



# TARRANT COUNTY

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

1101 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76104  
<http://health.tarrantcounty.com>

### MOBILE UNITS

- A. A mobile unit, for the purpose of these guidelines, is defined as a totally enclosed, vehicle mounted food establishment designed to be readily moveable. A mobile unit will be required where open food (except hot dogs-for hot dogs see Cart requirements) will be prepared, stored or served on site to the public.
- B. A three compartment sink with two drain boards is required in the mobile unit along with equipment able to cook and/or hold food at proper temperatures. Mechanical refrigeration will be required to hold food at 41°F or below. The use of use of ice or dry ice as means of maintaining food below 41°F is not approved unless written permission from this department is given.
- C. The mobile unit shall provide adequate and properly constructed counter space for the preparation and holding of food.
- D. The unit shall have adequate lighting which is properly shielded.
- E. All food products must come from approved, permitted sources. All prepackaged foods must be properly labeled. Home prepared foods of any kind are not permitted.
- F. Food and food contact items must be stored and dispensed in a manner to prevent contamination.
- G. Mobile food establishments shall provide only single service articles for use by the consumer.
- H. The potable water system must be under pressure or may be a gravity system and must be able to deliver at least one half (.5) gallons per minute. This system must be of adequate capacity, as determined by the department, for food preparation, utensil cleaning, and hand washing. The water tank inlet shall be 3/4 inch inner diameter or less and be provided with a hose connection of a size or type that will prevent its use for any other service. The water inlet must be capped at all times except during time of drainage.
- I. All ceilings, walls, flooring, counters, cupboards, etc., must be finished to be smooth, durable, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. All windows that can be opened must be properly screened and the door must be kept closed tightly or also be screened.
- J. All food and food contact items are to be stored off of the ground and protected from contamination.

- K. A covered trash container must be provided for use by the public and public restrooms must be easily accessible to employees.
- L. Liquid waste must be stored in a detention tank that is at least 15% larger than the water supply tank and be sloped to a drain that is 1" inner diameter or greater and be equipped with a shut off valve. All connections for servicing the waste disposal facility shall be of different size or type than those used to supply potable water. Liquid waste must be flushed and be disposed of in an approved sanitary sewer. Discharge of wastewater on to the ground or into a storm sewer is prohibited.
- M. If unwrapped foods of any kind are prepared, stored or served, then a hand sink must be provided and equipped with hot and cold water, paper towels dispensed from a dispenser, and hand soap.
- N. The following items must be kept on site and used as necessary:
1. A calibrated product thermometer scaled 0°F to 220°F
  2. Test strips for the type of sanitizer used
  3. Food grade gloves (highly recommended), or demonstrate how secondary protection for ready-to-eat food will be conducted
- O. All mobile units are required to obtain an annual food service permit from the Tarrant County Public Health Department prior to setting up business. The unit must be in compliance with the Texas Food Establishment Regulations and this guideline to obtain a food service permit. Please be advised that this department does not have health jurisdiction in all of the cities in Tarrant County and some cities have zoning or vending ordinances that will restrict the use of mobile units. You may contact this department as to what cities we regulate but please contact the individual city in which you plan to operate for any other restrictions.
- P. All mobile units must operate from an approved commissary. The mobile unit owner must submit to this department a letter from the owner of the commissary giving permission to use that facility for the proper storage of supplies and for the clean up of the unit. All mobile units must report at least once per day to the commissary (please see the Commissary Guidelines for additional requirements).
- Q. If the mobile unit exists, the owner must submit plans or demonstrate that the unit meets the requirements of this guideline. If the mobile unit will be new the owner must submit a set of plans, drawings, etc, that fully describes the mobile unit to this department, for approval. The plans will be reviewed by the inspector for completeness and conformity to the regulations. The plans are to include but are not limited to:
1. A menu
  2. Potable water and waste water retention tank capacities
  3. The number and size of the sinks
  4. A drawing of the equipment layout in the mobile unit
  5. The make and model numbers of equipment to be used
  6. How food and supplies are to be stored on site
  7. What materials will be used to construct the interior of the unit
  8. What are the locations the mobile unit will serve
- R. Mobile units that have not been previously permitted by the Tarrant County Public Health Department or those that have had a change of ownership must meet the current requirements of this Department. Contact this department for information on the current requirements.

- S. The owner of the mobile unit must obtain a Food Handlers card for each employee prior to opening. The owner may also be required to obtain a Food Managers Certification if deemed necessary.



