

MOBILE FOOD PREPARATION VEHICLE GUIDELINES



City of Dallas

A mobile food preparation vehicle (MFPV) is defined as a commercially-manufactured, motorized mobile food establishment in which ready-to-eat food is cooked, wrapped, packaged, processed, or portioned for service, sale or distribution.

Requirements for a MFPV permit:

- Approved commissary location
- Notarized letter of authenticity for the vehicle
- Registered food service manager certificate
- Approved vehicle plan review
- Vehicle vending itinerary with written property owner authorization and restroom use agreement
- Propane fire permit from Dallas Fire Department (is necessary)
- Current proof of six months vehicle liability insurance
- Current registered vehicle license plate
- Current driver's license
- Vehicle passes permitting health inspection

Commissary Requirement

A Commissary is defined as a permitted fixed food establishment that serves as an operating base for a mobile food vehicle. The commissary is where the MFPV will be stored, parked, serviced, cleaned, supplied, and maintained. When located in Dallas, the facility must be constructed in accordance with Chapter 17 of the Dallas City Code. Commissaries outside Dallas must be permitted and inspected by the local health authority. **Home based operations are not allowed.**

All mobile food preparation vehicles must report daily to a commissary where:

- The vehicle is properly cleaned and serviced.
- All food contact surfaces are washed, rinsed and sanitized.
- The liquid waste is properly disposed.
- The vehicle receives potable water necessary to operate.
- Food served from the mobile food vehicle is stored, handled or prepared.
- Single service articles are properly stored.
- The vehicle is stored overnight (minimum of 5 hours).

Out-of-town commissaries must submit a copy of the current local health permit and a copy of the last health inspection report conducted by the local health authority.

Note: If you do not own your own commissary, you must secure a Dallas Commissary Approval Form and have it filled out completely by the commissary owner. The approval form must be signed by the commissary owner and notarized if the commissary owner is not present at our office at the time of signing.

Vehicle Plan Review

A mobile food preparation vehicle must go through plan review if the unit is:

- applying for initial permit with City of Dallas,
- converted from another use,
- remodeled, or
- without a valid permit for more than 1 year.

The plan review process is used to determine if the MFPV meets all the sanitation and safety specifications required by the City of Dallas. If the MFPV requires a plan review, it must pass the plan review before the vehicle will be inspected. The plan review fee for a mobile food preparation vehicle is a non-refundable.

Items required for plan review

- 2 sets of plans drawn to scale (minimum ½”-1’)
- Views from top and both sides
- Include view of plumbing fixtures and dimensions of tanks
- Label equipment and include dimensions
- Provide a list of all equipment and include the manufacturers specification sheet
- Describe the construction materials used on the vehicle (i.e. floors, walls, ceiling, counters, etc.).

The floor plan drawing of the MFPV should be a good representation of how the unit looks in real life. The plan does not have to be professional, but does have to be to scale, detailed and legible. Drawing “to scale” means that everything is drawn to the correct proportion (minimum ½”- 1’). Make sure the drawing is detailed to include all labeled equipment and their dimensions. Submitted plans that are not drawn correct or are incomplete will be returned until finished properly. Once the plans have been accepted as complete, please allow up to 2 weeks for the review process. An inspector will contact the owner with any questions or to notify of approval. After the plan has been approved a time can be scheduled for the inspection of the vehicle.

Vehicle Design and Equipment Requirements:

1. Floors of the vehicle must be constructed of durable, easily cleanable material, including, but not limited to, anodized aluminum, stainless steel, or tile. All junctures must be properly sealed. All service lines and pipes must be installed off the floor to allow for easy cleaning.
2. Walls of the vehicle must be durable, easily cleanable, non-absorbent and light in color. Minimum wall materials include, but are not limited to, aluminum or fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP). Walls at vent hood and grill areas must be covered with stainless steel panels. Wall covering must be installed to cover the entire height of each wall. Stud and utility lines may not be unnecessarily exposed on the wall or prevent cleaning.
3. Ceilings of the vehicle must be light in color, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. The height over the aisle-way portion of the vehicle must be at least 74 inches and unobstructed. Joints and rafters may not be exposed.
4. The cab of the vehicle must be physically separated from the food preparation area, with seats designated for the cook and any passengers located outside of the food preparation area. Aisle space must be unobstructed and at least 30 inches wide.

