City of New Haven

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Order: LM-2025-0643

File Number: LM-2025-0643

ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN TO READ AND FILE THE COMMUNICATION CALLING FOR A WORKSHOP REGARDING THE CATERING LICENSE FEE AND A "FIRST YEAR FREE" POLICY FOR NEW HAVEN FOOD BUSINESSES.

WHEREAS: the City of New Haven seeks to strengthen businesses that are seeking to launch and grow in the food business; and

WHEREAS: the City's fee includes a Food Service Establishment license application fee of $100.00 and a Food Service Establishment license catering fee of $550.00, resulting in a first-year total of $650.00 and subsequent annual renewals of $550.00 for catering licensure; and

WHEREAS: small businesses have identified the first-year cost burden associated with catering licensure as a barrier to entry for emerging food entrepreneurs; and

WHEREAS: a "First Year Free" policy for catering licenses, and related fee-structure alternatives, warrant public review and testimony to assess fiscal, administrative, compliance, equity, and public
health considerations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED by the New Haven Board of Alders that a workshop is convened to examine: (i) the City's catering license fee structure; and (ii) a proposed "First Year Free" policy for New Haven food businesses seeking a catering license: and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the workshop shall also examine: (1) the existing catering license application and annual fee structure reflected in the City's fee schedule; (2) implementation options for a "First Year Free" policy, including eligibility criteria and renewal-fee alternatives; (3) administrative feasibility, enforcement and compliance impacts, and anticipated fiscal impacts; and (4) public health and consumer protection considerations consistent with applicable state requirements; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that said workshop should include, but not be limited to, Alders, Economic Development, Health Department, Building Department, and other pertinent city departments necessary; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that as said workshop was held by the Health and Human

Services Committee on February 27, 2026, this Order and related communication be and hereby be read and filed.

This Order was Passed by the Board of Alders on 3/16/2026.

Attest, City Clerk _____ **Date** 3/01/2026

Signed, City Clerk _____ **Date** 3/25/2026

Signed, Mayor _____ **Date** 3/30/2026