West Street</li> <li>• North border: north side of Vesey Street</li> </ul>
	<b>NYC Code §20-465(g)(2)</b>
<b>4</b>	You cannot vend within 10 feet of any street corners, subway entrances and exits, or driveways.
	<b>NYC Code §20-465(e)</b>
<b>5</b>	You cannot vend within 5 feet of bus shelters, newsstands, public phone or WiFi kiosks, or disabled access ramps.
	<b>NYC Code §20-465(q)</b>
<b>6</b>	You cannot vend within 20 feet of sidewalk cafés or stoop line stands.
	<b>NYC Code §20-465(q)</b>
<b>7</b>	You cannot vend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• within a bus stop or taxi stand or on the sidewalk next to a “no standing” zone that is next to a hospital</li> <li>• on a median unless the median is a pedestrian mall or plaza (has space for pedestrians to walk)</li> <li>• over any ventilation grills, subway gratings, cellar doors, transformer vaults, or manholes</li> </ul>
	<b>NYC Code §§20-465(e), 20-465(i), 20-465(m)</b>
<b>Location</b>	
<b>Areas restricted to vendors with specialized licenses and First Amendment vendors</b>	
<i>All vendors, including individuals selling First Amendment items such as written materials and artwork must follow all of the other requirements found in this document.</i>	
<i>See Page 1 for description of items covered by the First Amendment.</i>	
<b>8</b>	You must have a Blue specialized license to vend in the area below (including the border streets) in Manhattan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East border: 2nd Avenue</li> <li>• South border: 30th Street</li> <li>• West border: 9th Avenue and Columbus Avenue</li> <li>• North border: 65th Street</li> </ul>
	<b>NYC Code §20-465(g)(1)</b>



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9	<p>You must have a Blue or Yellow specialized license to vend in the area below (including the border streets) in Flushing, Queens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East border: eastern side of Union Street</li> <li>• South border: south side of Sanford Avenue</li> <li>• West border: west side of College Point Boulevard</li> <li>• North border: north side of Northern Boulevard</li> </ul>
<b>NYC Code §20-465(g)(4)</b>	
<b>Display</b>	
10	<p>You must follow these display requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your display (e.g., table, cart, stand) is no more than 8 feet long, 3 feet deep, and 5 feet tall.</li> <li>• Horizontal displays are at least 2 feet off the ground.</li> <li>• Vertical displays are at least 1 foot off the ground.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tip:</b> You cannot place items for sale directly on the sidewalk or on a blanket, board, or piece of cardboard on the sidewalk.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> You can only use the space immediately below your display to store items for sale.</p>
<b>NYC Code §§20-465(b), 20-465(n)</b>	
11	<p>You must leave at least a 12-foot-wide clear path on the sidewalk for pedestrians.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> The distance is measured from the property line to any sidewalk obstructions (e.g., bike racks, fire hydrants, street signs) or, if there are no obstructions, to the curb.</p>
<b>NYC Code §20-465(a)</b>	
12	Your cart or stand must be located next to the curb.
<b>NYC Code §20-465(a)</b>	
13	Your cart or stand and the goods you are selling must be at least 20 feet from the entrance or exit of any building.
<b>NYC Code §20-465(d)</b>	
14	Your cart/stand, vehicle, the goods you are selling, and any other items related to your vending cannot touch any buildings or structures (e.g., lampposts, parking meters, mailboxes, traffic signal posts, fire hydrants, tree boxes, benches, bus shelters, trash bins, or traffic barriers).
<b>NYC Code §20-465(c)</b>	
<b>Other</b>	
15	You cannot vend from a parked or double-parked motor vehicle.
<b>NYC Code §20-465(o)</b>	
16	<p>You cannot use electricity or electrical generating equipment or oil or gas-powered equipment, devices, or machinery.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> You cannot use any equipment on a power cord.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> You can use battery-powered equipment.</p>
<b>NYC Code §20-465(p)</b>	



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17	<p>If your cart or stand is in the roadway (e.g., in parking spaces), you must follow all traffic and parking laws.</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> You cannot vend in the roadway if there is a safety zone or within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.</p>
<b>NYC Code §20-465(f); 6 RCNY §2-304(c)</b>	
<b>Price Posting</b>	
18	<p>For all items offered for sale, you must show the price, exclusive of tax, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the individual item by a stamp, tag, or label. OR</li> <li>• On a sign that is plainly visible where the item is displayed.</li> </ul>
<b>6 RCNY §2-307(b)</b>	
<b>Receipts</b>	
19	<p>You must offer a serially numbered receipt for any item a consumer purchases. The receipt must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of purchase</li> <li>• Total amount of money and tax paid</li> <li>• Description of the item</li> <li>• Your General Vendor license number</li> <li>• A statement that complaints can be made to DCWP that includes DCWP’s address and telephone number (311)</li> </ul> <p><b>Tip:</b> You must give Sanitation Police Officers a copy of a receipt from a sale earlier in the day immediately upon request.</p>
<b>6 RCNY §2-307</b>	

For more information: **Visit** [nyc.gov/BusinessToolbox](https://nyc.gov/BusinessToolbox) | **Contact 311** (212) NEW-YORK (Outside NYC)

*This document is provided for informational purposes only, is not exhaustive, and does not constitute legal advice. New York City businesses must comply with all relevant federal, State, and City laws and rules. Businesses are responsible for knowing and complying with current regulations that affect their business.*