



Recent Changes to Fee Waivers

On November 16, 2011, as part of the 2012 budget, the City of Chicago, by ordinance, fundamentally restructured its process for granting fee waivers. The effective date of these changes is January 1, 2012. Fee waivers that passed City Council via ordinance by December 31, 2011 and have a defined and clear expiration date or applicable project will be honored for the period or project identified in such ordinance. Any ordinance that granted a fee waiver without a defined and clear expiration date or applicable project will be viewed as expiring on December 31, 2011 and subject to the changes below. This fact sheet highlights and describes those changes in general terms. In all cases, please consult the Municipal Code of Chicago (<http://www.amlegal.com/library/il/chicago.shtml>) for a full and complete description of the applicable law.

Individual Fee Waivers

- No Alderman, city department, member of the city council or municipal officer may introduce an individual fee waiver ordinance for any one individual or entity, except in the following situations:
 - any permit requiring approval of the Commission on Historical and Cultural Landmarks;
 - neighborhood block parties within the meaning of Section 9-12-040 (does not include festivals); or
 - any governmental entity. (Section 2-8-065 of the Code)

Generally Applicable Fee Waivers

- All generally applicable fee waivers, i.e. those fee waivers that apply to all qualifying persons or entities, are detailed below and must be applied for through the appropriate department issuing the license or permit. There is no need for an Alderman to introduce a generally applicable fee waiver ordinance. If a person or entity meets the requirements identified below, then that person or entity is eligible for a fee waiver under the provisions of that specific section. If they do not meet the requirements identified below, then that person or entity is *not* eligible for a fee waiver.

Disproportionate Share Hospital and Public Museum Fee Waivers (Section 1-23-300 of the Code)

- Not-for-profit hospitals that qualify for a disproportionate share adjustment as defined by the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (“DSH hospitals”) and public museums that are eligible to receive capital funds for capital development under the Department of Natural Resources Act (“DNR museums”) are exempt from payment of 20% of any license or permit-related fee, except for water and sewer fees (which are discussed below) and fees incurred in connection with the Department of Buildings’ Developer Services Program.

Water and Sewer Exemptions (Sections 11-12-540 and 3-12-020 of the Code)

- No water or sewer exemption will be given unless the property is controlled by a water meter.



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- Property of the State of Illinois that is used as an armory by the state or federalized National Guard is exempt from payment of 100% of the water service charges and the first \$500 of the sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- Property owned, leased or occupied by the City of Chicago is exempt from payment of 100% of the water and sewer service charges.
- Property owned, leased or occupied by the Chicago Public Schools is exempt from payment of 100% of the water and sewer service charges.
- Property owned, leased or occupied by the City Colleges of Chicago is exempt from payment of 100% of the water service charges and the first \$500 of the sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- Cook County hospitals (John H. Stroger Jr. and Provident Hospitals) are exempt from payment of 100% of the water service charges and the first \$500 of the sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- Other “DSH hospitals” are exempt from payment of 60% of the water service charges in 2012, 40% in 2013 and 20% in 2014 and thereafter; and the first \$500 of the sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- “DNR museums” are exempt from payment of 20% of the water service charges in 2012 and thereafter; and the first \$500 of the sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- If an eligible not-for-profit organization applied for and received a charitable exemption from payment of any portion of its water service charges in 2011 and its net assets or fund balances do not exceed \$250 million or more in the previous year, such not-for-profit is exempt from payment of 60% of its water service charges in 2012, 40% in 2013, and 20% in 2014 and thereafter; and the first \$500.00 of its sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- If an eligible not-for-profit organization had not applied for or received such a charitable exemption in 2011 and its net assets or fund balances do not exceed \$250 million or more in the previous year, such not-for-profit is exempt from payment of 20% of its water service charges in 2012 and thereafter; and the first \$500 of its sewer service charges per semi-annual billing period.
- Except as stipulated above, there is no exemption from water and sewer service charges for any not-for-profit organization with net assets or fund balances of \$250 million or more in the previous year.

Other Generally Applicable Fee Waivers

- Day Care Center License Fee. Day care centers operated without charge are eligible for a 100% fee waiver. (Section 4-72-040 of the Code).



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- Hospital License Fee. “DSH hospitals” are eligible for a 20% fee waiver (Section 4-84-060 of the Code).
- Annual Driveway Permit Fee. Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago are eligible for a 100% fee waiver after payment of the 1st year’s permit fee. (Section 10-20-420 of the Code)
- Building Registration Fee. Governmental agencies, Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago are eligible for a 100% fee waiver. (Section 13-10-040 of the Code)
- Vacant Building Registration Fee. Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago are eligible for a 100% fee waiver. (Section 13-12-125 of the Code)
- Annual Building Inspection Fee. Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago are eligible for a 100% fee waiver; “DSH hospitals” and dispensaries or homes operated without a charge to patients and “DNR museums” are eligible for a 20% fee waiver for premises used, owned or occupied exclusively by such entity. (Section 13-20-060 of the Code)
- Building Permit Fee. Existing fee waivers remain unchanged for qualifying senior citizens, vegetated roofs and permits issued in connection with the Chicago Green Permit Program. “DNR museums” and “DSH hospitals” are eligible for a 20% fee waiver, except for fees incurred in connection with the Developer Services Program. (Section 13-32-301 of the Code)
- Sprinkler Plan and Inspection Fees. Chicago Public Schools are eligible for a 100% fee waiver. (Section 15-16-190 of the Code)
- Annual Fire Pump Test Fee. Chicago Public Schools are eligible for a 100% fee waiver. (Section 15-16-1160 of the Code)