



RICHMOND CITY  
HEALTH DISTRICT



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND CITY HEALTH DISTRICT

400 East Cary Street, Suite 322

Richmond, VA 23219

**“Working together for a healthier Richmond”**

(804) 205-3912

FAX (804) 371-2208

# **MOBILE FOOD UNIT GUIDELINES**

## **RICHMOND CITY HEALTH DISTRICT**

**2020**

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## **Introduction**

This document is intended as a guide to assist potential owners and operators of mobile food establishments in meeting the requirements of the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Health Food Regulations, 12 VAC-5-421. It is designed to be a companion document to the *MOBILE FOOD UNIT PLAN REVIEW* packet and pertains to potential owners and operators of mobile food establishments (mobile unit, pushcart, vending truck). This material does **NOT** contain all of the health rules and regulations, but rather provides guidance on obtaining an operating permit and lists most of the basic requirements.

These regulations are available at the following website:

**<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/Food/Regulations>**

Thorough review of this information and guidance may help expedite the processing of the food service permit application.



## **Definitions:**

In an effort to facilitate better understanding of the concepts mentioned in this document, please reference the following listing of definitions from the Food Regulations that have been provided for this purpose:

***"Catering operation"*** means a person who contracts with a client to prepare a specific menu and amount of food in an approved and permitted food establishment for service to the client's guests or customers at a service location different from the permitted food establishment. Catering may also include cooking or performing final preparation of food at the service location.

**"Catering operation" does not include:**

1. A private chef or cook who, as the employee of a consumer, prepares food solely in the consumer's home.
2. Delivery service of food by an approved and permitted food establishment to an end consumer.

***"Commissary"*** means a catering establishment, restaurant, or any other Virginia Department of Health permitted food establishment in which food, food containers or supplies are kept, handled, prepared, packaged or stored for distribution to satellite operations.

***"Corrosion-resistant Materials"*** means a material that maintains acceptable surface cleanability characteristics under prolonged influence of the food to be contacted, the normal use of cleaning compounds and sanitizing solutions, and other conditions of the use environment.

***"Easily cleanable"*** is a non-absorbent surface that allows effective removal of soil by normal cleaning methods. It also includes a tiered application of the criteria that qualify the surface as easily cleanable as specified above the different situations in which varying degrees of cleanability are required such as:

1. The appropriateness of stainless steel for a food preparation surface as opposed to the lack of need for stainless steel to be used for floors or for tables used for consumer dining; or
2. The need for a different degree of cleanability for a utilitarian attachment or accessory in the kitchen as opposed to a decorative attachment or accessory in the consumer dining area.

***"Equipment"*** is an article that is used in the operation of a food establishment. Includes, but is not limited to, items such as a freezer, grinder, hood, ice maker, meat block, mixer, oven, cooler, scale, sink, slicer, stove, table, thermometer, and vending machine.

***"Food-Contact Surface"*** is a surface of equipment or a utensil with which food normally comes into contact with and from which may drain, drip, or splash into a food, or onto a surface normally in contact with food.

***“Mobile food unit”*** means a food establishment that is mounted on wheels (excluding boats in the water) readily moveable from place to place at all times during operation and shall include but not limited to pushcarts, trailers, trucks, or vans. The unit, all operations, and all equipment must be integral to and be within or attached to the unit.

***“Packaged”*** Means bottled, canned, cartoned, securely bagged, or securely wrapped, whether packaged in a food establishment or a food processing plant.

***“Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food” or “TCS Food”*** means a food that requires time/temperature control for safety to limit pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation.

***“Pushcart”*** means any wheeled vehicle or device other than a motor vehicle or trailer that may be moved with or without the assistance of a motor and that does not require registration by the department of motor vehicles.

***“Ready-To-Eat Food”*** is food that is in a form that is edible without washing, cooking, or additional preparation. Examples are sandwiches, foods on a buffet, and sushi.

***“Servicing area”*** means an operating base location to which a mobile food establishment or transportation vehicle returns regularly for such things as vehicle and equipment cleaning, discharging liquid or solid wastes, refilling water tanks and ice bins, and boarding food.

***“Utensil”*** means a food-contact implement or container used in the storage, preparation, transportation, dispensing, sale, or service of food, such as kitchenware or tableware that is multiuse, single service, or single use; gloves used in contact with food; temperature sensing probes of food temperature measuring devices and probe-type price or identification tags used in contact with food.

## Commissary Requirements

Mobile food units typically operate from a commissary. The local health department in which the commissary is located will issue the permit to operate the mobile unit.

A written agreement must be signed by the commissary operator and the mobile food unit operator with a copy provided to the Health Department. A permitted restaurant or facility may operate a mobile food establishment out of the restaurant. A fully self-contained mobile food unit **may** have the ability to operate without a commissary if all requirements are met on the unit and the operator can prove safe food handling and preparation can be accomplished without the commissary base. A servicing area would be required for this type of unit.

## What is a Mobile Food Unit?

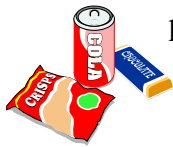
Mobile food units are a type of food establishment. They vary in equipment and design, depending upon the type of food and service intended by the operator. The intention is to be mobile and not a permanent fixture. Mobile units **do not** include automobiles, trucks, or vans not designed for food preparation (this includes the trunk of a car). No food products or extra supplies may be stored in a personal vehicle. All grills, burners and cooking equipment must be installed **on** or **to** your unit. No separate smokers or grills may be used that are separate from the unit itself. A handwashing sink shall be provided unless otherwise approved. Temporary style handwashing set ups are not permitted on mobile food units.



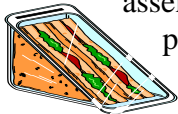
## Types of Mobile Units

There are four types of mobile food establishments. The mobile food unit classifications are based on the menu. A mobile unit can serve menu items within its classification number or below. For example a Class III unit may also sell items allowed in a Class II. Training and equipment requirements are located in Table 1.

**Class I** These units serve **only non-TCS commercially prepackaged foods**. No preparation or assembly is required and only bottled or canned drinks may be served. Examples include chips, crackers, cookies, soda, and sweets. These units **DO NOT** require a permit to operate.



**Class II** These units serve **TCS and non-TCS prepackaged foods**. No preparation or assembly on the unit is required. The food items may be prepared commercially or in a permitted restaurant. Examples: sandwiches, tossed salads, *individually wrapped* and cooked hot dogs/sausages.



