

BAH GUIDELINES

On the second Tuesday of every month the Oak Park River Forest Chamber of Commerce holds a Business After Hours (BAH). These very popular networking events bring together 60-125 Chamber members and prospective members to meet, greet and mingle with other business owners and professionals in an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

Hosting a BAH can be a great opportunity for a local business to showcase its facility and services before a large and influential crowd. If you are a Chamber member and would like to host a BAH, please consider the following requirements:

- The sponsor/host(s) assume all responsibility for the event, including costs, planning, set-up/take-down. Chamber staff will publicize the event and manage check-in and the small program during the event.
- You must have a room or space that can accommodate 100 attendees (or more if you plan to invite additional guests such as your business neighbors or business district.)
- The sight lines in your venue must be such that when announcements are made, everyone will see the speaker.
- You need to provide cocktail fare for all attendees. Cocktail fare includes: appetizers or snacks, light dinner samples, beer, wine and soft drinks. In many cases this may involve partnering with another Chamber member who does catering. Keep in mind that the quality of the food will reflect upon not only your business but on the Chamber brand as well. If you would like to host the event outdoors, you must have in place a rain plan that can be implemented quickly.
- The BAHs are meant above all to be fun and enjoyable. As host, you would be expected to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to networking and socializing. Consider, for instance, seasonal themes, music, and/or fun activities and prizes.
- Logistics: The OPRF Chamber needs a table near the front entrance for check-in. A speaker / podium is preferred for announcements, but the Chamber can bring a microphone system if you do not have one. In cooler weather, please have a place for coats. We appreciate advice as to where guests should park.
- Timing: Chamber volunteers or staff arrive about 4:40 to set up. Guests begin arriving promptly at 5 but continue to arrive through 6:30pm. Most people leave at 7, though there are always a few stragglers to manage should you need to close the space soon after 7pm. We expect that the food and beverages will be available during the entire 5-7pm period.
- Insurance: you are expected to have your own insurance in place.
- Split the Pot and business-card-drawings are popular features of the BAH. We would appreciate if you provided at least one (but no more than three) gift basket, gift certificate or product that we can include as a drawing prize.

If you feel that you can meet the requirements of hosting a BAH, you may submit an application via our online form. Please keep in mind that BAH sites are assigned twelve to eighteen months in advance. A site visit and/or additional information may be required by Chamber staff or board member. All decisions made regarding hosting of BAHs are subject to the final approval of the Board of Directors.