



Frequently Asked Questions

General Info about 5-Star

The [Colorado 5-Star Certification Program](#) encourages businesses to implement safety measures above and beyond what public health orders require. In exchange, businesses can accelerate their reopening and will be eligible for less restrictive capacity caps depending on where Denver falls on the [COVID-19 dial](#).

5-Star certification reassures employees and customers that businesses are adhering to enhanced guidance in other areas. The program is completely voluntary for local governments and serves as an expanding directory of establishments recognized for their efforts to keep their communities safe and open.

When can a business apply for the Denver 5-Star Certification Program?

Applications will open on February 2 at 10:00 a.m. for the first round of pre-certifications.

Please note, businesses will not be able to utilize their 5-Star certification and increase indoor capacity until the following has been met:

a) The city has reached one week (7 days) of stable or declining metrics in the following categories under [CDPHE's COVID-19 Dial Orange qualifications](#):

- New cases
- Percent positivity
- Hospitalizations

How many businesses will be certified in round 1?

Because of our commitment to equity, we have put processes in place to ensure all eligible businesses in Denver have the opportunity to participate in the Denver 5 Star Certification program.

A key component of this is our ability to evaluate which businesses are applying and getting certified and assess any gaps or barriers in real time.

For that purpose, the first round of applicants will be capped at 500.

Application Schedule

Feb 2, 2021: Application Round 1 opens and will close on Feb 7, or when we reach the first 500 applicants.

Additional rounds:

We plan to re-open applications soon after the close of Round 1. Please check back at denver5star.org, or follow us on social media to stay up to date.

How (where) do I apply for the Denver 5-Star Certification Program?

1. Visit denver5star.org

Ensure all checklists are reviewed prior to applying

2. Complete and sign the HVAC checklist

to upload into the application

3. Have credit card payment ready

Nominal fee will be collected based on business revenue size

4. Complete application

5. Receive and complete the audit checklist sent by H2 in preparation of the site audit

What should businesses have ready to apply?

Businesses should come prepared to the application process having watched the preparation video on denver5star.org.

There is also two checklists that should be reviewed prior to applying: [Pre-Audit](#) and [HVAC](#)

What should a business expect of the audit process?

1. Schedule Audit

2. Participate in Audit

3. Get Results

Receive scorecard electronically and action plan and if "passed," a certificate to display in the window/facility

How do I speak to a live person?

Phone Number to Call for Businesses Who Need Support (not general public): (970) 795-8386

Who is eligible to apply?

Businesses that have capacity restrictions due to Covid-19 public health orders may apply, these include: general business, personal services, indoor events, gyms, and restaurants. There are sector specific and general business guidelines that must be adhered to. More information found on the State's info sheet found [here](#).

Do hotels need to apply for each of their businesses on the premises?

Hotels are currently categorized as essential businesses per the State's Public Health Orders, and should continue to follow all COVID-19 safety guidelines under this order.

The non-essential businesses within a hotel – restaurants, spas, event spaces, fitness centers – can qualify for Denver 5 Star Certification. Hotels owners/operators should fill out the "[multi-tenant intake form](#)" to start the certification process.

Can I apply if I am currently closed, but plan to reopen?

Yes, if the business can demonstrate that all safety protocols are in place and you meet program requirements.

Is there a fee to apply?

Yes, there will be a fee to apply depending on the size of the business as follows (subject to change):

<\$1M Annual Revenue (2019): \$25 fee

\$1M - \$5M Annual Revenue (2019): \$75 fee

\$5M+ Annual Revenue (2019): \$150 fee

This small fee helps offset the program costs that are being covered through private sector fundraising efforts.

How long will it take to get approved?

Approval time will vary and will depend on application volume and the number of staff and volunteers we are able to devote to the Denver 5-Star Program. We recognize the value of time for reopening and will make every effort toward a swift evaluation process.

What is the Denver 5-Star Committee and who is on it?