**Class III** These units serve **TCS and non-TCS unpackaged pre-cooked foods**. Prepared foods may be *re-thermalized, assembled or dispensed on site*. The food shall maintain proper hot and/or cold holding temperatures. Examples: sandwiches, soups, tacos, hot dogs, chili, cooked onions and peppers, salads, rice bowls, shaved ice, and BBQ pork.



**Class IV** These units serve **TCS and non-TCS foods that are prepared, cooked/reheated, and assembled on the unit** using precooked and/or raw products. Examples: All meats, fish, poultry, plant foods, and dairy products.



<p><b>Class II, III, and IV Units</b> <b><u>REQUIRE</u> a permit to operate!</b></p>
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Table 1: Mobile Food Unit General Requirements and Limitations

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Class II</b>	<b>Class III</b>	<b>Class IV</b>
Plan Review	YES	YES	YES
Commissary or Service Area	Commissary	Commissary	Commissary or Service Area
Assembly or preparation allowed	NO	Assembly/Dispensing only	YES
Cooking allowed	NO	NO (Re-thermalizing ONLY)	YES
Cold holding facilities	YES	YES	YES
Hot holding facilities	YES(if needed)	YES (if needed)	YES
Water supply required hot & cold	NO	YES	YES
Waste water tank	NO	YES	YES
Plumbed Handwashing sink required with hot & cold Running water	NO*	YES	YES
Dishwashing sinks required	NO	NO ** (at commissary only)	YES
Stove, hood, or vent fan	NO	NO – unless re-thermalizing	YES
Examples	RTE's <b>Prepackaged</b> salads, hot dogs, sandwiches	Unpackaged <b>pre-cooked</b> hot dogs, chili, salads, rice bowls, sandwiches, soups	Menu to be reviewed

\*Hand towelettes required – **ONLY PRE-PACKAGED OPERATION**

\*\*Three compartment sink is available at commissary



## **Comparison of Different Mobile Food Units**

### **Mobile Food Unit:**

The majority of vehicle driven units are fully self-contained “kitchens on wheels” that can be driven or pulled to various locations. The menu is dependent on available equipment. A copy of the Mobile Food Establishment Permit sticker is to be posted. The features required are a three-compartment sink, handwashing sink, hot and cold water under pressure, at least one wastewater holding tank and potable water holding tank. No mop water should be dumped into the handsink or three compartment sink on board or transported in a manner that can contaminate the unit. Additionally, if a commissary is to be used for food storage and/or prep, the unit still must meet the requirements listed above. The unit must be kept free of excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes by mechanical means. A service area where potable water is obtained and wastewater from the waste tank is discarded *is required*. A copy of the agreement signed by owner or a receipt allowing for use of service area is required.



**Pushcarts:**

Pushcart units have a simpler design than traditional mobile units. Pushcarts are not self-propelled, but are pushed, pulled or *otherwise transported* to their dispensing location. Because these units will be dispensing or vending only commissary or commercially prepared foods they will generally only have handwashing fixtures. They are restricted to dispensing and assembling foods. **Cooking from raw animal foods (raw meat) is not permitted on pushcarts.** Re-thermalizing commercially prepared or commissary prepared foods is allowed. The features required are a plumbed handwashing sink with hot and cold running water, potable water tank, wastewater tank, a cold storage well capable of maintaining food at 41<sup>0</sup> F or below and/or a hot holding unit capable of maintaining hot foods at 135°F or above (if serving hot food). A commissary where the food is prepared, food is stored, the unit is stored and/or serviced is required. A copy of the agreement signed by owner allowing for use of site as your commissary is required. A copy of the Mobile Food Permit sticker is to be posted.

**\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*\*\***

**Contact the local zoning and business license agency in the area in which you will be operating for other requirements such as size of the unit and use of generators on city/county property.**

**Vending Trucks:**

Vending trucks have a simpler design than traditional mobile units. They are enclosed commercial units operated from a truck and must have proper storage and display space. They are restricted to *dispensing only pre-wrapped, bottled, canned or otherwise packaged food in individual servings for immediate consumption*. All preparation must be done at the commissary ahead of time. Because there is no actual food handling in these units, on-board dishwashing and handwashing sinks are not always required.

**Construction Guidelines****Construction and Materials:**

Everything necessary for the operation of the unit must be *integrated into the unit*. All mobile units must provide proper equipment to support processing of foods on menu.

**Overhead Protection:**

- a. The structure of the mobile food unit must be designed to protect food from potential contaminants by way of overhead protection. Examples include roofs or other permanent structures, canopies, awnings or attached umbrellas for units such as pushcarts.
- b. For mobile food units with self-service components such as condiments, additional protection of individual food dispensing containers located beneath the awning or similar structure may be necessary. Examples include lidded dispensing containers and sneeze guards.

**Walls:**

- a. For fully self-contained mobile units, walls are required to protect against the elements, wind-blown dust and debris, insects or other sources that may contaminate food, food contact surfaces, equipment, utensils, or employees.
- b. Walls must be smooth, durable, easily cleanable and nonabsorbent. All openings to the outside must be screened or fitted with other devices to repel or prevent the entrance of flies, insects, and vermin (except when foods are being served through a service window that is screened, opens and closes). Some units may be permitted if all sides pop out to create adequate air flow where insects will not congregate.

**Floors:**

- a. Floors must be designed, constructed and installed so they are smooth, durable and easily cleanable. Examples include vinyl composition tile, commercial grade linoleum, or similar finish.
- b. The floor wall juncture are to be coved and sealed.
- c. Pushcarts and food delivery and dispensing units must be located on concrete, asphalt or similar non-absorbent surface that minimized dust and mud. The services sites should be graded to drain.

**Ventilation and Fire Protection:**

- a. If cooking is proposed on-board the mobile food unit then detailed information regarding the ventilation hood system is to be provided. Hoods that are to vent grease laden vapors shall be of commercial-grade construction designed to be cleaned in place or with removable filters. All hoods need to vent to the outside.
- b. "If necessary to keep rooms free of excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes, mechanical ventilation of *sufficient capacity* shall be provided." 12 VAC5-421-3090. Smaller mobile food units may have mechanical ventilation, such as an exhaust fan to meet this requirement.
- c. Local regulations shall govern fire protection requirements. Please consult with the local Fire Marshal regarding any additional fire suppression requirements they may have. An ABC fire extinguisher is required for all units with propane.

