

City of Houston Alcohol Sales Guidelines

1. City Liquor License Process

The City of Houston has updated its procedures for obtaining the **Certificate of City Secretary** required by the **Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC)** as part of its prequalification process.

2. Application Scope & Requirements

Before applying with the City, applicants must first complete the appropriate **TABC application**.

To proceed with the City's portion of the licensing process, applicants must:

- **Submit a certified survey** of the proposed alcohol-sales location.
 - The survey must be prepared by a **Texas licensed surveyor or state-licensed engineer**.
 - The survey must indicate distances from the property to nearby **schools, public hospitals, and religious institutions**.
 - The survey must be dated **within 60 days** of submitting the TABC application.
- **Submit a signed and notarized affidavit** acknowledging:
 - Awareness of the location-based restrictions for alcohol sales.
 - Understanding that violations may result in suspension or revocation of certification.

Verification & Certification:

- Once submitted, the **Administration and Regulatory Affairs (ARA) Section** will review the documents.
 - Upon approval, the City will **certify the application and provide you with certification for execution by the City Secretary**.
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3. Minimum Distance Requirements

The following minimum distance requirements must be met unless an exception is granted:

1. **300 feet from a religious institution**
 - Measured from **front door to front door**, including any public entrance leading to the sanctuary.
2. **300 feet from day care centers designated as Alcohol-Free Zones**

- **Day Care Centers Alcohol Free Zones (300 feet)**
 - 1. **Heights Preschool (2064 Oxford St.)**
 - 2. **Messiah Lutheran Early Childhood Ctr. (5103 Rose St.)**
 - 3. **300 feet from a public hospital**
 - Measured **front door to front door**.
 - 4. **300 feet from a public or private school**
 - Measured **property line to property line**.
 - 5. **1000 feet from designated Alcohol-Free Zones**
 - **School District or Private School with Alcohol-Free Zones**
 - 1. **Spring Branch Independent School District**
 - 2. **Houston Independent School District**
 - 3. **Alief Independent School District**
 - 4. **Incarnate Word Academy (609 Crawford St.)**
 - 5. **St. Mark Lutheran School (1515 Hillendahl Blvd.)**
 - 6. **SER-Nino's Charter School (5815 Alder Dr.)**
 - 7. **Aldine Independent School District**
 - 8. **St. Agnes Academy (9000 Bellaire Blvd.)**
 - 9. **Strake Jesuit College Prep. (8900 Bellaire Blvd.)**
 - 10. **St. Stephens Episcopal Sch. (1805 W. Alabama St.)**
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4. Distance Measurement Certification Checklist

To ensure compliance, use the following guidelines for measuring distances:

- **Schools:** Measured from the alcohol-sales property's boundary to the school's property line. *(Refer to the attached HISD school map.)*
 - **Religious Institutions:** Measured from the **front door or sanctuary entrance** to the proposed establishment's **front door**.
(See the attached diagram illustrating distance measurement across street intersections.)
 - **Public Hospitals:** Measured from the **hospital's front door** to the establishment's **front door**.
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6. Standard Issuance

- **No school or church within 300 ft. of applicant's location.**
 - **No school with an alcohol-free zone less than 1000 ft. away.**
- 7. Exception (Grandfather, TABC Authorized)**
- **Investigator finds a church less than 300 ft. way)**
 - **Investigator finds a public or private school less than 300 ft. away**
 - **Investigator finds a school with an alcohol-free zone less than 1000' away and the applicant is applying as a bar or liquor store.**

- **Location has an alcohol permit that has been active for longer than the school or church nearby.**

8. Temporary Issuance

- **Investigator finds a School with an Alcohol-Free Zone nearby**
- **The location is less than 1000 ft. away, but over 300 ft. away**
- **The applicant is applying for a FB Permit if applying for on-premises permit**
- **Applicant must submit affidavit every year showing that their annual revenue is less than 50% in alcohol sales**
 - 1. Grocery stores total sales must be less than 25% in alcohol sales**

Exceptions to Distance Requirements

Certain exceptions to distance requirements may be granted under City ordinances:

a. Restaurants Near Schools:

- Under **Section 3-2(g)** of the **Houston Code of Ordinances**, restaurants may be allowed to operate within 300 feet of a school.
- Requires a **binding covenant agreement** between:
 - The restaurant owner,
 - The property owner, and
 - The **City of Houston**.

To request this exception, applicants must submit:

1. A **written request** for a restaurant exception package.
 2. A copy of the **first pages** of current TABC Forms **L-IA** and **CERT**;
 3. Copies of **two letters from Administration & Regulatory Affairs (ARA)** related to the variance request.
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