

Smack Dab Temporarily Closes After Back-to-Back Equipment Failures Create Nearly \$20,000 Loss

Rogers Park brunch restaurant plans to reopen Thursday, 7/16 with a limited menu while inviting the community to support its recovery through gift cards.



smack dab chicago logo

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, July 15, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Smack Dab, the independent Rogers Park [brunch](#)

restaurant known for its scratch-made breakfast sandwiches, biscuits, inclusive menu, and community-centered mission, will temporarily close on Wednesday, 7/15, after the overnight failure of its walk-in cooler compressor forced the restaurant to discard approximately \$2,000 to \$3,000 worth of food.

The equipment failure comes just two and a half weeks after Smack Dab's convection oven stopped working and had to be replaced. Because no used oven meeting the restaurant's specifications was available, Smack Dab purchased a new oven for approximately \$9,000 and is still waiting for it to arrive.

Between the replacement oven, a new walk-in cooler compressor, lost food, and revenue from the restaurant's temporary closure, Smack Dab estimates that the combined financial impact will reach approximately \$19,500.

"We can joke that it has been a particularly brutal retrograde for our operational efficacy and cash flow, but the truth is that losing two essential pieces of restaurant equipment within 30 days is incredibly difficult for an independent business," said Teeny, co-owner of Smack Dab. "We are grateful that we are in a position to weather the storm at all, but this is still a hell of a storm."

After discovering that the walk-in cooler was no longer maintaining a safe temperature, the Smack Dab team determined that nearly everything stored inside could no longer be served. The unusable food was composted rather than discarded in the garbage.

"Our responsibility is always to protect the people we feed," Teeny said. "As painful as it was to

compost thousands of dollars in food, there was never a question about whether we would serve something that might not be safe. We closed, called our repair team, and started figuring out how to rebuild our backstock.”

A refrigeration technician began replacing the failed compressor immediately. Smack Dab will remain closed Wednesday to allow the team to receive deliveries, restock ingredients, complete food preparation, and prepare the kitchen to safely resume brunch service.

The restaurant expects to reopen Thursday, 7/16/26, with a slightly limited menu. Grits bowls and biscuits and gravy will temporarily be unavailable, with the full menu expected to return by Saturday, 7/18/26.

Smack Dab will also pause its regular Friday buy-one-get-one promotion this week. Regular Friday service will continue, and the promotion is expected to return the following week.

How the Community Can Support Smack Dab

Smack Dab is inviting customers and community members who want to help the restaurant recover to support the business in several practical ways. Customers who already plan to visit Smack Dab in the future can purchase gift cards, giving the restaurant access to funds now while preserving the value for a future meal.

Community members can also dine at the restaurant, order brunch for takeout, enjoy one of Smack Dab’s seasonal cocktails, or bring a friend, family member, or date in for a meal.

Those who do not have discretionary income to spend can support the restaurant by leaving an online review and sharing their favorite Smack Dab meal, drink, [catering](#) experience, or memory. Positive reviews help independent restaurants reach new customers without requiring supporters to make an additional purchase.

Businesses and organizations may also consider Smack Dab for future catering orders, staff gatherings, meetings, celebrations, and [private events](#). While the catering menu will remain temporarily unavailable for approximately one week as the team rebuilds its food inventory, Smack Dab is continuing to accept inquiries for upcoming events.

Smack Dab’s catering program is designed for organizations seeking food for meetings, workshops, staff appreciation events, retreats, and community gatherings. The restaurant particularly values relationships with local organizations and mission-driven businesses that want to keep their spending within the community.

“We understand that many people are dealing with their own financial challenges, so this is not about pressuring anyone to spend money they do not have,” Teeny said. “Come eat if you can. Buy a gift card if you were already planning to visit. Leave a review, tell a friend, or think of us the

next time your office needs breakfast. Every bit of support helps keep an independent neighborhood restaurant moving forward.”

The Hot Diggity Dog Remains Available for a Limited Time

Guests will also have a few more weeks to try the Hot Diggity Dog, Smack Dab’s breakfast-inspired tribute to the Chicago dog. The sandwich features an all-beef frank scrambled into an egg with diced white onion, atomic relish, roasted tomatoes, and dijonnaise, served on a brioche bun with sport peppers on the side. Vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free versions are also available.

Despite the recent setbacks, Smack Dab’s team remains focused on reopening safely, restoring the full menu, and continuing to serve the Rogers Park community. “We have a repair person on the roof, food deliveries being reorganized, and a team figuring out how to keep moving with one oven and a temporarily limited menu,” Teeny said. “The light at the end of the tunnel may still be a little dim, but we can see it. We are not going anywhere.”

About Smack Dab

Smack Dab is an independent, queer, woman-owned brunch restaurant in Chicago’s Rogers Park neighborhood. Known for its breakfast sandwiches, scratch-made biscuits, creative drinks, and extensive vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free options, Smack Dab serves brunch, takeout, catering, and private events with an emphasis on hospitality, accessibility, and community care.

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