**Lighting:**

Sufficient lighting is required. All lights must be either coated bulbs or shielded to preclude accidental breakage over food and equipment. The intensity must be:

- a. At least 10 foot candles (110 lux) at a distance of 30 inches (75 cm) above the floor, in walk-in refrigeration units and dry food storage areas and in other areas and rooms during periods of cleaning;
- b. At least 20 foot candles (220 lux) at a surface where food is provided for consumer self-service such as buffets and salad bars or where fresh produce or packaged foods are sold or offered for consumption; Inside equipment such as reach-in and under-counter refrigerators; At a distance of 30 inches (75 cm) above the floor in areas used for handwashing, warewashing, and equipment and utensil storage, and in toilet rooms; and
- c. At least 50 foot candles (540 lux) at a surface where a food employee is working with food or working with utensils or equipment such as knives, slicers, grinders, or saws where employee safety is a factor.

**Handwashing Facilities:**

- a. A handwashing sink is not required if ONLY food items are pre-packaged food that are dispensed IN the packaging.
- b. At least one handwashing sink must be provided with suitable hand cleaner, individual disposable towels and a trash can. A handwashing sign is to be posted at the sink.
- c. Handwashing sinks shall be equipped to provide potable water, under pressure, at a minimum temperature of at least 100 °F.
- d. Handwashing facilities must be provided at all toilet facilities used by the food employees.

**Toilet Facilities:**

- a. Mobile food units that do not provide on board restroom facilities must have restroom facilities that will be accessible to employees during all hours of operation. 12 VAC5-421-3130.

**Garbage:**

- a. An adequate number of non-absorbent, easily cleanable garbage containers must be provided. Garbage containers must be rodent-proof, non-absorbent, and covered when not in use.
- b. Grease must be disposed of properly and shall not be dumped onto the ground surface or into the sanitary sewer system.
- c. Final disposal facilities for garbage, grease, and other waste materials must be identified, approved by the regulatory authority, and used. (Commissary or service area).

**Equipment**

Construction, maintenance, and cleaning of all equipment shall be in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Health Food Regulations 12 VAC5-421 and with the manufacturer's instructions. Equipment may be movable; however, it must be capable of being secured when the unit is in transit to and from its service locations.

Hot and cold holding equipment, cooking facilities, preparation surfaces, and dispensing equipment must be appropriate for the types and quantities of food items being prepared and served.

Equipment installed in a fully enclosed mobile food unit must be sealed to facilitate cleaning as required.

**Food Contact Surfaces:**

- a. All food-contact surfaces shall be non-toxic, smooth, easily cleanable, free of rust, dents or pitting, and durable under the conditions to which they will be exposed.

**Cooking and Reheating Equipment:**

- a. Cooking and reheating equipment shall be installed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall meet all fire safety code requirements.

- b. The reheating equipment used must be capable of heating all of the TCS foods offered to their required reheating temperature within two hours or less.
- c. The local fire safety or other designated authority must approve all cooking devices and their location within the mobile food unit.
- d. If proper temperatures cannot be attained using the equipment, then cooking and reheating must occur at the commissary and will not be allowed on the unit.

**Hot Holding Equipment:**

- a. Equipment used for hot holding must be capable of maintaining TCS foods at 135° F or above. 12 VAC5-421-0820; 12 VAC5-421-1450
- b. Hot holding equipment shall be installed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and shall meet all fire safety code requirements.

**Cold Holding Equipment:**

- a. Equipment used for cold holding must be capable of maintaining TCS foods at 41° F or below. 12 VAC5-421-0820; 12 VAC5-421-1450
- b. Refrigeration shall be installed and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- c. Each refrigeration unit must have a scaled thermometer accurate to  $\pm 3^{\circ}$  F to measure the air temperature of the unit.
- d. If ice is used to cold hold TCS foods at 41° F or below, it must come from an approved source and be protected from contamination. Example: Ice in coolers to hold foods cold. Must be self-draining.
- e. A cooler with ice in lieu of a refrigeration unit may be acceptable on some push carts with limited operational times. Food product temperatures for cold food must maintain 41 °F or below at all times.
- f. Unpackaged foods may not be stored in direct contact with undrained ice, except as allowed for raw fruits and vegetables, and raw poultry and raw fish that are received on ice in shipping containers.
- g. Ice used as a coolant for foods shall not be used for drink ice.
- h. The weather, such as during the colder months of winter, should not be considered an acceptable alternate to cold holding equipment.

**Counters/Shelves:**

- a. All food-contact surfaces shall be safe, corrosion resistant, nonabsorbent, smooth, easily cleanable, durable, and free of seams and difficult to clean areas.
- b. All other surfaces shall be finished so that they are smooth, nonabsorbent, corrosion resistant, and easily cleanable.

**Warewashing Facilities:**

- a. A three compartment sink is required for all fully self-contained mobile unit and available for use in all commissaries. It must be large enough to accommodate the immersion of the largest equipment and utensils. It must have integrated drain boards, utensil racks, or tables large enough to accommodate utensil holding before cleaning and after sanitizing, and accommodate all soiled and cleaned items that may accumulate during the hours of operation.

- b. For mobile food units that are not fully self-contained, a commissary three compartment sink may be adequate so long as extra utensils and equipment are available on board for the duration of short term service and the mobile food unit returns to the commissary for all warewashing daily. Please note that some jurisdictions throughout the Commonwealth may require a three compartment sink on ALL mobile units operating in their jurisdiction.

## **Water Supply, Capacity and Wastewater Disposal**

### **Water:**

- a. An adequate supply of potable water meeting the requirements specified under 12 VAC5-421-2120 Capacity -shall be available on the mobile food unit for cooking and drinking purposes; for cleaning and sanitizing equipment, utensils, and food-contact surfaces; and for hand washing.
- b. Water must come from an approved public water source or an approved well water source.

### **Water System:**

- a. A potable water tank is required for all mobile units that require a handwashing sink
- b. The water supply system and hoses carrying water must be constructed with approved food-contact materials and must be installed to preclude the backflow of contaminants into the potable water supply.
- c. Hoses and connections used to fill potable water tanks shall be dedicated for that one task and shall be identified for that use to prevent contaminating the water. They should be handled and stored so that no contamination is created. The hoses are usually white with a blue stripe or labeled by the manufacturer as “food grade”.



