

## MOBILE FOOD UNITS—Food Trucks, Push Carts and Trailers

Updated: 9/8/2020

### Overview:

Mobile retail food establishments include food trucks, trailers, carts and mobile food vending operations that sell prepackaged foods requiring temperature control for food safety. Mobile units are intended to be just that, mobile and move from one operating site to another. They have a limited operating capacity compared to typical “brick and mortar” establishments that are plumbed to water and sewer systems, wired to the electrical grid, and can support more food service equipment such as refrigeration. In addition, mobile units may not have the capability to operate in cold or hot weather conditions that can impact plumbing and refrigeration equipment.

Because of this limited capacity a mobile unit’s menu needs to be relatively simple. Restricted to cook/heat and serve and simple assembly. Due to the described limitations mobile units are expected to operate from a commissary or base kitchen for advanced food preparation, servicing, restocking and maintenance each day they operate.

Food trucks and trailers where the service of food is from the interior of the unit are called mobile units. Units that are designed so food is served from the exterior of the unit are considered to be a cart. Mobile food vending operations that sell prepackaged foods requiring temperature control for food safety, such as packaged frozen meats from a cooler or freezer, or packaged burritos from a hot holding cabinet, are considered prepackage mobile units. Booth setups that may include cooking at a grill and the service of food from a table, under a tent that often operate at a festival or temporary event are not considered to be mobile retail food establishments.

### Basic Requirements:

1. A Colorado Retail Food Establishment License and written approval from the Teller County Department of Health & Environment must be obtained before starting operation. Mobile food units must be operated in compliance with the Colorado Retail Food Establishment Rules and Regulations (Rules and Regulations).
2. Mobile retail food establishments must operate from an approved commissary that meets the requirements of the Rules and Regulations. Mobile operations must report to their commissary each day they operate.
3. To obtain a Retail Food Establishment License the mobile food establishment operator must submit plans and specifications to the Health Department for review and approval. The following must be included in the plan review submittal:
  - ✓ A proposed menu of what is to be prepared and/or served.

- ✓ A floor plan of the mobile unit or photos of the unit that details its layout and equipment.
- ✓ A plan review application that gives details about the unit's water supply and wastewater tanks, equipment specifications for refrigeration, cooking equipment, exhaust hood and sinks. Plumbing details about the water supply inlet and wastewater drainage. The plan review application must include the required application fee.
- ✓ The proposed commissary location that will be used as the unit's base of operation. A signed commissary agreement form can be submitted if an established commissary is to be utilized. Plans and specification for a commissary will need to be submitted if one is to be constructed. Please be advised, if a commissary is to be set up and built in a private home or residence it must be physically separated from domestic living areas, must meet commercial standards and must comply with all applicable planning and zoning requirements.
- ✓ The proposed location(s) where the unit will operate.
- ✓ A plan review application for mobile food operations can be found at:

**[Opening a Food Truck/Mobile Plan Review Application](#)**

4. All foods used by mobile food operations must be obtained from approved commercial sources. Cottage foods and other foods prepared in a private home are prohibited for use and service. Foods to be sold pre-packaged must be properly labeled. Labels must include the name of the product, net weight or net contents, list of ingredients in decreasing order of predominance from most to least, list of major food allergens, manufacture' name and address. For specific details about labeling requirements see:  
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=177fhscMZSwH12IMdHYrTYv86ARtzVSFK>
5. Hand washing sink(s) equipped with both hot and cold running water under pressure must be provided in or on all units where unpackaged foods are handled. Single use towels in a dispenser and hand soap must be provided at hand sinks. Hand washing sink bowls must be of adequate size to allow for hand washing (>9"x 9" or >9" in diameter).
6. Foods requiring temperature control for food safety must be kept below 41°F or above 135°F. Adequate equipment must be provided to adequately cook, re-heat and maintain foods at proper temperatures. Advanced food preparation that requires cooling of hot foods is not allowed to be conducted in mobile units or on carts.
7. An accurate food thermometer scaled at least 0°F - 220°F must be provided to monitor food temperatures. A digital thermometer should be provided.
8. If cold foods requiring temperature control are to be sold, refrigeration must be provided. Mechanical refrigeration is required for trucks and trailers. No more than two, hard sided, easily cleanable coolers can be used for carts or prepackage mobile operations. Raw animal foods stored in refrigerators or coolers must be stored to prevent contamination of other foods. Refrigerators and coolers must be equipped with conspicuous thermometers so refrigeration temperatures can be monitored.

