



Development Services
Health & Code Compliance Division
P.O. Box 307
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Guide to Opening a New Restaurant

This outline of requirements is not to be construed as all-inclusive; It is to be used as a guide only. Site evaluations and Inspections may determine other deficiencies that need to be in compliance prior to approval.

Opening a restaurant in an existing space and/or change of ownership.

- Completed application for Certificate of Occupancy. (Consult Building Inspections Department for specifics.)
- Completed health permit application, supplemental documents and fees submitted.
- Copy of restaurant Menu, State of Texas Sales Tax Certificate, Texas Driver's License or valid Photo ID, Food Manager Certificate(s)
- Floor plan of the space. (Plans must detail floor, fixtures, equipment, layout, location of floor and hub drains, room finish schedule, grease trap location and size etc.)

****Do not bring in any food related items/dry goods, small wares, or operate until authorized to do so by the Health Authority.**

****If you are planning on leasing/buying a pre-existing food establishment it is best to contact the Health Authority before purchase/lease. (There may be additional requirements that must meet the current health codes prior to occupying.)**

New Construction.

- Completed application for Certificate of Occupancy. (Consult Building Inspections Department for specifics.)
- Completed health permit application, supplemental documents and fees submitted.
- Copy of restaurant Menu, State of Texas Sales Tax Certificate, Texas Driver's License or valid Photo ID, Food Manager Certificate(s)
- Floor plan of the space. (Plans must detail floor, fixtures, equipment, layout, location of floor and hub drains, room finish schedule, grease trap location and size etc.)

****Do not bring in any food related items/dry goods, small wares, or operate until authorized to do so by the Health Authority.**

Pre-Opening Checklist

- **Application.** Apply for a health permit, submit floor plan, menu, apply for Certificate of Occupancy, and submit all fees.
- **Floors.** Smooth, easily cleanable, light in color, durable, non-absorbent in all food prep, bars, storage areas, dish washing areas, walk in coolers, dressing/locker rooms, toilet facilities. **Carpeting not allowed in these areas.** Cove base is required at all floor and wall junctures. Coved tile base must be installed integral with and flush with floor tiles. **(Terrazzo, Epoxy Resin, Ceramic Tile, and Quarry Tile are approved flooring material.)**
- **Walls.** Non-absorbent, light in color, smooth (no texture) and durable in all food prep, storage, dish wash areas, toilet rooms and vestibules. Flat latex paint NOT approved. Use semi-gloss or high gloss only. NO exposed studs, rafters, or joints. Seal coverings to wall. FRP (Fiberglass Reinforced Panels/Polyester) or stainless-steel sheets behind sinks. Ceramic Tile, minimum height eight (8) feet in height, walls in dry storage areas must be painted with oil-based enamel or epoxy paint. Restroom walls must be four (4) feet in height.
- **Ceilings.** Non-absorbent, no texture or patterns, light color, smooth, and durable vinyl coated panels are required in the kitchen, dish wash areas, over bar, wait stations, restrooms and/or storage rooms.
- **Lighting.** Fifty-foot (50') candles for working surfaces and thirty (30') candles at dishwash surfaces are required for lighting. Position directly over these areas.
- **Light Shields.** Provide light shields over, by, or within storage, prep, service and display areas, equipment, dish wash, and storage areas. Heat lamps must have shields surrounding and extending beyond bulb or shatter proof or tuff coated bulbs.
- **Hand Wash Sinks.** Located in toilet rooms, an additional sink(s) required in food prep and dish wash areas. **Hand wash sinks must be accessible and conveniently located within every 25 linear feet of unobstructed space in all food preparation and utensil washing areas.** Hand wash sinks cannot be used for any other purpose and must always be accessible. Mounted liquid soap dispensers, mounted disposable paper towel dispensers or electric blower/dryer, trash can, nail brush and posted handwashing signage must be available at every hand wash sink.
- **Hot and Cold Water.** Required at all sinks by means of mixing valve faucets. If automatic water flow type faucets are used, water must stay on for at least twenty (20) seconds. **Hot water must be a minimum of 100° F maximum of 110° F for adequate handwashing within 20 seconds of turning on the water.**
- **Mechanical dishwashers.** Spray or immersion type mechanical dishwashers must demonstrate that it cleans and sanitizes properly. Thermometers are required to check

water temperature in tanks and final rinse if sanitizing with hot water. Chemical test strips to check chemical sanitizer must be available. **Required for reusable tableware.** **Type II vented hoods are required over high temperature dishwashers.** Post respective sanitizing instructions.