### **Wastewater Storage and Disposal**

- a. Equipment and facilities that generate liquid waste must be disposed of in an approved manner.
- b. The volume of the wastewater tank must be 15 % larger than the volume of the potable water storage tank and sloped to a drain that is 1 inch in inner diameter or greater and equipped with a shut off valve. Refer to 12 VAC 5-421-2360 through 12 VAC 5-421-2500 for additional regulation information in regards to water and wastewater tanks, backflow prevention, and grease trap requirements.
- c. Wastewater must be removed at an approved waste servicing area.
- d. Wastewater may not be dumped onto the ground surface, into waterways, or into storm drains, but shall be collected and dumped into an approved receptacle.

## **Food Defense**

- a. The mobile food unit must be secured to prevent unauthorized access to food, equipment utensils, and related items.
- b. Unauthorized personnel shall not be allowed at or in the mobile food unit.

## **Administrative Requirements**

### **Licensing Your Mobile Food Unit**

A **Health Permit** is required for Class II, III, and IV units. Before a Mobile Food Unit is permitted, it must go through a **Plan Review**-*menu and floor plan required*. There may be other agencies from which you will be required to obtain approval. These include, but are not limited to planning (zoning) and the local Fire Marshal. Permits are valid for one year and must be posted in public view during all hours of operation. Permits are non-transferable. The local health department will issue a mobile food unit permit in the form of a sticker.

For **Plan Review**, plans should include a drawing of the interior of the mobile food establishment. Include the location of important items such as sinks, refrigeration equipment, prep tables, shelving and the hot water heater. Pushcarts are of a more simple design than traditional mobile establishments, therefore, photographs and company cut-sheets can be valuable when evaluating applications. For smaller push carts, our department recommends that you submit photographs taken from different angles that would give a representative view of the interior of the unit. In cases where a prospective operator may have an existing mobile food establishment it may be necessary to bring the vehicle to a health department location as part of plan review.

**For new mobile unit applications and existing units where a new menu is proposed, a PLAN REVIEW form and FEE must be submitted.**

***Food Establishment Health Permit Application - \$40***

***Plan Review Application - \$40***

All checks made payable to Richmond City Health District

All permitted mobile food units are subject to periodic inspection (12 VAC5-421-3800)



## **Food Safety Information**

### **Demonstration of Knowledge (DOK)**

A Person in Charge (PIC) is required for all mobile food units. The PIC must successfully demonstrate knowledge of basic food safety principles by either passing a DOK test (written or verbal) or providing an accepted Certified Food Protection Manager certificate.



### **Certified Food Protection Manager**

At least one employee with supervisory and management responsibilities over food service, shall be a CFPM.



## **Personal Hygiene Requirements**

### **Employee Health Policy**

The applicant/owner is required to have an employee health policy. Employees ill with *diarrhea, fever, vomiting, jaundice, sore throat with fever, or discharge from the eyes, nose or mouth* may not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single service items. These big “Six” foodborne illnesses are reportable to the Health Department: ***Norovirus; Hepatitis A virus; Shigella spp. ; Shiga toxin producing E.Coli; Salmonella Typhi; Salmonella(nontyphoidal).***

When an employee, customer or other person becomes ill in a commissary or mobile food establishment, there is a real potential for the spread of pathogens. You are required to have a procedures for cleanup of vomiting and diarrheal events.

## Handwashing Facilities

Handwashing is very important when working with food and drinks. Twenty (20) seconds of proper handwashing removes microorganisms that are known to cause illness. Hand sinks must have warm running water (100°F), dispensed soap, paper towels, a handwashing sign, and wastebasket.



A Class II mobile unit may utilize hand sanitizer or wipes. With Class III and IV mobile units, a handsink must be provided with hot and cold running water. No jewelry on the arms or hands shall be worn with the exception of a plain wedding band.

## Clothing

Hair restraints and clean clothing are required when preparing food. An apron may be worn over daily clothing.

## Cuts and sores

Cuts must be kept covered with an impermeable clean cover such as a finger cot or bandage and a single-use glove over the impermeable cover.



## Gloves



Gloves are required to be worn when handling ready-to-eat food. It is always best to use utensils or deli sheets to handle all foods. Single use gloves shall be used for only one task such as working with ready-to-eat food or raw animal food, used for no other purpose, and discarded when damaged or soiled, or when interruptions occur during the operation.

## Allergens

Food operators are required to train their employees on allergen awareness. The eight major food allergens are : Peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, milk, eggs, wheat and soy



## Food Source



All food products must be wholesome and free of spoilage, microorganisms, toxic chemicals, and other harmful substances that can make people sick. Food prepared in a private home shall not be used or offered for human consumption in a food establishment unless the home kitchen is inspected and regulated by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

**Food Safety** Food safety information is at the Richmond City Health District as requested.

## Water source



All water and ice used in the mobile food unit must be from an approved water system. A mobile food unit may also use commercially bottled water.

The materials that are used in the construction of a mobile food unit water tank and accessories shall be safe, durable, corrosion resistant, nonabsorbent, and finished to have a smooth and easily cleanable surface.

## Cleaning and Sanitizing Requirements

### Dishwashing

A three compartment sink with drainboards may be required on Class II, III and IV mobile food units.

### Sanitizing

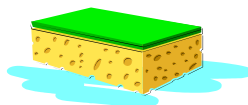
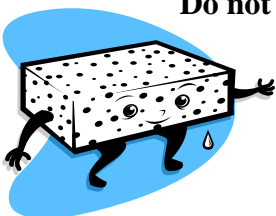
All food contact surfaces shall be cleaned and sanitized at least every four (4) hours.

Approved chemical sanitizers are Chlorine, Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (Quats), and Iodine. Surfaces may be sanitized using a spray bottle of sanitizer or clean wiping cloths stored in a sanitizing bucket.

Test strips must be appropriate to the type of sanitizer in use. The test strips will ensure that the sanitizer has been mixed according to the manufacturer's directions.



**Do not use sponges to clean a food contact surfaces.**



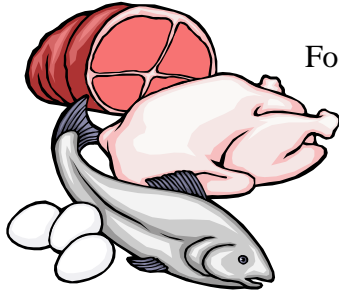
## **General Food Protection**

### **No food products are to be prepared or stored in private homes.**

- Store food and utensils at least six inches off the floor.
- Store food only in food grade containers.
- Keep ready-to-eat foods away from raw food products.
- All mobile food units must have overhead protection (truck roof, umbrella, canvas, canopy)
- Store chemicals such as detergents and sanitizers below and separate from the food and utensils.
- Properly label all chemical containers.
- Keep all garbage in a water tight container with lid.
- Dispose of wastewater properly into a plumbed sanitary sewer.
- Protect food and equipment from insects, rodents, and other environmental contamination.
- Maintain food temperatures at proper temperature. Monitoring of food temperatures is required.
- The food storage and preparation areas of the mobile unit must be protected from public access.
- Condiments shall be dispensed in individual packets, squeeze bottles, or served by the employee.



## Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food:

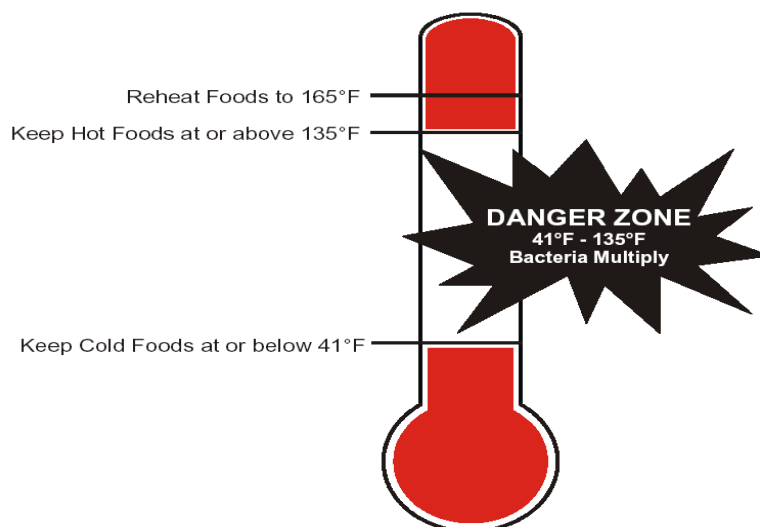


TCS foods require FATTOM in order to survive and multiply. Foodborne illnesses can be prevented by removing one of these elements and monitoring time and temperature. FATTOM stands for:

- F** food (nutrients)
- A** acidity ( $\text{pH} \geq 4.6$ )
- T** time (10-20 minutes)
- T** temperature (food in TDZ, 4 hour rule)
- O** oxygen (aerobic, anaerobic, facultative)
- M** moisture ( $A_w \geq .85$ )

The following foods are identified by the FDA Model Food Code as TCS		
Milk and Milk Products	Shell eggs-except those heat treated to eliminate salmonella spp.	Meats-Beef, Pork, and Lamb
Poultry	Fish	Shellfish and Crustaceans
Tofu	Garlic in Oil Mixtures	Sliced Melon
Baked or Boiled Potatoes	Raw Seed Sprouts	Soy-Protein Foods
Cooked Rice and Cooked Beans	Sliced Tomatoes	Other Heat-Treated Plant Foods

## TEMPERATURE DANGER ZONE



**WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!**

## Hot and Cold Holding

TCS foods must be kept cold at 41°F or below or kept hot at 135°F or above. Temperatures between 41°F and 135°F allow for the rapid growth of bacteria that can make people sick. Use equipment capable of holding foods hot (135°F or hotter).

IT IS REQUIRED THAT TEMPERATURES ARE  
MONITORED!!!



Use refrigerators or ice to store food cold (41°F). The ice must be from an approved source. All containers used must allow for water to drain away as the ice melts (like an insulated cooler with a drain plug). Keep enough ice available to keep food surrounded by ice for the duration of the operation.

## Date Marking

Date and label ready-to-eat TCS foods that will be kept longer than 24 hours at 41°F or below with a date of preparation or expiration to be discarded at 7 days from the day of preparation.

## Thawing Foods

Foods shall be thawed under refrigeration, under cool running water, or in a microwave if it will be cooked immediately.

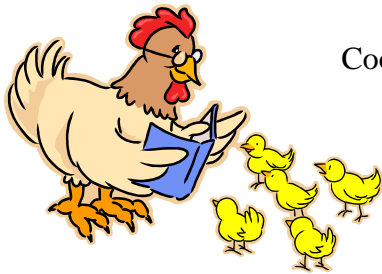
## Cooling Foods



If food is cooked in advance, it must be cooled from 135°F to 70°F within two hours and then the food must cool from 70°F to 41°F within the next four hours. If the food does not reach 70°F within two hours, it must be reheated to 165°F within two hours. At that point, the cooling process can be started again or it may be served immediately or hot held until served.

# What's Cookin'?

## Cooking

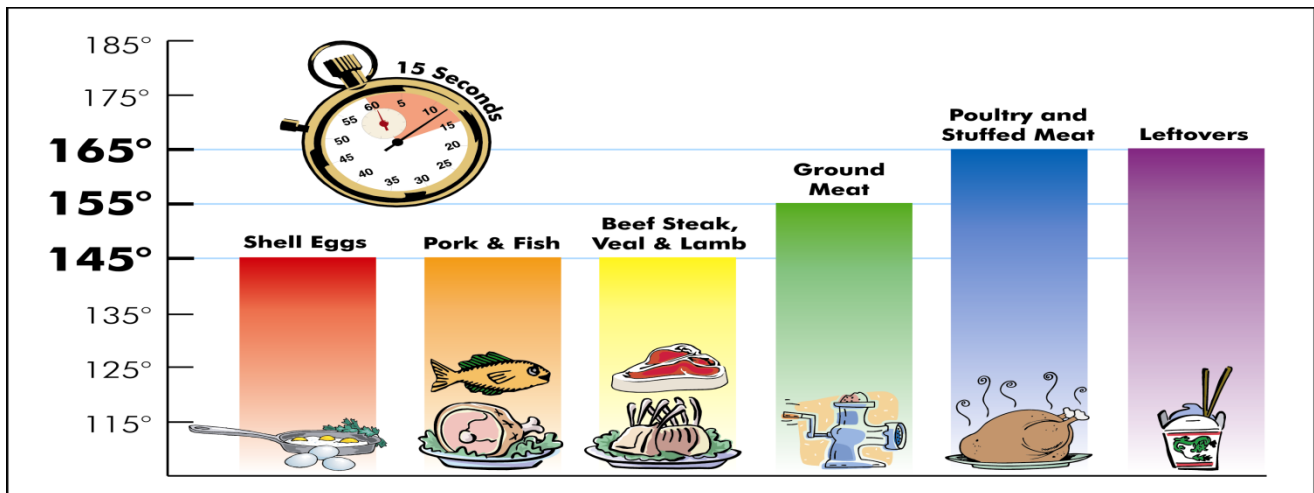


Cook raw animal products to the following internal temperatures:

