



Mobile Food Licensing Guide

Mobile Food Operation Definitions:

"Mobile food service operation" means a food service operation that is operated from a movable vehicle, portable structure, or watercraft and that routinely changes location, except that if the operation remains at any one location for more than forty consecutive days, the operation is no longer a mobile food service operation. "Mobile food service operation" includes a food service operation that does not remain at any one location for more than forty consecutive days and serves, in a manner consistent with division (F) of section 3717.01 of the Revised Code.

"Mobile retail food establishment" means a retail food establishment that is operated from a movable vehicle or other portable structure, and that routinely changes location, except that if the establishment operates from any one location for more than forty consecutive days, the establishment is no longer a mobile retail food establishment.

Licensing Process

- (1) Read this entire packet and review requirement checklist
- (2) Submit a proposed plan for the mobile unit. Proposed plan must include: detailed drawing with all necessary requirements listed (i.e. hand washing sink, 3- compartment sink, permanent equipment, etc.) menu or list of all foods that will be served, and an equipment list.
 - Equipment list shall include equipment type, make/model #, and proof of approved NSF or equivalent equipment specifications.
 - *Questions regarding the certification of any equipment can be referred to the inspector by submitting a spec sheet, or make and model number
- (3) Once submitted, the proposed plan will be reviewed by the inspector.
- (4) The inspector will reach out to schedule a pre-licensing inspection.
 - At time of inspection, a food service application will be collected along with fees.
 - The license will not be issued until all mobile food license requirements in the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code are met.
- (5) License will be issued and mailed or picked up by operator
 - Original license must be in the unit at all times
 - *Copies of the license are not accepted as substitutes
 - Layout drawing, menu and any restrictions to the operation will be listed on the back

Any further questions regarding mobile food requirements or to speak with an inspector, please call ZMCHD Environmental Health at 740-454-9741 Option 3.

What are the different types of mobile units out there?

1) Concession Trailers / Trucks:

Concession Trailers and Trucks are fully self-contained units with mechanical refrigeration, a complete plumbing system including a hot water tank, and plenty of storage space for multiple day events. These are generally considered “restaurants on wheels.”

Basic Requirements for Concession Trailers / Trucks:

1) Concession Trailers / Trucks that prepare or cook food for customers should contain the following:

- a. NSF or equivalent cooking equipment.
- b. NSF or equivalent refrigerators / freezers that are not moved from the concession unit.
- c. Sink systems that are large enough to handle all items that must be washed, rinsed and sanitized in the concession. A three compartment sink with a faucet must be provided for this purpose.
- d. A hand wash sink with hot and cold water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a handwashing sign must also be provided in the unit.
- e. A water system, with a recommended minimum of 5 gallons (i.e. holding tank) that can handle the hot water needs of the concession trailer must be installed.
- f. A wastewater system (i.e. wastewater holding tank) must be provided in the unit as well.
- g. Adequate food and dry goods storage inside the unit.

2) All food preparation, handling, storage, and employee illness procedures that pertain to a restaurant apply to a Mobile Food Concession as well. Remember, it is a restaurant on wheels. All food served at the concession must be made at the concession or in a licensed food facility.

2) Pushcarts:

Pushcarts usually come in two different configurations; those in which the operator stands inside the cart and those in which they stand behind the cart.

Basic Requirements for Pushcarts:

1) Pushcarts should contain the following:

- a. They usually have a grill, flat top, or hot hold steam table that is part of the body of the cart. A mechanical, cold storage unit is installed into the body of the cart as well.
- b. A hand wash sink with hot and cold water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a hand wash sign must be provided in the unit.
- c. The cart must have an integral sink system that is large enough to handle all of the items that must be washed/rinsed/sanitized. A three compartment sink with a faucet must be provided for this purpose, as well as an adequate water supply and wastewater holding tank.
- d. If all operations, including all food preparation and ware washing, cannot be performed within the mobile unit, a commissary must be provided in which an operator begins and ends their day. Licensed food facilities or grocery stores are commonly used commissaries for pushcart operators. A commissary agreement form must be signed annually by the owner of the mobile unit and the owner/operator of the commissary before the Mobile Food Service License is issued. The owner or operator shall agree to prepare, store, and cook food at the licensed commissary. In addition, the owner /operator agrees to wash, rinse, and sanitize all

utensils and equipment, dispose of solid waste, and refill the water supply at the licensed commissary.

- 2) Food to be served will be prepared on the licensed concession cart or in the licensed commissary. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed kitchen.
- 3) A commissary is considered to be a permanent location, not a different mobile unit.
- 4) All food preparation, handling, storage, and employee illness procedures that pertain to a restaurant apply to a Mobile Food Concession Cart as well.
- 5) Pushcarts are referred to as restricted mobile units and will be notated as such on the back of the license, as well as the address of the licensed commissary.

3) Knockdown Concessions:

A knockdown concession consists of a tent and tables which is built and then knocked down at each event. At first impression it may seem like the easiest way to obtain a mobile concession business but in reality they require the most work of all the mobile types.