- **Dishwashing sinks.** A labeled three (3) compartment sink large enough to completely submerge the items that are washed with self-draining drain boards on both sides must be installed. Additional easily cleanable and movable tables/carts may be required. Chemical test strips to check chemical sanitizer must be available. Post respective sanitizing instructions.
- **Utility Sink.** At least one (1) utility sink or curbed cleaning facility must be present in each establishment. Install a broom and mop rack.
- **Doors and Windows.** Tight fitting, self-closing doors and automatic air curtains are required if they are opened to the exterior. If open, they must be screened (16 mesh/inch screening) Garage type/retractable and/or roll up doors/windows require automatic air curtains. Outer openings must be protected. Premises shall be kept in such a condition as to prevent the harborage or feeding of insects or rodents.
- **Toilet Facilities.** Toilet facilities must be conveniently located and accessible to employees at all times. If there are more than four (4) employees, separate male and female restrooms must be provided. All toilet seats must have open fronts.
- **Drain Tubes.** Required from dispensing units and shall not pass-through ice bin or ice machine.
- **Floor Drains.** A minimum of 3" diameter floor drains must be properly installed and trapped for areas that receive liquid waste.
- **Air Gaps.** Air gaps must be twice the size of drainpipes and must be located in permanent salad bars, icemakers, ice bins, and any other equipment in which food or equipment is placed.
- **Back Siphonage and Backflow.** There cannot be a cross connection between potable and non-potable water supplies. (Backflow preventers are required on all hose bibs.)
- **Grease Traps/Grease Interceptors.** Grease traps/interceptors must be located exterior, outside and serving all sinks, dishwashers, and floor drains in food prep areas. Copies of cleanout reports must be provided and kept on file/in a Health Binder accessible at all times for the Inspector. Minimum 1,000 Gallons per establishment or as determined by the Health Authority. Must be serviced every 90 days or as determined by the Health Authority.
- **Lockers.** Lockers can only be in designated dressing rooms or in rooms containing completely packaged single service articles. Personal belongings storage area required.
- **Laundry Facilities.** If a washer is available, a dryer must be provided. Laundry items are limited to linens used in the establishment and must be located in a separate room provided or can be in rooms containing packaged foods or packaged single service articles.

- **Dumpsters and Compactors.** Dumpsters/compactors must be located on concrete. Shall be smooth, durable and sloped to drain. Required to be cleaned and maintained. Outdoor enclosures shall be constructed of durable and cleanable materials.
- **Parking Lot and Walkways.** Parking lot/walkways must consist of concrete, or material treated to minimize dust and facilitate maintenance. To prevent pooling, must be graded.
- **Dumpster Drains.** Dumpster drains must be connected to the sanitary sewer. Must be enclosed.
- **Food Storage.** Food must be protected from contamination. Food may not be stored in locker rooms, toilet rooms, dressing rooms, garbage rooms, dumpster enclosures, mechanical rooms, under sewer lines, under leaking water lines, or under lines on which water has condensed, under open stairwells or open building structural elements, or under other sources of contamination.
- **Racks/Shelving.** Shelving must be impervious and easily cleanable. Food must be stored on shelves that are a minimum of 6 inches off the floor.
- **Sneeze Guards.** A partition/barrier is required to be used to protect food from contamination over buffets, self-service bars, food displays, etc.
- **Equipment and Installation.** ALL equipment shall meet or exceed National Sanitation Foundation Design Standards (NSF), commercial grade and must be mounted on six (6) inch bullet legs, casters, or completely sealed to the floor. Adequate space should be provided between the walls and fixtures or equipment to allow free access for cleaning. (Other approved accredited certification programs include ETL-sanitation or UL-sanitation certifications)
- **Food Contact Surfaces.** Food contact surfaces must be impervious to liquids, must not be painted, must be of non-corrosive materials and accessible for cleaning.
- **Facilities to Maintain Product Temperature.** Refrigeration and Hot Holding Units must maintain the required temperatures of TCS foods. Accurate thermometers must be provided in each. Provide a long-stemmed thermometer to monitor internal food temperatures.
- **Vent Hoods.** Vent Hoods with removable filters are required over all cooking equipment and surfaces. Must comply with plumbing and mechanical codes.
- **Pest Control Contract.** Professional Pest Control is required at least once a month. Frequency may be increased depending on the Health Authority. Retain documentation for at least a period of one (1) year. Must use a licensed applicator.
- **Grease Trap Service Agreement.** Documentation must be retained on premises for a minimum of three (3) years. A permitted liquid waste hauler must be used. Must service every 90 days.
- **Certified Food Managers.** At least one (1) Food Manager is required to be on duty, on premises, at all times during operation within thirty (30) days of employment.

- **Food Handler Certifications.** Required by all food service personnel/ employees within thirty (30) days of employment. Original/ copies of state issued certificates/ ANSI must be kept on premise at all times for the Inspector to verify. ****Keep in a Health Binder****
- Provide an **Employee Health Policy Agreement.**
- Provide a **First Aid Kit.**
- Provide a **Bodily Fluids/Spill Kit** and cleanup procedures.
- **Signage.**
 - A sign must be posted at each hand washing lavatory including employee restroom facilities stating, “Employees Must Wash Hands”
 - Manual and mechanical sanitizing instructions must be posted at the respective location.
 - Must post a sign or poster, clearly visible to food employees, by all handwashing sinks notifying food employees to report symptoms and diagnosis information about their health as it relates to diseases that are transmissible through food.
 - Post a food allergen awareness poster in an area generally accessible to employees in each retail food Establishment.

Prior to an approval of a Food Establishment Health Permit, an inspection will be conducted of the proposed food establishment to determine compliance with the current Health Ordinance as adopted with all local amendments, State and Federal applicable codes, laws and ordinances. This is done prior to establishment occupancy. No food preparation or food storage shall be approved prior to the issuance of a Food Establishment Health Permit.