Poultry, stuffed meats, stuffed fish, stuffed pasta  
**165°F (74°C) for 15 seconds**

Ground beef and other ground meats  
**155°F (68°C) for 15 seconds**

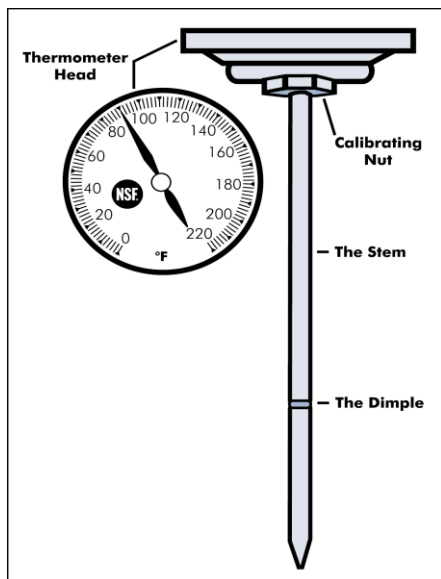
Beef steak, veal, lamb, pork, fish, shell eggs  
**145°F (63°C) for 15 seconds**



## Reheating

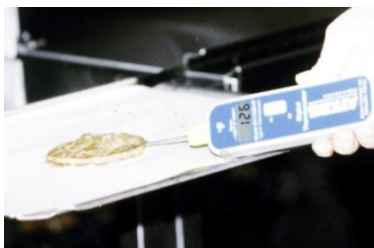
All TCS foods that have been cooked, and cooled must be reheated to at least 165°F within two hours before being placed in hot holding. Commercially made products (precooked and canned items) reheated for hot holding must be reheated to at least 135°F.



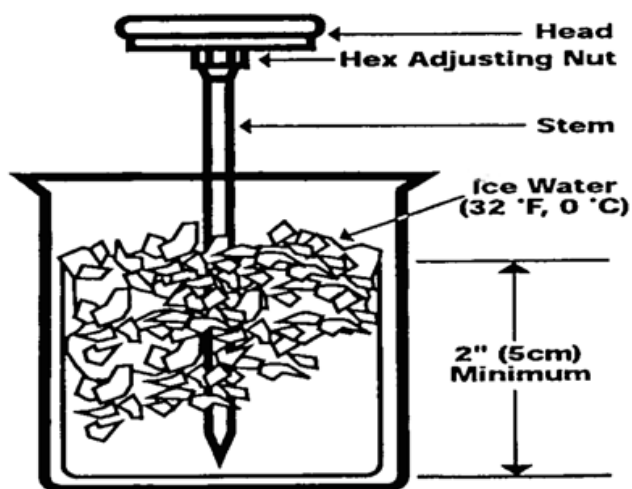


## Thermometers

Metal-stem probe food thermometers with a temperature range of 0°F to 220°F are required to test food temperatures when holding foods hot, cold, or when cooking raw animal products. Clean and sanitize your thermometer after and before each use.



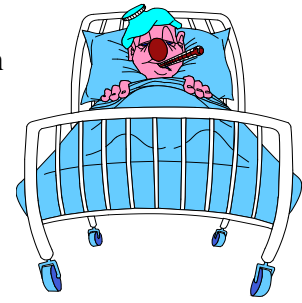
It is important to ensure that your thermometer is working properly. An easy way to check the calibration is to use ice water. Place ice (preferably crushed) into a container and add enough water to make it slushy. Put the thermometer into the slush and wait about 30 seconds until the dial stops moving. The dial should read 32°F. If it has a different reading, adjust the hex nut keeping the probe in the slush until it reads 32°F. For digital thermometers, follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to calibrate.





## Employee Health Policy

The Person In Charge must inform employees to notify the manager when an employee is experiencing fever, sore throat, or gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, and nausea. Any person, who is infected with a communicable disease, has vomiting, abdominal cramps or diarrhea must NOT work in food service until the person is completely free of symptoms for 24 hours. Sores or cuts on employee hands must have a water-tight cover such as a finger cot that protects the lesion and a single use glove must be worn. 12-VAC-5-421-80 through 12-VAC-5-421-120.



### **FOODSERVICE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES REGARDING EMPLOYEE HEALTH**

<b><u>Report</u></b> Train your employees to report to you:	<b><u>Restrict</u></b> Act to restrict or exclude them from food handling	<b><u>Release</u></b> Release the restriction or exclusion from food handling.
When they experience the following symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Diarrhea</li> <li>✓ Nausea</li> <li>✓ Vomiting</li> <li>✓ Jaundice</li>   <li>✓ Sore throat with fever</li> <li>✓ Infected wound or pustular boil</li> </ul>	<b>Exclude the Food Handler</b> -They may not be present in the food establishment; <i>-Jaundice must be reported to the local health department</i>  <b>Restrict the Food Handler</b> They may not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single service articles.	<b>Remove the Exclusion/Restriction when:</b> -They are totally free of the symptoms that caused the exclusion for 24 hrs. and no foodborne illnesses have occurred; OR They present a written medical release stating that their condition is not infectious ( <i>sore throat with fever MUST have medical documentation</i> ). --- -Infected wound is properly covered
When they are diagnosed with the following diseases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Shigellosis</li> <li>✓ E. Coli 0157</li> <li>✓ Salmonella typhi</li> <li>✓ Norovirus</li> <li>✓ Hepatitis A</li> <li>✓ Salmonella (nontyphoidal)</li> </ul>	<b>Exclude the Food Handler</b> They may not be present in the food establishment;  PIC is required to report to the Health Department	<b>Remove the Exclusion when:</b> They present a written medical release stating that their condition is no longer infectious and Regulatory Approval (see Guide to Employee Health)

# Regulations



Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Health Food Regulations 12 VAC 5-421  
available for review and downloading at  
[www.vdh.virginia.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/Food/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/Food/)