5. Construction joints must be tightly fitted and sealed with no gaps or voids, and all sealant, solder, and weld joints located in the food contact areas must be smooth and approved for food contact surfaces.
6. All equipment and utensils must meet or exceed the standards published by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF).
7. All equipment must be placed, installed, stored, and secured on the vehicle in a manner that allows for thorough cleaning and sanitizing around the equipment.
8. Floor-mounted equipment must be sealed directly to the floor or securely installed on legs to provide a six-inch clearance under the equipment. Counter-mounted equipment must be sealed directly to the countertop or securely installed to provide a four-inch clearance under the equipment.
9. Cooking equipment must be commercial grade and properly vented. An automatic fire suppression system approved by the Dallas Fire Department must be provided over cooking surfaces that require exhaust ventilation. Deep fryers, steam tables, and similar equipment must have covers with secured latches while the vehicle is in motion.
10. The vehicle must be equipped with commercial grade mechanical refrigeration equipment if potentially hazardous food is stored, prepared, or served on the vehicle. The refrigeration equipment must have at least 15 cubic feet of usable storage space.
11. The vehicle must contain at least 20 inches of linear counter space for each piece of food equipment.
12. The vehicle must contain at least 15 cubic feet of storage space for dry food and utensil storage. No food or utensil storage is allowed in any plumbing compartment.
13. The vehicle must be equipped with a power source that is capable of handling the power demands of the vehicle and equipment while the vehicle is stopped or in motion. The power source must be permanently installed in an area that is completely separated from food preparation and food storage areas and must be accessible for proper cleaning and maintenance.
14. Adequate lighting must be provided using light bulbs that are completely enclosed in plastic safety shields or the equivalent.
15. All outer openings to the food service area of the vehicle must be insect and rodent proof. Screens are required to be tight fitted with a maximum of 16 mesh per square inch.
16. Service windows must not be larger than 216 square inches. The distance between two service windows must not be less than 18 inches. Each service window must have an overhead protection cover extending at least 12 inches from the vehicle.
17. Entrance doors and service windows to the food preparation area must be self-closing and kept closed when not in use.

Vehicle Plumbing Requirements:

1. Vehicle must be equipped with a permanently installed water supply tank with a minimum capacity of 30 gallons.
2. A hot water heater must be provided that is capable of heating water to at least 110 degrees Fahrenheit. The water heater tank is required to be a minimum of three gallons.
3. The vehicle must be equipped with a stainless steel, three-compartment sink measuring at least 12 inches long, 12 inches wide, and 10 inches deep for each compartment. The sink is required to have an integrated stainless steel drainboard that is at least 12 inches long.
4. The vehicle must be equipped with a stainless steel handwash sink measuring at least nine inches long, nine inches wide, and four inches deep. The sink must be fully accessible and separated from the warewashing sink by a splashguard. Handwash sinks are required to have a soap and papertowel dispenser in close proximity.
5. All sinks must provide a minimum water pressure of one gallon per minute.
6. All liquid waste must be properly drained into the vehicles liquid waste retention tank. The retention tank must be permanently installed and at least 50 percent larger than the potable water supply tank.
7. The vehicle must be equipped with a built-in hose that may be used to wash the interior of the vehicle.

Operational Requirements:

1. All operators of motorized mobile food vehicles must have a current driver license and proof of liability insurance.
2. Mobile food preparation vehicles must have a current Registered Food Service Manager on-site during food service operations. All other employees working in the food service area must have a current food handler registration.
3. Each vehicle must have a copy of their daily vending itinerary. The Consumer Health Division must be advised of any itinerary changes immediately. Schedules/Stops must be accurate to within 30 minutes. The name, address and telephone number of the owner of the premises must be provided. A description of the food to be sold or served at each premise must accompany the itinerary.
4. The vehicle must maintain a written agreement with each vending locations property owner/manager granting permission to vend at the location and to provide access to toilet facilities for the food service employees.
5. The mobile food preparation vehicle must park only on improved surfaces to sell and serve food. Vending on dirt or grass is prohibited.
6. Cooking must not be conducted while the vehicle is in motion.
7. Only fast-cooked food items may be prepared on a mobile food preparation vehicle. Raw poultry or seafood may be prepared on the vehicle only if it is frozen and breaded and goes

directly from the freezer into a fryer. Non-frozen raw poultry and seafood can only be served on vehicles that have been granted a variance from the Director to do so.

8. Ice used for drinks must be properly dispensed and drained into a liquid waste retention tank.
9. Food and single service articles must be properly protected and stored at least six inches above the floor.
10. Garbage containers must have tight fitting lids and be kept closed when not in use.
11. A fire extinguisher approved by the Dallas Fire Department must be present on the vehicle at all times.

Food Variance

A variance is required to allow non-fast-cooked food items or refrigerated raw poultry and seafood on a mobile food preparation vehicle. An application must be submitted for a variance along with detailed written procedures on how the food items will be stored, prepared, cooked and served on the vehicle. Cutting of raw poultry or seafood will be prohibited on a mobile food preparation vehicle regardless of a variance. The variance application must be accompanied by a nonrefundable variance fee. An approved variance will be good for up to two years after it has been granted by the Director.