The city was required to set up an administrative committee who is responsible for implementing the program. The Committee is an arm of Denver's Long-Term Recovery Committee (established earlier this year) and comprised of the following members:

- Stacie Gilmore, Denver City Council President

- Alan Salazar, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office and Co-Chair of Denver's Long-Term Reopening and Recovery Committee
- Evan Dreyer, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
- Kim Desmond, Director of the Mayor's Office of Social Equity and Innovation
- Bob McDonald, Executive Director of Denver Department of Public Health & Environment
- Eric Hiraga, Executive Director of Office of Economic Development & Opportunity
- Ashley Kilroy, Executive Director of Excise and Licenses
- Albus Brooks, Co-Chair of Denver's Long-Term Reopening and Recovery Committee
- Tami Door, CEO, Downtown Denver Partnership
- Richard Scharf, CEO, Visit Denver
- Dwight Jones/Deborah Staten, Denver Public Schools
- Dr. Robin Wittenstein and Dr. Bill Burman, Denver Health and Hospital Authority

The Committee will also establish a stakeholder/outreach committee with invitations to the following individuals and groups. This Committee may be subject to addition and revision depending on the success of the program in Denver:

- Janice Sinden, Visit Denver Board and CEO, Denver Center for the Performing Arts
- Sonia Riggs, Executive Director, Colorado Restaurant Association
- Katie Lazor, Executive Director, EatDenver
- Amie Mayhew, Executive Director, Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association
- Denise Burgess, Member of Denver's Emergency Relief and Recovery Council President & CEO, Burgess Services, Inc.
- Mike Ferrufino, Colorado Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Colorado Black Chamber of Commerce
- Fran Campbell, Asian Chamber of Commerce Colorado
- Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce

Denver's 5-Star Administrative Committee will rely upon several external partners to administer the program. The City and VISIT DENVER are currently in discussions with H2 Manufacturing Solutions, who, over the last six months, has developed and implemented a COVID Safety System like what is outlined in the 5-Star State Certification program guidelines.

What is the role of H2 and VISIT Denver?

- State 5-Star certification program guidance allows counties to utilize financial administrators and third party partners to administrate the program. Oversight of these external partners are the responsibility of the administrative committee per above.
- Through a contract with VISIT DENVER, H2 is providing program compliance and enforcement services. These services will include reviewing and approving business applications for the program and providing training and deploying and overseeing volunteers to conduct on-site inspections before applicants can be certified in the Denver 5 Star Program.

- Once a business application and on-site inspection has been completed and approved by the contractor, and the Committee has been informed and considered that business's standing, the Committee will notify applicants of their certification status.
- H2 is assisting in preparing regular reports for the Committee and CDPHE regarding the status of the program. In addition, other partners in the Denver business community will assist in recruiting volunteers to conduct the inspections. VISIT DENVER, who will hold the contract with the H2, will administer the financial aspects of the services provided under the Denver 5 Star Services contract.

How much will this cost the City of Denver to implement?

At this time, Denver will not be using city funds to implement this program. Costs incurred are expected to be offset with fundraising through the private sector, and the application fees for businesses. Denver is currently evaluating internal staff support necessary to administrate the program.

Who will be doing to the inspections and application review?

The program is utilizing a team of trained city staff and corporate volunteers to review applications, conduct on-site inspections and make complaint/compliance checks.

Denver Department Public Health & Environment also reserves the right to do periodic on-site spot checks.

How will the public know if a business is 5-Star certified?

Businesses who receive a 5-Star certification will be required to post signage provided by the Committee where it is visible to patrons, which will include date of certification, and information on how the public can report a complaint or concern. The business will also be listed at denver5star.org

What should someone do if they see a 5-Star certified business not following the rules?

To file a complaint, patrons can fill out the State's 5 Star business complaint form found here: covid19.colorado.gov/certified-compliance or contact the City of Denver by calling the 3-1-1 or emailing phicomments@denvergov.org. Please include business name, location, date, and reason you are filing a complaint.

What happens if our Covid-19 numbers increase?

If Denver's caseload, positivity rate and hospitalizations begin to escalate again, the State may move Denver to a more restrictive level on the dial, and the City could temporarily revoke 5 Star certifications for businesses.

How long will businesses be certified?

Once a business is certified, they will remain certified for the duration of the program (dependent on need/COVID-19). They can lose certification if they found not to be in compliance.

Do restaurants participating in 5 Star need to get contact info from one person in each party? Or every single individual?

One person from each party is enough.

Will a prior public health order violation automatically disqualify me?

No, if you have had a violation after 12/12/20, H2 Manufacturing Solutions will check with Denver Public Health & Environment on the severity and or frequency of the violation, to determine whether or not you can move forward.