



Lake Friendly Business Recruiter Handbook

Last Updated: 3/10/2025

IMPORTANT: Use the [Working Spreadsheet](#) to update which restaurants you are working with. You should be updating this spreadsheet throughout the entire verification process!

Step 1: First Contact

1. First, make contact through **Facebook, email, phone, or in person** (see the restaurant's website or Google Maps for contact info). Most businesses have a Facebook page which makes it easy to send a private message. **We welcome you to reach out using the method you are most comfortable with.**
 - a. Request **Outreach Packets** from sustainability@milwaukeekeeper.org to make this process even easier. You will receive 5 folders to drop off at 5 potential businesses, requesting that it be given to the manager/owner if present. **You may choose to use the [First Contact Script](#) for emails or phone calls**
 - i. **Personalize this script** as indicated in yellow
 - ii. Make sure you come off as friendly and offer this as a free opportunity for them- **do not shame businesses or come off as aggressive**
 - iii. CC info@plasticfreemke.org when emailing a business
2. Use the [Checklist Assessment Template](#) for information you collect on how the business is doing on each checklist item, and what they need to change. When you start working with a business, make a copy of the Checklist Assessment Template and save it to the [Lake Friendly Checklist Assessments folder](#) or send it to sustainability@milwaukeekeeper.org.
 - **You could also send the Checklist to the business to fill out and send back to you, to save time**
 - **Example of the file name:** Hacienda Beer Co. Checklist Assessment

Pro tip: It's helpful to scope out how a business is doing before contacting them. This could help you initially identify ways they can improve! Business owners also tend to be more receptive to regular customers.

3. Potential Outcomes and Next Steps

Outcome	Action
Outcome 1: The food service business would like to set up a meeting.	Yay! Schedule a meeting with them to go over the checklist and talk about what the next steps will be. Use Outcome 1 Script to kick off the onboarding process.

	<p>Record all information in the Checklist Assessment† and Working Spreadsheet.</p> <p>You may also connect them to info@plasticfreemke.org and have us meet with them instead.</p> <p>See Step 2 for information on the meeting.</p>
Outcome 2: The food service business is interested, but cannot meet.	<p>Use Outcome 2 Script to get more information about what they need to make the transition from unnecessary plastics to reusables. Send this script on the same platform you originally reached out on (Facebook, email, phone, or in-person). Once you have the necessary additional information, record it in the Checklist Assessment and Working Spreadsheet.</p> <p>See Step 2 for follow-up information.</p>
Outcome 3: The food service business does not respond.	<p>First try reaching out on a different platform (Facebook, email, phone, or in-person) using the same script.</p> <p>If you still do not get a response, follow up with an additional message using Outcome 3 Script.</p>
Outcome 4: The food service business says they are not interested.	<p>Use Outcome 4 Script to let them know you will check in with them in a few months. Make a note in the Working Spreadsheet about when you will reach out again.</p>

Step 2: Follow Up & Making the Switch

1. Continue or start to fill out the [Checklist Assessment](#) for the business you are working with or send the document to the business for them to fill out and send back to info@plasticfreemke.org. Business owners may have additional questions for you. If so, use our [Business Owner Q & A's](#) document to help you answer them, or email us!

The process of transitioning to Lake Friendly will look different for each business, but here are some key guidelines:

If you are comfortable meeting with the business, below are some tips and responses to potential questions or problems

1. Encourage businesses to consult with their supplier(s) first about sustainable reusables or eco-alternatives such as compostable BPI-certified products.
2. Recyclable items are okay if there is not a reusable option.
 - a. **Important Note:** [recyclables must be numbered 1, 2, or 5 to be recycled curbside by the City of Milwaukee](#). Other towns may say they recycle more types of plastics, but **it's safest to recommend numbers 1, 2, & 5.**
 - b. **Black plastic is also discouraged and is not recyclable.**
3. If a business doesn't have a specific supplier/distributor you can point them to our [Resources for Businesses](#) page on our website.
 - a. Other local distributors include Auburn Supply Group, Grainger, Boelter, and Restaurant Depot
4. Work with businesses that may have specific constraints that don't allow them to meet one of the checklist items. If they can't fulfill one of the 5 guidelines, they can pick an additional item in the list of 4 bonus items. We are very flexible and can verify them even if they do not meet all the guidelines right away.
5. Encourage businesses to set a timeline for when they will make the full transition to Lake Friendly and to message info@plasticfreemke.org if they have any questions.
6. Check-in regularly with restaurants to see how their transition is going and offer problem-solving support as needed.
 - a. Let us know how often the business wants to be contacted

Helpful resources for businesses can be found here:

- [Lake Friendly](#) web page
- [Plastic Free Resources](#) web page- includes links to several case studies, guides on best products, how to find a composter, and more!

Step 3: Verification & Surveys

1. Once they have completed the Checklist Assessment and are ready to be verified, you can visit the business to:
 - a. Have the primary decision maker (owner or manager) sign the [verification contract](#) *[you should bring a paper version of this*

document]

- b. Have them take the [Lake Friendly Onboarding Surveys](#)- [print out this [small graphic](#) to make it easier or open it on your phone for them to scan]
 - c. Present them with the Lake Friendly sticker for their window
 - d. Present them with any signage they requested (poster or table tents) or have them fill out the [inventory request form](#) if they haven't requested anything yet.
 - e. Ask if they would like to be in a Google Group with other Lake Friendly Business Owners to share tips and resources.
 - f. Take a picture of the business owner with the sticker or contract in/outside their business for social media and promotion
2. Once you have visited the business, **you will need to send a few items to info@plasticfreemke.org:**
 - a. The picture of the business owner and their sticker/contract
 - b. A picture of the signed certification contract
 - c. The contact information of the business owner (Name, email, and phone number)
 - d. A short blurb (2-3 sentences) about the restaurant's certification process to be used on social media.
 - i. (For example: what they changed, what they're doing above and beyond, something they said that resonated with you, etc.)
 - e. **IMPORTANT:** An estimate of the total amount of time it took you to certify the business- we need this data to keep track of volunteer hours!
3. If you are not comfortable meeting in person by yourself or at all email sustainability@milwaukeekeeper.org and our Volunteer Coordinator will figure out a day for you to go together or for them to go instead.

Congratulations! You have just helped Milwaukee reduce plastic!