9. If equipment and utensils are to be washed and sanitized within the food truck or trailer an approved, adequately sized, 3-compartment ware washing sink must be provided within the unit. The sink must be equipped with both hot and cold running water. Because of the large volume of water needed to wash and sanitize equipment and utensils, the health department recommends ware washing be conducted at the commissary kitchen and a ware washing sink NOT be installed in a mobile unit. Ware washing utensils on a cart is not allowed.
10. A drinking water system under pressure must be provided if unpackaged foods are handled. The system must be of an adequate capacity, as determined by the department, for food preparation, utensil cleaning, and hand washing (See Water System Criteria below for details). The water system's fill inlet must be located so it will not be contaminated by waste discharge, road dust, oil, grease, or other contaminants. The water inlet must be equipped with a cap.
11. Generated wastewater must be collected and held in a retention tank that is attached to the food truck, trailer or cart and must be at least 15% larger than the drinking water supply. Liquid waste must be disposed of in a utility sink or a floor sink at the commissary or at an approved sewage dumping station. Discharge of wastewater onto the ground is prohibited. Drainage of uncontaminated ice onto the surface of the ground is allowed, provided it does not create a nuisance condition. All waste connections and flushing systems must be of a different size than those used for the drinking water system.
12. Cooking and hot holding equipment, refrigerators, food preparation and ware washing sinks must be of commercial design and approved by the health department. Equipment must be designed, constructed, and installed according to Sections 4-101, 4-201, 4-202, 4-204 and 4-402 of the Rules and Regulations. Except for a single grill or smoker used for cooking only, all equipment must be installed within and/or mounted on the mobile unit.
13. Only approved, smooth, easily cleanable, non-absorbent ice coolers may be used for the storage of ice and canned soft drinks. The use of Styrofoam coolers is not approved.
14. If grease cooking is to be done within the food truck or trailer, a Type 1 stainless steel commercial exhaust hood must be provided above the cooking equipment. Most fire authorities in Colorado counties require fire extinguishing systems in hoods installed above grease cooking equipment. Please check with the local fire authority where the food truck or trailer will operate for specific requirements. Grease cooking outdoors off a cart is not allowed.
15. Finishes on the floor, walls, ceiling, counters, shelves, drawers, and cabinets must be smooth, durable, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable.
16. 50 foot-candles of light must be provided on work surfaces within food trucks and trailers. All lights within the unit must be shielded.
17. All outer openings, including service windows and doors, that will be left open must be properly screened to help prevent the entry of flies and other insects.

18. At all times, including while being stored, displayed, served or transported, food, ice, utensils, equipment, counters, single service articles and paper goods must be protected from potential contamination by customers, dust, insects, rodents, flooding and drainage.
19. A trash container for public use must be provided.
20. Spare tires, tools and other equipment used for maintenance or mechanical operation of the truck, trailer or cart must be stored in a way that does not contaminate food, paper goods, equipment, and utensils.

### **Water Supply Criteria**

The water heating system must provide a continual flow of hot water that at 100°F or greater if a hand washing sink is the only fixture provided. If a ware washing sink is provided the water heating system must provide a continual flow of hot water at 110°F.

Adequate water pressure must be provided at all sinks. A minimum flow rate of one gallon per minute or thirty-two ounces per fifteen seconds is required.

Sizing criteria for the drinking water supply:

#### **Food Trucks and Trailers**

- Hand washing sink(s).
  - ☐ 3 gallons/hr. Xs number of hours of operating hours – for units that have 1-2 employees working at one time.
  - ☐ 5 gallons/hr. Xs number of hours of operating hours – for units that have 3 or more employees working at one time.
- Ware washing sink.
  - ☐ Sink compartment volume (LxWxD) x 3 x 50% full x the number of fills per day. Calculate one fill for every four hours of operation.
  - ☐ Dish machine—Not allowed
  - ☐ Pre-Rinse sprayer—Not allowed
- Food preparation sink.
  - ☐ Compartment volume (LxWxD) x 50% full x one fill per day.
- Utility/mop sink--7 gallons per day.
- In line coffee/tea dispenser—5 gallons per hour of operation or manufacturers' specifications. Whichever is less.
- Espresso machines--1.25 gallons per hour of operation or manufacturers' specifications. Whichever is less.
- Ice machine—manufactures' specifications.
- Fountain drinks—manufactures' specifications.

#### **Carts**

- Carts manufactured to National Sanitation Foundation Standard 59 and listed by NSF--5 gallons.
- Carts not manufactured to National Sanitation Foundation Standard 59 or are not listed--7 gallons.