



**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**  
**FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS**

4520 READING ROAD ♦ SUITE A-800 ♦ ROSENBERG, TX 77471  
OFFICE: 281-342-7469 FAX: 281-342-5572



**Procedures for Obtaining a Food Vendor Permit**  
**MOBILE UNITS**

This document outlines the requirements needed to obtain a permit from Environmental Health. A mobile unit must be inspected and permitted by Environmental Health, abide by Fort Bend County's Regulations for Food Establishments, obtain a Fort Bend County Fire Marshal Office Permit, and all additional requirements outlined by Environmental Health.

**Mobile Inspections:**

- Inspections are conducted on Wednesday, from 8:00 AM until 11:30 AM at the Fort Bend County Environmental Health Department. ***No permit inspections are conducted off site.***
- Failure to pass any mobile inspection, including water testing, will result in a re-inspection and associated fee(s).
- Mobile vendor units shall be clean, with all equipment in place, powered on and functioning.
- No food is allowed unless the unit has a valid health permit.
- All supplies shall be provided (chemical test strips, soap, sanitizer, paper towels, thermometers, first aid kit, etc).
- The ability of equipment to hold cold and hot foods at safe temperatures, which will be verified.
- Mobile vendor units having potable water systems will need to submit a fee for a water sample, taken by Environmental Health and submitted for testing of bacteria. ***Check or money order payable to the City of Houston.*** Cash is not accepted.
- Provide the following documentation:
  - Application: All new and renewing vehicles shall submit a completed and signed application
  - Current/valid Texas driver's license, or Texas Department of Public Safety identification certificate with a current residential address which must be in Fort Bend County or in a neighboring county; If the owner does not have a Texas driver's license, then an approved operator of the mobile unit must comply with Fort Bend County regulations
  - Current state inspection of vehicle
  - Sales tax certificate
  - Proof of liability insurance
  - Certified Food Manager's certificate from a state or ANSI accredited course
  - A menu or list of all foods and beverages to be served
  - Trip ticket within 7 days



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**Commissary:** Mobile Vendor Units shall operate from an approved commissary, and shall report at least weekly to the location for supplies, food, cleaning and servicing operations. **FOODS SHALL BE FROM AN APPROVED COMMERCIAL SOURCE. UNDER NO INSTANCES SHALL FOODS BE PREPARED OR COOKED AT HOME.** The commissary shall be used as a base of operation and must possess a current, valid Health Permit. Trip tickets are required at all times.

**Once permitted, Mobile Vendor Units shall serve the approved menu, and use the approved method of operation only.**

Mobile food units must meet the Texas Food Establishment rules, FDA Food Code, and Fort Bend County Regulations for Food Establishments, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Customer seating shall **not** be provided
- Refrigeration: Refrigeration shall be operational and maintain an internal product temperature of 41°F or below.
- Hot Food Holding Units shall be provided and maintain an internal product temperature at 135°F or above.
- Thermometers shall be shielded and provided inside of all potentially hazardous food holding units. Provide stem probe thermometers, scaled 0-220°F, for monitoring internal food temperatures.
- Hand Sinks: Hand sinks shall be provided, accessible for use, and plumbed according to current law. The hand sinks shall be provided with hot and cold water under pressure tempered by a mixing valve or combination faucet. Each hand sink shall be provided with soap, paper towels, and a splash guard(s).
- Three Compartment Sink shall be provided and used to wash, rinse and sanitize utensils and equipment. Each sink shall be large enough to permit the complete immersion of utensils and equipment used on the mobile unit. Each compartment shall be supplied with hot and cold running water under pressure tempered by a mixing valve or combination faucet and drain stoppers in good working condition.
- Drain Boards shall be provided. Open wire racks with protective coating above the 3- compartment sink will be accepted as alternate to drain boards.
- Water Systems: A mobile vendor unit requiring a water system shall have a hot and cold potable water system under pressure,  $\geq 35$ psi. Water shall be from an approved source. The system shall have a holding capacity sufficient to furnish enough hot and cold water under pressure for hand washing, food preparation, and utensil washing and sanitization. The water inlet shall be located in such a place to prevent contamination from any source with a dust cover. The outlet shall allow



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- complete gravitational drainage of the tank. Lines between the inlet and outlet shall be constructed according to law. Water inlet less than or equal to ¾".
- **Waste Retention:** Liquid waste resulting from the operation of the mobile food unit shall be stored in permanently installed retention tanks that are at least 50 % larger than the water supply tanks. Liquid waste at no time shall be discharged while the unit is in motion. The retention tanks shall be thoroughly flushed and drained at the commissary. Wastewater outlet must be greater than or equal to 1".
  - **Solid Waste:** A solid waste receptacle (trash can) shall be provided inside the unit, and located to avoid contamination of food product.
  - **Ice:** Ice used for cooling foods or maintaining food temperatures may not be used for human consumption. *Potentially hazardous foods may not be stored in direct contact with ice.*
  - **Poisonous & Toxic Materials, Personal Items:** All cleaning chemicals and personal items shall be stored separately from all foods, food containers, single service items, utensils and food contact surfaces and have a designated sanitizing bucket at all times.
  - **Outer Openings:** All outer openings shall be protected to prevent the entrance of pests with 16 mesh/inch screens, or sealed, or by other effective means.
  - **Ventilation** shall be provided and operational. All vents to outer areas shall be sealed to prevent the entrance of pests.
  - **Lighting:** Adequate lighting with shielding or shatterproof bulbs shall be provided to all surfaces
  - **Floors and Floor Coverings:** All floors and floor coverings shall be smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable, and maintained in good repair.
  - **Walls and Ceilings:** All walls and ceilings shall be smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable, and maintained in good repair.
  - **Identification:** Provide the name of the business in at least two (2) inches in height and one and a half (1 ½) in width permanently affixed and prominently displayed on the driver's side, passenger side, and rear of the vehicle. In addition, label the potable water inlet and wastewater outlet.
  - **Ice Cream** units shall follow Fort Bend County Regulations for Food Establishments.

**Note: Raw seafood vendors (example: Shrimp Vendors) are subject to all of the above requirements and must also hold a valid Retail Fish Dealer Truck Permit from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department which can be obtained by calling 1-800-792-1112.**

### **Mobile Food Units Permission Requirements on Private Property**



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- All Mobile Food Units must have notarized written permission from the private property owner to operate on any private property. The notarized written permission must be in the unit and in plain view of the public at all times.
- A Mobile Food Unit is not required to display written permission for use of the property if the unit will not operate or be on that property for more than two hours.

**Mobile Food Units and Toilet Facilities**

- When a Mobile Food Unit parks or remains at one fixed location for more than two hours, and toilet facilities are not provided on the Mobile Food Unit, a toilet facility must be available within 200 ft. of the unit.
- Upon application for a Permit under these Regulations, a Mobile Food Unit's Mobile Operator must provide the Department with written permission by the owner of the toilet facility for use of restrooms by the Permittee for the Mobile Food Unit. The written permission must remain on the Mobile Food Unit at all times. A Mobile Food Unit may not operate when the facility providing the toilet facilities is not open for business. Toilet facilities must be located within a business establishment, must include a flush-type toilet and hand lavatory supplied with hot and cold running water under pressure, and must meet all requirements of the Texas Administrative Code Title 25 Chapter 228. If the toilet facilities are Portable Toilets or similar facilities, the permit will not be approved. If there is a relocation of the Mobile Food Unit to another location for more than two hours, written permission to use an approved toilet facility must be acquired and presented to the Department.
- A Mobile Food Unit is not required to obtain written permission for use of a restroom if they will not be on that property for more than two hours.