
Legislative Review: BOS File #230861 – Police Code - Fees, Applications, and Conditions for Certain Entertainment Permits

Name: Mayor

Date Introduced: 7/25/2023

Date Referred: 8/2/2023

Scheduled for BOS Committee: Budget and Finance Committee

Legislative Intent/Overview:

This legislation amends Police Code to simplify and update the permit process for entertainment permits, which include Place of Entertainment permits, Just Add Music permits, Limited Live performance permits, etc.

Amendments to Current Law

This legislation will:

Define Just Add Music permits and waive initial license fees.

- Waive initial entertainment permit application fees for any business that held a Just Add Music (JAM) Permit during the pandemic and now seeks to continue that outdoor entertainment or amplified sound on an ongoing basis. Businesses that are getting an entertainment permit for the first time will also have their initial license fees waived.
- Waive initial license fees associated with Place of Entertainment Permits, Limited Live Performance Permits, and Fixed Place Outdoor Amplified Sound Permits prior to June 30, 2025, and provide retroactive refunds for license fees paid beginning Jan. 1, 2023.

Eliminate duplicative referrals of Place of Entertainment permits to Dept. Of Building Inspections

- Remove the requirement that applications for Place of Entertainment permits be referred to the Department of Building Inspection where a premises has held a Place of Entertainment permit within the past year. This reform would save time and money for operators seeking to acquire an existing Place of Entertainment, reducing the barriers to the retention of existing venues.

Clarifies Security Plan requirements associated with Limited Live Performance Permits

- Allows the Director or Entertainment Commission to require security plans with (or retroactively for) Limited Live Performance permits if there are concerns about safety, property, or traffic impacts.

Simplifies permit process for Billiards and Pool Tables

- Removes the requirement that Billiard and Pool Table applications be approved by the Entertainment Commission; clarifies that the Director can approve applications without a hearing unless there are complaints about the applicant on file.

Additional amendments:

- Eliminate permits specific to Masked Ball events.
- Clarify that Limited Live Performance locale includes outdoor patios and Shared Spaces.
- Clarify that the Entertainment Commission is able to inspect establishments with Entertainment permits.
- Eliminate the requirement that permit applicants provide detailed criminal history information.
- Remove outdated and unnecessary operating standards for arcades that require unnecessary staffing and infrastructure to receive a permit to operate an arcade.

Background, Issues, and Considerations

- Who benefits from or will be burdened by your proposal (geographically, ethnically, linguistically)? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
 - This legislation simplifies Entertainment permit processes, which assists small businesses, many of which are BIPOC by saving time and money. This proposal also eliminates outdated criminal background disclosure requirements, which disproportionately hinder communities of color. It also removes excess oversight on entertainment uses that were historically viewed as unsavory.
- What was the development process of this proposal? Whose input have you sought out? What feedback did you hear and did you incorporate it into this proposal? If not, why not?
 - This proposal incorporates feedback from entertainment business operators and small businesses.
- Is this proposal punitive or enforcement based? What are the other alternatives for proactive compliance?
 - This program encourages proactive compliance with City regulations by providing a fee waiver for JAM permitholders who want to transition to more permanent entertainment permits.
- Given the diversity of San Francisco, how would this policy play out in different cultural settings? How does it accommodate cultural norms?
 - This supports art, music, and nightlife uses that highlight the diversity of San Francisco.