

2025 BOMA/Chicago Local TOBY Awards Application Process



THE OUTSTANDING BUILDING OF THE YEAR (TOBY) AWARD is the most prestigious and comprehensive program of its kind in the commercial real estate industry. The TOBY awards recognize excellence in building management, operational efficiency, tenant retention, emergency planning and community impact. The competition begins with the local BOMA/Chicago awards. Local winners will be announced at the TOBY/Gold Circle Awards Gala in early 2025.

For an opportunity to win a BOMA International TOBY Award, a property first must earn the BOMA 360 designation and win both local and regional competitions. Whether winning at the local, regional and/or international levels of the competition, you gain the opportunity to showcase your building's strengths and gain recognition for best-in-class operations and management. Judging is based on criteria that includes community impact, tenant and employee relations programs, energy management, accessibility, emergency evacuation procedures, building personnel training programs and overall excellence.

TOBY LOCAL CHICAGO DEADLINE

The deadline to submit your application is September 26 at 5PM (CST). This deadline will not be extended. Please [visit this webpage](#) for all of the details about the local TOBY awards.

CHICAGO BUILDINGS HAVE A STRONG HISTORY OF WINNING THE INTERNATIONAL TOBY!

Since 2010, [21 Chicago buildings have won the International TOBY Award](#). Our Chicago buildings are truly the best of the best who continue to win at the International level and we encourage you to apply for the 2025 TOBY!

ARE YOU APPLYING FOR THE 2025 TOBY?

If you are applying for a 2025 TOBY, your first step is to contact Jaclyne Madden at jmadden@bomachicago.org. Please let Jaclyne know as soon as possible that your building will be applying so that she can tell you about important and brand-new changes for this TOBY season.

BOMA 360 REQUIREMENT FOR 2025 TOBY SEASON & BEYOND

For the 2025 TOBY season and beyond, all TOBY applicants must have the BOMA 360 designation. If you plan to apply for a TOBY this year, you will need to apply and/or maintain your BOMA 360 certification by the September 26 TOBY deadline. You can learn more about BOMA 360 and access the 360 portal here:

<https://recognition.boma.org/>

Please contact recognition@boma.org for all questions about the BOMA 360 designation.

LEVELS OF COMPETITION

The TOBY competition consists of three levels. The first level is held locally by local BOMA associations (BOMA/Chicago). Buildings that win at the local level advance to the regional level. When (and if) a building wins at the regional level, that winner advances to the international level. The Chicago winners will go on to compete in the North Central Region TOBY Awards in March/April 2025. Regional TOBY Award winners compete in the International TOBY Awards. International winners will be announced at BOMA International's annual conference in June 2025.

TOBY FEES

To enter the local TOBY awards competition, you must first pay the \$300 entry fee directly to BOMA/Chicago. To pay this fee (via credit card or invoice), [please log into the BOMA/Chicago website and then click here](#). You must pay the \$300 fee to BOMA/Chicago before you submit your application.

If you proceed to the regional competition, you will pay another fee of \$450 (directly to BOMA International). This \$450 will be collected once the entry has been completed and the “Submit” button has been pressed. No additional fees are collected for the international competition.

LOCAL ONLINE/WRITTEN APPLICATION PROCESS

All 2025 Local TOBY applications must be submitted electronically to BOMA/Chicago through the BOMA International TOBY application portal: <https://recognition.boma.org/>. This link will be open until September 26 at 5PM CST.

Please do not wait to log onto the TOBY application portal. [Register your building on this portal immediately](#) and review the website so that you have time to ask BOMA/Chicago any questions or find any glitches. The system will close on September 26 at 5PM CST and we highly recommend that you submit your application at least one day in advance of the deadline in order to identify any potential issues. Once again, the TOBY portal link is: <https://recognition.boma.org/>

We recommend that you save your application within a Word document before you submit your application. Thoroughly review and edit the Word document application before you finalize it. Once the application is finalized, visit the online portal and copy and paste in your answers. Also, please have all of your attachments organized and ready before you fill out the online application form.

2025 TOBY CATEGORIES

Below are the 19 different categories in which you may apply (you can only apply in one of the 19 categories).

