

## **Business Catalyst Program**

A program for local entrepreneurs to bring their small business into Akron-Canton Airport (CAK). This program aims to encourage the success of local businesses as they establish a presence in an airport environment.

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### **Business Catalyst Program Requirements**

- The proprietor and/or firm's owner must be a U.S. citizen or a lawfully admitted permanent U.S. resident.
  - The proprietor must have active business certification from the State of Ohio.
  - The proprietor must reside in Northeast Ohio and maintain a local mailing address.
  - The proprietor and any employees must pass a federal background check.
  - The proprietor must be the founder and maintain ownership of the business.
  - Legal business documentation, including the operating agreement and company logo, is required for review.
  - Business financials are required, focusing on the most recent six months of sales or, for new businesses, forecasted sales.
  - A Summit County vendor's license is required (for vending businesses).
  - Non-vending business proprietors must have staff availability or make reasonable staffing accommodations.
  - Businesses must meet and maintain minimum insurance requirements.
  - Businesses must commit to the program for a minimum of one (1) year.
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### **Business Catalyst Program Expectations**

- Proprietors must offer bespoke products, unique services, and/or exclusive licensing agreements.
  - All product offerings must be approved by the CAK administrative team.
  - General resale is not permitted outside of approved vending arrangements.
  - Transactions are the sole responsibility of the proprietor.
  - Consignment opportunities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
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Please note: Products or services that conflict with existing retail or concession offerings, including those already within the Business Catalyst Program, will not be considered. All products and concepts must demonstrate viability for success in an airport

environment, aligned with CAK passenger volumes and available space. Product and service fit is at the sole discretion of the CAK administrative team.

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### **Business Catalyst Program Additional Vending/Food Service Requirements**

- Vending units must be branded and receive graphic design approval from CAK prior to placement.
  - Owners of vending machines that accept cash or card insert transactions must be located within a reasonable driving distance of the airport and are required to display a direct phone line on the unit.
  - The distance requirement does not apply to swipe/scan or cashless-only vending machines; however, a direct phone line must still be displayed.
  - Resale is permitted within vending operations, but sourced products are encouraged to have strong Northeast Ohio ties.
  - All food-based products and services must have the appropriate certifications for consideration.
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### **FAQ**

#### **Who is eligible to participate?**

The Proprietor and/or firm's owner is a U.S. citizen or lawfully admitted permanent U.S. resident. In addition to our other general requirements, eligible participants are for-profit businesses that perform or seek to perform a concession activity.

The firm meets the Small Business Administrator's size standard found here:

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-guide/basic-requirements>

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#### **Are Akron-Canton Airport employees and tenants eligible to participate in the programming?**

Akron-Canton Airport employees and tenants are not eligible to participate.

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#### **Is information submitted to CAK as part of evaluation and participation subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests?**

Information shared with CAK as part of the programming is subject to Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests.

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**How many program participants can CAK support in a calendar year?**

Participants are considered on a first-come, first-served basis.

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**What are the fees to participate in the Business Catalyst Program?**

The fee is based on the square footage of the space being occupied by the vending or concessions concept. For example, a 10'x10' space is 100 SF times the applicable rental space fee per SF. In 2025, this fee is about **\$22/SF** and subject to annual increases.

The proprietor/any employees will need to obtain badging through Akron-Canton Airport Operations and must pass a criminal history record check (CHRC). If during the investigation a conviction is found for most felonies involving piracy, fraud, violence, distribution of weapons or drugs, or possession of a controlled substance for which a maximum term of imprisonment for more than one year is found, the applicant will be disqualified. This process takes approximately one week to complete, at which point an airport-issued badge will be given, granting unescorted access to the **Sterile area**.

The cost for the badge is **\$80 initially**, and **\$25 annually** after that.

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Please contact [rcamacho@akroncantonairport.com](mailto:rcamacho@akroncantonairport.com) to start a conversation about the Business Catalyst Program (BCP).



