



FIRE DEPARTMENT • CITY OF NEW YORK
Supplement No. 53 to Department Order No. 53
April 30, 2026
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2.1.1

OUTDOOR DINING RULES & ENFORCEMENT

Roadway Café Requirements – Standard & Narrow Streets

April 1, 2026, marked the start of “Dining Out NYC” across the city. If field units suspect an Outdoor Dining location is operating outside the program’s rules, notify OutdoorDining@fdny.nyc.gov. Please include the following in your report: Location, Photos, and Description of the Issue. Special Projects Survey Task Force (SPSTF) will survey the location and refer the matter for enforcement as needed.

For a complete list of the rules relating to the program, visit: <https://rules.cityofnewyork.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/DOT-Notice-of-Adoption-DOT-Dining-Out-NYC-Rules-Accessible.pdf>

For Roadway Cafés on Narrow Streets

(Where a 15-foot emergency travel lane cannot be maintained)

- Café length is limited to **20 feet** maximum
- Multiple cafés are permitted if frontage exceeds 20 feet, provided no single café exceeds 20 feet
- Maximum width is **6.5 feet**, subject to further reduction to ensure a minimum **12-foot emergency travel lane**
- Minimum **3 feet** spacing must be maintained between cafés

For Roadway Cafés on Standard Width Streets

(Where a 15-foot emergency travel lane can be maintained, typically wider than 28’ curb-to-curb)

- Maximum allowable length for any single café is **40 feet**. A clearance of **3 feet** must be maintained between cafés, and where cafés are at the maximum length of **40 feet**, a minimum spacing of **6 feet** must be maintained between each café
- Maximum café width is **8 feet**

Clearance Requirements

No Clearance Required but Must Remain Visible:

- Gas valves
- Water valves
- Pull boxes

Minimum 1-Foot 6-inches Clearance Required From:

- Manholes
- Vent infrastructure
- Subway grates
- At-grade ventilators
- Utility vent poles

Minimum 3-Foot Clearance Required From:

- Transformer vaults

Clearance from Intersection and Crosswalks:

- From crosswalks:
 - **20 feet** on the approaching side of an intersection
 - **8 feet** on the non-approaching side
- If no crosswalk is present, maintain **20 feet** from the curb line of the intersecting street

Minimum 5-Foot Clearance Required From:

- Curb cuts
- Emergency exit hatches

Minimum 15-Foot Clearance Required From:

- Fire hydrants

Design & Installation Requirements

- Tables and chairs must be lightweight, movable, and not permanently affixed.
- Umbrellas and overhead coverings must:
 - Not exceeding **10 feet** in height
 - An umbrella or overhead covering cannot extend beyond the outer edge of the cafe
 - Be removable
 - Not be installed within **50 feet** of regulatory or safety signage
 - Acceptable materials include tensile fabric, retractable fabric, fabric panels, and rigid materials (e.g., polycarbonate or metal panels)
- Barriers shall be a maximum of 42-inches in height, not including the height of any plantings above such barrier

Electrical Connections

- Must maintain **14 feet** clearance over sidewalks
- Must maintain **18 feet** clearance over roadways or floating parking lanes

By Order of: **Lillian Bonsignore**, *Fire Commissioner*
John M. Esposito, *Chief of Department*