
**Food Facility Plan Review Guidelines
NEW or REMODEL
Carts, Mobile Units or Semi-Permanent Buildings**

You have requested information to begin the process of establishing a food service operation in Lewis & Clark County for a Cart, Mobile Unit or a Semi-Permanent Building. **THIS PROCESS MAY TAKE 30 DAYS BEFORE YOU CAN BEGIN WORK ON YOUR FACILITY.**

The steps you need to take are as follows:

1. Review plan review materials and develop your plan completely on paper and obtain approval before any equipment or materials are purchased. We are happy to meet with you to discuss your project and design. Call 447-8361 for an appointment.
2. Submit the required plan review information along with the appropriate plan review fee payable to the Lewis & Clark County Health Department.
3. After plan approval, begin construction or remodeling. When completed call for inspection and licensing approval.

Plans submitted for review need to include the following:

1. Provide the proposed menu. Limited water and wastewater capacity will limit the menu options for mobile units, carts and semi permanent buildings. The addition of an approved servicing area can increase your options. See below.
2. Provide plans that are a minimum of 11 x 14 inches in size, including the layout of the floor plan accurately drawn to a minimum scale of ¼ inch = 1 foot.
3. Show the location of all food equipment. Each piece of equipment must be clearly labeled on the plan with its common name. Submit drawings of self-service hot and cold holding units with sneeze guards.
 - a. Choose commercial grade equipment.
 - b. Provide a food equipment schedule to include manufacturer and model numbers. Providing specification sheets on the equipment allows for faster review.
4. Part of the review process is a calculation for adequate storage capacity. This determination is made by using the maximum number of meals to be served and the number of hours of operation per day. Use numbers that show a plan for success.
5. Handwashing sinks must be conveniently located in or on your mobile food unit and supplied with hot and cold running water, soap and paper towels.
6. Provide a 3 compartment sink for utensil washing. The compartments must be large enough for the largest utensil. This must be either located within the unit or at an approved servicing area.

7. Provide detailed plumbing schedule that includes location of water supply lines, hot water generating equipment with capacity and recovery rate, backflow prevention, and wastewater line connections. All food equipment with wastewater lines must have an indirect connection to the sewer.
8. Designate other areas that will be used for storage. Include an area set aside for storing personal belongings (coats, purses, backpacks, etc.).
9. Semi-permanent building applications must include contracts for employee restrooms within 200 feet of the building, water and sewer servicing and garbage disposal.

Servicing Area

1. Some operations are best supported by a licensed kitchen. This is called a servicing area for mobile units or food carts. If the unit is completely self contained, then a servicing area is not required. This would most likely be for a semi-permanent building or a mobile food unit.
2. Any shared kitchen must have prior approval from us. This will require an operation review for that kitchen. If the facility is already at capacity, then we would not approve additional use.
 - a. For a shared kitchen, provide a contract that indicates when you would have access and what facilities you will be allowed to use.
 - b. A home kitchen will not be approved as a service area. All food operations must be completely separate from living quarters.
3. Licensing requirements for servicing area:
 - a. If owned and licensed as a food establishment by the mobile unit operator
 - i. Mobile food license required
 - ii. Commissary license is not required
 - b. If owned and licensed as a food establishment by a second party
 - i. Mobile food license required
 - ii. Commissary license is required by the mobile food vendor

Water

1. Water Source: Water must be obtained from a licensed Public Water Supply.
2. Connections to fill water tanks must be from a drinking water quality hose that is protected from contamination.
3. Storage capacity requirements are calculated by using the following information
 - a. Number of hours of operation between filling
 - b. Number of employees per day
 - c. Capacity of the 3 compartment sink and number of times utensils washed per day
 - d. Pump capacity on water lines in gallons per minute, number of times hands are washed per day

4. Water hauling: You can become a licensed water hauler for servicing semi-permanent buildings with an approved vehicle.

Wastewater

1. Storage Capacity: Wastewater tank must be 15% larger than the water storage tank.
2. Disposal: A contract with a dumping station or septic hauler must be provided for your operation.

Rules for food service establishments can be found at the following web page:

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/FCSS/RetailFood>

If your mobile unit is located **outside the city limits**, then you will need to contact the Lewis & Clark County Permit Coordinator for information regarding any subdivision approvals, recorded covenants or other restrictions for the proposed development.

If your mobile unit is located **inside the city limits**, you must contact city planning for zoning requirements, review and approval.

Other agencies may have requirements that you must meet. Contact the following agencies for review and approval for your project depending on your proposed facility location.

City Limits

**City of Helena Community Development
Building Division**
316 N. Park, Room 435
Helena, MT 59623
(406) 447-8437

City of Helena Fire Inspection
300 Neill Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
(406) 447-8472

City of East Helena
City Hall
7 E. Main
East Helena, MT 59635
(406) 227-5321

Lewis & Clark County

Building Codes Bureau
PO Box 200517
Helena, MT 59620-0517
(406) 841-2040

**Department of Justice
Fire Prevention & Investigation Section**
2225 11th Ave.
Helena, MT 59601
(406) 444-2050

On-Site Wastewater

Subdivision Approval
Christal Ness – Permit Coordinator
316 N. Park, Room 230
Helena, MT 59623
447-8392

Environmental Health Division
316 N. Park, Room 230
Helena, MT 59623
447-8351

Non-Municipal Water System

Public Water Supply:
MT Department of Environmental Quality
1520 E. Sixth Ave
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620
444-4400