



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Ashwin Vasan, MD, PhD
Commissioner

Testimony

of

Corinne Schiff
Deputy Commissioner of Environmental Health
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

before the

New York City Council
Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection

on

Street Vending in NYC

December 13, 2023
New York, NY

Good afternoon Chair Velázquez and members of the Committee on Consumer and Worker Protection. I am Corinne Schiff, Deputy Commissioner for Environmental Health at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. On behalf of Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasana, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on the Health Department's oversight of mobile food vending and legislation before the Committee.

The Department's mission is to protect and promote the health of all New Yorkers, including by promoting the safety of food sold from food carts and trucks. We do this by issuing permits to operate a food cart or truck, issuing licenses to the people who vend food, providing mandated training for vendors on food protection, and conducting food safety inspections.

I want to start by providing a brief update on the Department's implementation of Local Law 18, which expanded opportunities for street food vending. Local Law 18 established a new mobile food vending license, called a supervisory license, and a new kind of permit, a supervisory license permit. The mobile food vending license authorizes a person to vend and a permit authorizes a food cart or truck to be used for vending. A food cart or truck with a supervisory license permit must be operated by a person with a supervisory license.

The Department is charged with issuing 445 applications for a supervisory license each year for 10 years as of July 2022. Supervisory license applications are issued to people on waiting lists in accordance with the local law's detailed criteria and prioritization. Vendors on the waiting lists can track their progress on the Department's new lookup tool, available on our website. Once a person has a supervisory license, they are entitled to apply for a supervisory license permit for a food cart or truck at any time; there is no deadline to apply.

We are now in year two of the program, and the Department has issued all 890 supervisory license applications that were required to be released by June 30, 2024. Of those, as of early December, 342 vendors have applied for this license, and the Department has approved all of the applications, issuing 342 supervisory licenses. 108 of the 342 new supervisory license-holders have initiated the supervisory license permit process to obtain authorization for a food cart or truck. The Department has issued 50 of these permits, and the other 58 supervisory license-holders are completing their permitting submissions. The other 234 supervisory license-holders may apply for the supervisory license permit at any time, and we are standing by, waiting for their permit applications.

Since Local Law 18 changed the license and permitting process, the Department has been conducting outreach and education to help vendors understand the new requirements. Before Local Law 18, the cap and waiting lists were for permits, and there was a deadline for a vendor called off the permit waiting list to apply. The Council's new approach under Local Law 18 sets a cap and waiting lists for the new supervisory license, rather than the permit, and there is a deadline for a vendor called off the supervisory license waiting list to apply. Once the vendor has their supervisory license, however, there is no deadline to apply for the supervisory license permit.

Turning to Introduction 1188, which would eliminate the requirement that a person applying for a mobile food vending license have a New York State certificate of taxing authority, limiting that requirement to mobile food vending permittees and supervisory licensees: this proposal will relieve burden on the industry without compromising food safety, and the Department has no concerns with the bill but would like to work with the Council on the effective date.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to take your questions.