## Virginia Food Regulations Mobile Food Establishment Matrix

Food Regulations	Potentially Hazardous Menu		Not Potentially Hazardous Menu
<i>Areas/Part</i>	<i>Food Preparation</i>	<i>Prepackaged</i>	<i>Food Preparation</i>
Personnel	Applicable Sections of sections 80-250 2230 (B)	Applicable Sections of sections 80-250 2230 (B)	Applicable Sections of sections 80-250 2230 (B)
Food	260 270-320	260 270-320 530 (A) 610; 620 (Applicable to Service Area or Commissary)	260 280 390 Applicable Sections of sections 450-690
Temperature Requirements	390; Applicable Sections of sections 450-690 820 840 (A) & (C)	340 820	NONE
Equipment Requirements	Applicable Sections of Part IV and sections 2590-2780	Applicable Sections of sections 960-1440; 770-1870 2590-2780	Applicable Sections of sections 960-1440; 1570-1870 2590-2780
Water & Sewage	2160 2230 (A) & (B) Sections 2360-2490 2500 2540-2560	2230 (B)	2160 2230 (A) & (B) Sections 2360-2490 2500 2540-2560
Physical Facility	2790; 2810 2800 (A) & (B) 2930; 3170 3180; 3270	2790 2800 (A) & (B) 2930 3270	2790; 2810 2800 (A) & (B) 2930; 3170 3180; 3270
Toxic Materials	Applicable Sections of Part VII	Applicable Sections of Part VII	Applicable Sections of Part VII
Servicing	2960/ As necessary to comply with the Food Regulations	2960/ As necessary to comply with the Food Regulations	2960/ As necessary to comply with the Food Regulations
Compliance & Enforcement	Applicable Sections of Part VIII	Applicable Sections of Part VIII	Applicable Sections of Part VIII

**Sections of the Food Regulations Pertaining to  
Mobile Food Units – OTHER SECTIONS IN THE REGULATIONS WILL APPLY**

Mobile Water Tank and Mobile Food Establishment Water Tank

**12 VAC 5-421-2360. Approved materials.**

Materials that are used in the construction of a mobile water tank, mobile food establishment water tank, and appurtenances shall be:

1. Safe;
2. Durable, corrosion resistant, and nonabsorbent; and
3. Finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface.

*Materials used in the construction of a mobile water tank are affected by the water they contact. Tank liners may deteriorate and flake. Metals or platings can be toxic. To prevent the degradation of the quality of the water, it is important that the materials used in the construction of the tank are suitable for such use.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2370. Enclosed system, sloped to drain.**

A mobile water tank shall be:

1. Enclosed from the filling inlet to the discharge outlet; and
2. Sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank.

**12 VAC 5-421-2380. Inspection and cleaning port, protected and secured.**

If a water tank is designed with an access port for inspection and cleaning, the opening shall be in the top of the tank and:

1. Flanged upward at least one-half inch (13 mm); and
2. Equipped with a port cover assembly that is:
  - a. Provided with a gasket and a device for securing the cover in place, and
  - b. Flanged to overlap the opening and sloped to drain.

The tank must be a closed system from the filling inlet to the outlet to prevent contamination of water. It is important that the bottom of the tank be sloped to *the outlet to allow the tank to drain completely, to facilitate the proper cleaning*

*and disinfection of the tank, and to prevent the retention of water or solutions after cleaning.*

*Some tanks are designed with an access opening to facilitate the cleaning and servicing of the water tank. The access must be constructed to prevent the opening from becoming a source of contamination of the water.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2390. "V" type threads, use limitation.**

A fitting with "V" type threads on a water tank inlet or outlet shall be allowed only when a hose is permanently attached.

*V-type threads are difficult to clean if contaminated with food or waste. To prevent the contamination of the drinking water, this type of thread should only be used on water tank inlets and outlets if the connection is permanent which eliminates exposed, difficult-to-clean threads.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2400. Tank vent, protected.**

If provided, a water tank vent shall terminate in a downward direction and shall be covered with:

1. 16 mesh to 1-inch (16 mesh to 25.4 mm) screen or equivalent when the vent is in a protected area; or
2. A protective filter when the vent is in an area that is not protected from windblown dirt and debris.

*Water tanks are equipped with a vent to preclude distortion during filling or draining. The vent should be equipped with a suitable screen or filter to protect the tank against the entry of insects or other vermin that may contaminate the water supply.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2410. Inlet and outlet, sloped to drain.**

A. A water tank and its inlet and outlet shall be sloped to drain.

B. A water tank inlet shall be positioned so that it is protected from contaminants such as waste discharge, road dust, oil, or grease.

*Both the inlet and outlet must be sloped to drain to prevent the pooling of possibly contaminated water or sanitizing solution.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2420. Hose, construction and identification.**

A hose used for conveying drinking water from a water tank shall be:

1. Safe;
2. Durable, corrosion resistant, and nonabsorbent;
3. Resistant to pitting, chipping, crazing, scratching, scoring, distortion, and decomposition;
4. Finished with a smooth interior surface; and
5. Clearly and durably identified as to its use if not permanently attached.

*Hoses used to fill potable water tanks should be dedicated for that one task and should be identified for that use only to prevent contaminating the water. Hoses must be made of a material that will not leach detrimental substances into the water.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2430. Filter, compressed air.**

A filter that does not pass oil or oil vapors shall be installed in the air supply line between the compressor and drinking water system when compressed air is used to pressurize the water tank system.

*Compressor pistons are lubricated with oil to minimize wear. Some of the oil is carried into the air lines and if not intercepted may contaminate the tank and water lines.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2440. Protective cover or device.**

A cap and keeper chain, closed cabinet, closed storage tube, or other approved protective cover or device shall be provided for a water inlet, outlet, and hose.

*Protective equipment provided for openings of the water supply must be in use to prevent contamination which may be present where the supply is exposed to the environment, i.e., at water inlets or outlets or the ends of transfer hoses.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2450. Mobile food establishment tank inlet.**

A mobile food establishment's water tank inlet shall be:

1. Three-fourths inch (19.1 mm) in inner diameter or less; and
2. Provided with a hose connection of a size or type that will prevent its use for any other service.

*Mobile units may be particularly vulnerable to environmental contamination if soiled hose connections are coupled to the tank inlet.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2460. System flushing and disinfection.\***

A water tank, pump, and hoses shall be flushed and sanitized before being placed in service after construction, repair, modification, and periods of nonuse.

*Contaminants of various types may be introduced into a water system during construction or repair or other incidents. The system must be flushed and sanitized after maintenance and before it is placed into service to prevent contamination of the water introduced into the tank.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2470. Using a pump and hoses, backflow prevention.**

A person shall operate a water tank, pump, and hoses so that backflow and other contamination of the water supply are prevented.