Basic Requirements for Knockdown Concessions:

- 1) Knockdown Concession stands should contain the following:
 - a. The stand must be set up on a non-absorbent ground surface such as concrete or asphalt; otherwise a tarp must be placed on the ground surface for easy clean-up. Grass or dirt floors are not permitted due to the possible contamination from dust, dirt, or even mud (if inclement weather occurs).
 - b. Just like all of the other types of mobile units, commercial equipment is required including mechanical refrigeration, chest freezers, hot hold units, to name a few.
 - c. There must be a portable three compartment sink system with a faucet and sink basins large enough to accommodate the largest piece of equipment at the concession for proper washing, rinsing, and sanitizing.
 - d. A portable hand wash sink station with hot and cold water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a hand wash sign must be provided in the unit.
 - e. Water systems that can handle the hot water needs of the food service must be set-up at each event.
 - f. There must also be a wastewater disposal system in place to properly collect all of the grey water that is generated from the three compartments and hand wash sinks during the event. A holding tank or "blue boy" is generally used for this purpose.
 - g. Some type of roof must be provided in case of inclement weather and to protect the food during preparation and storage from possible overhead contamination. A 10 x 10 pop up tent is generally used for this purpose. Make sure to check with local fire authorities as cooking on an open flame under a tent is generally not permitted due to the risk of fire.
 - h. Ensure that adequate food storage is provided. Many times a stock truck can provide the additional storage space needed, however any additional storage areas will be inspected for cleanliness.
- 2) Food to be served from the knockdown concession will be prepared at the concession. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen and brought to the concession for sale.

4) Frozen Food Trucks / Carts:

A frozen food truck or cart is a mobile motorized or non-motorized concession on wheels that normally contains a commercial freezer and only prepackaged frozen product.

Basic Requirements for Frozen Food Trucks / Carts:

- 1) Frozen Food Trucks / Carts should contain the following:
 - a. The frozen food in the licensed mobile unit must be received in its frozen state, prepackaged, and from a licensed commercial distributor.
 - b. Frozen food being held in storage before sale to the public is prohibited from being stored inside a non-licensed residence.
 - c. Just like all of the other types of mobile units commercial equipment is required.
 - d. This is the only type of licensed unit in which no plumbing system, hand wash sink, or three compartment sink is required since no open food or preparation is taking place.

5) Catering Type Delivery Truck:

Catering type trucks carry prepackaged and non-prepackaged hot and cold type foods.

Basic Requirements for Catering Type Trucks:

- 1) Catering Type Delivery trucks should contain the following:
 - a. These truck types carry only prepackaged hot or cold foods and are not required to have a hand wash or three compartment sink system.
 - b. Foods must maintain proper holding temperatures at all times.
 - c. Packaged food on these trucks must come from a wholesale type facility that is inspected and licensed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
 - d. Catering trucks that have any type of commercial food preparation grill or soup warmer must meet the same requirements as a concession trailer as previously detailed.

6) Mobile Cookers / BBQ pits:

A Mobile Cooker / BBQ pit is virtually an oven on wheels. The cooking unit is mounted to the frame of the trailer unit.

Basic Requirements for Mobile Cookers / BBQ pits:

- 1) Mobile Cookers / BBQ pits should contain the following:
 - a. NSF or equivalent cooking equipment.**
 - b. The mobile cooker concession must have all the infrastructure of a concession trailer or knockdown unit such as a three compartment sink, hand wash sink, water and wastewater holding tank, adequate storage space, etc.
 - c. Most mobile cooker trailers utilize an auxiliary unit either consisting of another trailer or knockdown concession stand due to infrastructure needs.
- 2) Food to be served from the knockdown concession will be prepared at the concession. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen and brought to the concession for sale.

General Notes:

There may be local regulations that limit where and when some or all of these mobile units operate. An example of this may be a sidewalk vendor or Peddler's Permit issued by a city. Always contact local permit or zoning departments for additional information and requirements. All mobile units must have identification on the body of the unit at least 3" tall and 1" wide which contain the following information:

- 1) Mobile unit name
- 2) City, State, Zip code
- 3) Area code and phone number

Remember that all equipment in a license mobile unit must be of commercial grade and approved from an accredited agency,(i.e. NSF, UL Sanitation, etc). No residential equipment is allowed for use.

Examples of proper certification labels:



A food grade water hose must be used for potable water.

As previously mentioned the health district must post on the back of each license the layout of the operation including the location and type of major equipment, the menu, the license plate number or unit number, any restrictions or exemptions regarding the unit, commissary location (if applicable), and sanitarian information.

One complete standard inspection must be completed by the licensing health department at least once during the licensing year (conducted prior to obtaining the license). In addition, inspections may be conducted as necessary by the health district as well as other health districts in Ohio in which the licensee is set up and selling their product.

When an inspection is conducted by a health district other than the licensing district, a copy of the inspection report may be sent to the health district issuing the license.

If food product is to be stored at the physical address of the home base of operations for the mobile unit, a license must be procured from the Ohio Department of Agriculture. More information can be found at <https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/divisions/food-safety/licenses/Cold-Storage-License>.