- Under 100,000 Square Feet
- 100,000 to 249,999 Square Feet
- 250,000 to 499,999 Square Feet
- 500,000 to 1 Million Square Feet
- Over 1 Million Square Feet
- Corporate Facility
- Earth
- Historical Building
- Industrial
- Life Sciences Building
- Medical Building
- Mixed-Use
- Public Assembly
- Renovated Building
- Retail – Enclosed Mall Under 1 Million Square Feet
- Retail – Enclosed Mall Over 1 Million Square Feet
- Retail – Open Air/Strip Mall
- Suburban Office Park - Mid-Rise
- Suburban Office Park - Low-Rise

TOBY ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To view the questions, relevant attachments and requirements for the TOBY application, please carefully read through the 2025 Entry Requirements (listed below). The online application follows the exact questions, attachments and requirements for your category as written in the Entry Requirements.

- [2025 Entry Requirements for All Office](#) (Includes: Square Feet Categories, Life Science Building, Historical Building, Corporate Facility, Medical Building & Suburban Office)
- [2025 Earth Entry Requirements](#)
- [2025 Renovated Entry Requirements](#)
- [2025 Mixed Use Entry Requirements](#)
- [2025 Public Assembly Entry Requirements](#)
- [2025 Retail Entry Requirements](#) (Enclosed Mall Under 1 Million Square Feet, Enclosed Mall Over 1 Million Square Feet, and Open Air/Strip Mall)
- [2025 Industrial Entry Requirements](#)

SCORING OF PORTAL/WRITTEN APPLICATION

Your assigned TOBY judges will sign onto the portal to review and grade your online/written application. After the January/February 2025 Gala, you will be able to see the comments from your judges. The same judges who review your online application will come to your building inspection. Judges will not grade your inspection online. Judges will complete hard copies of the inspection sheets.

BUILDING INSPECTION & INSPECTION GRADING SHEETS

Inspections will be held in-person at your building between October 16 through November 15. You will be assigned your inspection date in early October. Once you begin the application process, we will communicate more detailed information about the inspections. Please contact Jaclynne Madden at jmadden@bomachicago.org to get a copy of the inspection sheet for your specific category.

NOTE: Another form, besides the inspection and judging forms, will also be used this year – the TOBY Inspection Verification Form (listed below). Please review all of these forms before your inspection. You will only need to submit the Inspection Verification Form if you proceed to the regional/international competition. If you proceed to these levels, BOMA/Chicago will provide you with a signed Inspection Verification Form to attach to your regional/international application. Please contact Jaclynne Madden at jmadden@bomachicago.org to get a copy of the inspection verification form for 2025.

- 2025 All Categories TOBY Inspection Verification Form **OR**
- 2025 Earth TOBY Inspection Verification Form

DISCLOSURE OF CONTRIBUTORS

All TOBY applicants will be required to disclose, as part of the local application, the name and employer of each person who contributed content, photographs or graphics to the application. Applicants will also be asked to confirm that contributors have granted permission for their contributions to be included as part of the application process and that the contributions do not infringe on the intellectual property rights of any other person.

Failure to provide full disclosure of contributors or any infringement of application material on the intellectual property rights of others may result in sanctions imposed by the Association, including disqualification of the application.

Your building must complete this online form by September 26 at 5PM (CST).

<https://bomachicago.wufoo.com/forms/toby-application-disclosure-of-contributors/>

TOBY FAQs & BEST PRACTICES

BOMA/Chicago has created a comprehensive document where we answer your frequently asked questions regarding the TOBY Awards, online application portal, the application process and much more. This document also has best practices for each step of the application process. ***We highly recommend that your entire team read through this document in the early phases of the application process.*** [READ BEST PRACTICES HERE](#)

You can view frequently asked questions and answers about TOBY here: <https://recognition.boma.org/TOBYFAQ>

WATCH OUR TOBY INFORMATIONAL & BEST PRACTICES WEBINAR

You can also watch our [May 2023 TOBY Prep Webinar here](#) (Password: TOBY09!c5).

WATCH VIDEOS FROM FORMER TOBY INTERNATIONAL WINNERS

150 North Riverside: Over 1 Million Square Feet

<https://vimeo.com/702203936/5379f5cfba>

AMA Plaza: Over 1 Million Square Feet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fr1rdC08miU>

Renovated Building: 1 North Dearborn

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0G0ffWQcD4>

100,000 to 249,999 Square Feet: 1515 West Webster

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9t6xJGnv2I>

500,000 to 1 Million Square Feet: 401 North Michigan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1zEtOsJ6DQ>

HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the TOBY Awards and the application process, please contact Jaclynne Madden at jmadden@bomachicago.org or by calling (312) 870-9608.

Good luck to all TOBY applicants and remember to contact BOMA/Chicago with any questions!