*When a water system includes a pump, or a pump is used in filling a water tank, care must be taken during hookup to prevent negative pressure on the supplying water system.*

*Backflow prevention to protect the water supply is especially necessary during cleaning and sanitizing operations on a mobile system.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2480. Protecting inlet, outlet, and hose fitting.**

If not in use, a water tank and hose inlet and outlet fitting shall be protected using a cover or device as specified under **12 VAC 5-421-2440**.

*When not connected for use, water inlets, outlets, and hose fittings should be closed to the environment. Unless capped or otherwise protected, filling inlets, outlets, and hoses may become contaminated by dust or vermin.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2490. Tank, pump, and hoses, dedication.**

A. Except as specified in subsection B of this section, a water tank, pump, and hoses used for conveying drinking water shall be used for no other purpose.

B. Water tanks, pumps, and hoses approved for liquid foods may be used for conveying drinking water if they are cleaned and sanitized before they are used to convey water.

**12 VAC 5-421-2500. Mobile holding tank capacity and drainage.**

A sewage holding tank in a mobile food establishment shall be:

1. Sized 15% larger in capacity than the water supply tank; and
2. Sloped to a drain that is 1 inch (25 mm) in inner diameter or greater, equipped with a shut-off valve.

**12 VAC 5-421-2540. Conveying sewage.\***

Sewage shall be conveyed to the point of disposal through an approved sanitary sewage system or other system, including use of sewage transport vehicles, waste retention tanks, pumps, pipes, hoses, and connections that are constructed, maintained, and operated according to law.

**12 VAC 5-421-2550. Removing mobile food establishment wastes.**

Sewage and other liquid wastes shall be removed from a mobile food establishment at an approved waste servicing area or by a sewage transport vehicle in such a way that a public health hazard or nuisance is not created.

*Improper disposal of waste provides a potential for contamination of food, utensils, and equipment and, therefore, may cause serious illness or disease outbreaks. Proper removal is required to prevent contamination of ground surfaces and water supplies, or creation of other insanitary conditions that may attract insects and other vermin.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2560. Flushing a waste retention tank.**

A tank for liquid waste retention shall be thoroughly flushed and drained in a sanitary manner during the servicing operation.

*Thoroughly flushing the liquid waste retention tank will prevent the buildup of deposits within the tank which could affect the proper operation of the tank.*

**12 VAC 5-421-2570. Approved sewage disposal system.\***

Sewage shall be disposed through an approved facility that is:

1. A public sewage treatment plant; or
2. An individual sewage disposal system that is sized, constructed, maintained, and operated according to law.



**Questions:**

Please contact the Richmond City Health District at (804) 205-3912

**Final Inspection Checklist:**

***Push Carts and Mobile Units with only handwashing sinks – no raw animal foods allowed on these units***

- Chef's thermometer ( 0°F-220°F)
- Disposable gloves
- Hair restraints (hat, hairnet or visor)
- All surfaces of unit smooth, non-porous and easily cleanable
- No raw wood
- Overhead protection (umbrella, enclosed cart etc.)
- All surfaces clean and free of dust
- Interior and exterior of all equipment clean
- All chemicals labeled
- Plumbed handwashing sink hot and cold running water under pressure, with potable water tank and disposal tank. Hand soap, paper towels and handwashing sign.
- Hand sanitizer or towelettes (***Pre-packaged units ONLY***)
- Trash container
- Dust Pan and Broom to clean up
- Lids for food containers/foil/plastic wrap & sneeze guard if applicable– a way to keep food protected
- Shelving 6" off the floor for single service items and food items
- Mechanical refrigeration for cold holding items or if approved, a cooler with ice
- Wiping cloths, sanitizer container (chlorine bleach or quaternary ammonia) plus the proper test kit to check the sanitizer strength (chlorine ( purple kit) or the quaternary (multicolor or green) **OR** food grade sanitizing wipes
- Utensils and BACK UP Utensils
- Fire extinguisher if propane is being used – verify last when last inspected by fire marshal
- Mechanical ventilation if needed
- Water inlet covered/protected
- Food grade hose if hose is used to fill water tank
- Toilet facilities accessible
- Employee Health Policy
- Allergen awareness and training
- Certified Food Protection Manager with supervisory duties
- Demonstration of Knowledge from the Person in Charge (cooking temperatures, cooling methods, hot holding and cold holding temperatures etc.)
- Vomiting and diarrheal accident clean up plan
- Obtain a Peddler license and Business License from City Hall



### **Final Inspection Checklist: Fully Self Contained Mobile Units**

- Three compartment sink with a designated drain board/area for soiled dishware and designated area for sanitized dishware (to air dry); hot and cold running water under pressure. Basins able to fit largest piece of equipment to be washed, rinsed and sanitized
- Handsink with hot and cold water under pressure – min 100 deg. F
- Hood vent system or adequate ventilation over cooking and grease areas -removable filters
- Adequate refrigeration
- All surfaces smooth, non-porous and easily cleanable (no raw wood)
- Sinks sealed to the walls
- Adequate lighting and proper shielded
- Cove molding around floor/wall juncture
- All surfaces clean and free of dust/debris
- Thermometers in all refrigeration units
- Chef's thermometer ( 0°F-220°F)
- Disposable gloves, tongs, deli paper
- Handsinks with signage and supplied with soap and paper towels
- Sanitizer and proper test strips
- All chemicals labeled
- Trash can
- Grease disposal agreement (if frying)
- Potable water and water disposal agreement (RV station)
- Adequate storage space for food, to go boxes , single service items stored 6" off floor
- Pest control methods working and approved
- Chemicals stored separate from food, single service items etc.
- All equipment in good repair, interior and exterior surfaces clean, NSF or equivalent
- Food grade hose designated for potable water only
- Fire extinguisher (**\*Check last inspection by Fire Marshal\***)
- Generator if needed
- Plumbing in accordance with code (potable water and disposal tank – disposal tank 15% larger than water tank and sloped to drain)
- Water inlet covered/protected
- Flushed or sanitized water tank, pump and hoses
- Sliding glass window with proper screen for protection against insects
- Certified Food Protection Manager -employee with supervisory duties and responsibilities
- Demonstration of knowledge from the person in charge – cooking temperatures, cooling methods, hot holding and cold holding temperatures
- Consumer advisory on menu if serving raw or undercooked products
- Employee Health Policy
- Allergen awareness poster and training
- Vomiting and diarrhea accident cleanup plan
- Obtain a peddler and business license from City Hall