These licenses include the "Food Safety (cold storage)" and "Food Safety (frozen food)" type licenses. An appointment must be made with an ODA inspector to inspect the storage area and if all requirements are met a typical turnaround to receive the license is approximately two weeks.

MOBILE FOOD SERVICE PLAN REVIEW INFO

1. BE LEGIBLE

2. BE DRAWN REASONABLY TO SCALE (minimum of 1/2"=1')

3. INCLUDE:

- **MENU**

- **TOTAL AREA TO BE USED**

- **ENTRANCES AND EXITS**

- **LOCATION/TYPE PLUMBING FIXTURES**

- Food trailers must have an ASSE 1012 or 1024 backflow preventer on the incoming public water line

- All mobile units shall have a sewage holding tank

- **PLAN OF LIGHTING** (all lighting must be shielded)

- Minimum of 50 foot candles of light required in areas of food preparation and a minimum of 20 foot candles of light required in **hand washing and ware washing areas.**

G. FLOOR PLAN

H. BUILDING MATERIALS (all building materials must be smooth, durable, and easily cleanable)

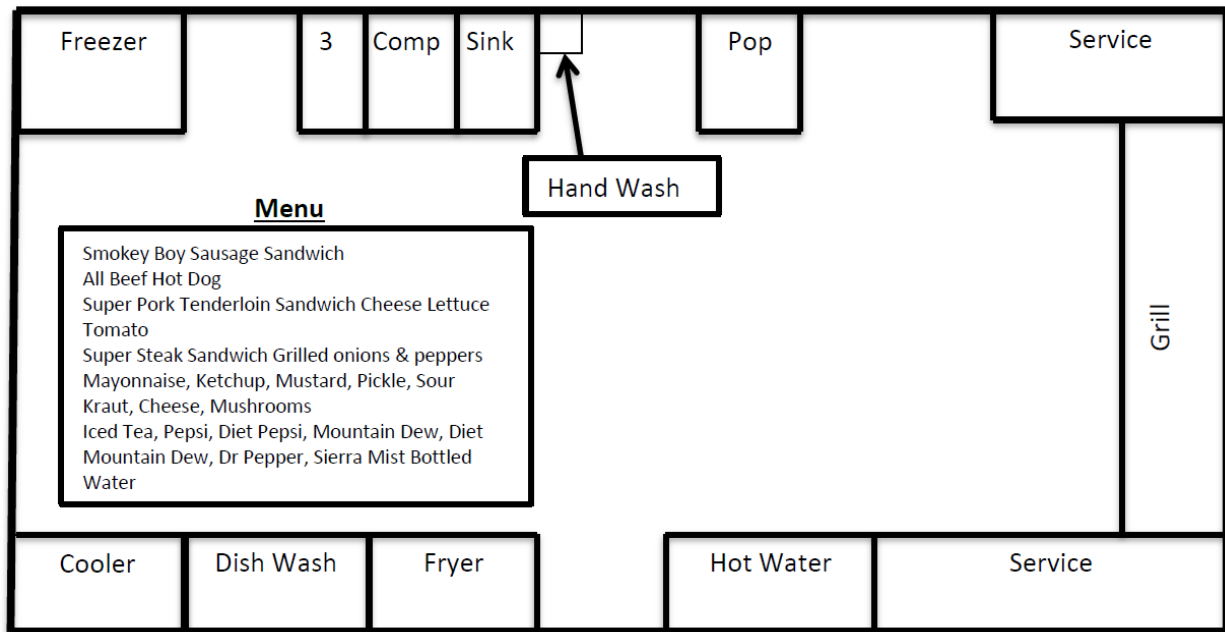
I. EQUIPMENT LIST (all equipment must be commercial, NSF approved)

J. FOOD STORAGE LOCATION (all food must be stored at least 6 inches off the floor)

K. LOCATION, SIZE, AND CONTENT OF EXTERIOR SIGN

- Exterior sign must include the name of the operation, the city of origin, area code, and telephone number. Name and city of origin shall be displayed with individual lettering measuring at least 3 inches high and one inch wide.

Example Layout:



Mobile Food Requirements Checklist

- A three-compartment sink with sanitizer and appropriate test strips available.
- A hand sink with soap and paper towels available.
- A hot water tank large enough to supply water to all sinks.
- A sewage-holding tank that is at least 15% larger than the water tank (if water tank is used).
- A dual-check backflow prevention valve that meets A.S.S.E. standard 1012 or 1024 if a hose will be used to supply water to the mobile unit.
- A food-grade hose if the mobile connects to a water supply.
- Shielded lights that provide at least 50 foot-candles of light intensity in food preparation areas.
- All surfaces must be smooth and washable.
- All refrigeration must maintain 41 degrees F. or less and have a working thermometer.
- If a water holding tank is used, it must be made from food-grade material and the inlet must be protected from contamination. The tank must be sloped to an outlet.
- Hot holding temperatures must be maintained at 135 degrees F. or more.
- Cold holding temperatures must remain 41 degrees F or less
- Metal stem thermometer must be available and accurate
- All mobile operators must wear a hair restraint (hat, hairnet, or visor) when working with food.