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### Food Carts

- A. A cart, for the purpose of these guidelines, is defined as an open, vehicle mounted food service establishment designed to be readily moveable. A cart may be used for packaged or unpackaged non-potentially hazardous food and prepackaged potentially hazardous food. The only open potentially hazardous food allowed on a cart will be fully cooked, hot dog like products including bratwurst. A complete menu must be submitted for approval. Please be advised that if food products not approved by this department are found on the cart this could mean closing of the establishment and revocation of the permit.
- B. If any unwrapped foods are prepared, stored, displayed, or served, on the cart then a three-compartment sink, and hand sink with soap and paper towel will be required on the cart.
- C. Carts, which require a water system, must have a potable water system which is under pressure or gravity feed and able to provide hot and cold water at one-half (.5) gallon per minute minimum. The system must be of an adequate capacity, as determined by the department, for food preparation, utensil cleaning and hand washing. The water inlet must be located so it will not be contaminated by waste discharge, road dust, oil, grease, etc. The water outlet must be capped at all times except during time of service. Liquid waste must be stored in a retention tank that is at least 15% larger than the water supply tank. Liquid waste may only be disposed of in an approved sanitary sewer. Discharge of waste water on to the ground or into a storm sewer is prohibited.
- D. Mechanical refrigeration and hot food storage must be provided for the maintenance of all potentially hazardous foods. All potentially hazardous food must be kept at 41°F or below or at 140°F or above. The use of ice, dry ice, and sterno as a means of maintaining proper food temperatures is not approved unless written permission from this department is given. Coolers that are smooth, durable, and easily cleanable may be used for the storage of soft drinks. The use of Styrofoam is not approved.
- E. All food products must come from approved sources. All prepackaged foods must be properly labeled. Home-prepared foods of any kind are not permitted.
- F. All finishes on the cart must be smooth, durable, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable.

- G. All food and food contact items are to be stored off of the ground and protected from contamination. The use of open condiments is not approved. Condiments must be dispensed from individual packets or from a closed dispenser, e.g. a ketchup squeeze container.
- H. Wiping cloths must be stored in an approved sanitizer at appropriate strength when not in actual use.
- I. A covered trash container must be provided for use by the public and public restrooms must be easily accessible to employees.
- J. All portions of the cart must be properly situated under a canopy or building overhang.
- K. The following items must be kept on site and used as necessary:
  - 1. A calibrated product thermometer scaled 0°F to 220°F
  - 2. Test strips for the type of sanitizer used
  - 3. Food grade gloves (highly recommended)
- L. Each employee must obtain a Food Handlers Card prior to the permit being issued and the owner must obtain a Food Managers Certification if required.
- M. All carts are required to obtain an annual Food Service Permit from the Tarrant County Public Health Department prior to setting up business. The cart must be in compliance with the Texas Food Establishment Regulations and this guideline to obtain the food service permit. Please be advised that the Tarrant County Public Health Department does not have jurisdiction in all of the cities in Tarrant County and some cities have zoning or vending ordinances that limit or will not allow carts to operate. You may contact this department as to what cities we regulate but please contact the individual city in which you plan to operate as to any other restrictions.
- N. All carts must operate from an approved commissary. The cart operator must submit to this department a letter, from the owner of the commissary, giving permission to use that establishment as a commissary and that commissary must be approved by this department. All carts must report at least once per day to the commissary for supplies, clean up of the cart, and any other activities related to the operation of the cart, e.g. use of a three-compartment sink for washing large items. When not in use the cart must be stored at the commissary in a covered area protected from the weather.
- O. If the cart is existing, the owner must demonstrate that the cart meets the requirements of this guideline. If the cart will be new, a set of plans, drawings, etc, that fully describes the cart must be submitted to this department for approval. The plans will be reviewed by the inspector for completeness and conformity to the regulations and this guideline. The plans are to include but are not limited to:
  - 1. A menu
  - 2. Potable water and waste water retention tank capacities
  - 3. The number and size of the sinks
  - 4. The make and model numbers of equipment to be used
  - 5. How food and supplies are to be stored on site
  - 6. What materials are used to construct the cart
  - 7. What locations the mobile unit will serve

8. A drawing or picture of the unit if already built

- P. Any adjunct equipment in addition to the cart must be approved by this department. Grills or other such equipment must be of commercial grade and be physically attached to the cart. If this equipment is to be added after the permitting inspection then this department must be contacted for approval.



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### COMMISSARY GUIDELINE FOR MOBILE UNITS AND CARTS

A commissary, as defined for the purpose of supporting a mobile food unit or food cart, shall meet the definition outlined in the regulations under Food Establishment. In addition, the commissary must be able to meet the following requirements:

1. Shall be a food service establishment, permitted and inspected by the Tarrant County Health Department or other Health Department recognized by the Tarrant County Health Department.
2. Shall have adequate storage space to house the cart or allow parking for the mobile unit.
3. Shall provide as a minimum a three compartment sink for the washing of pots, pans, utensils, and other such items used to hold or serve food and hold food contact items.
4. Shall provide dedicated space for the storage of dry goods, refrigerated foods, paper goods, and other items belonging to the mobile unit or cart owner.
5. Shall be an establishment that is accessible to the operator of the cart or mobile unit everyday at times agreeable to both the commissary owner and the mobile food unit/cart owner.
6. Shall provide adequate equipment for the proper cooking or reheating of food.
7. Shall provide adequate space/equipment for the proper cooling of hot food.

The commissary must be able to meet the above requirements **and** be approved by the Tarrant County Health Department. This department reserves the right to disapprove a submitted commissary if that location is deemed to be unable to meet the above requirements based on past inspections of the establishment.

This department reserves the right to waive any of the above requirements if the requirement is found to be unwarranted. This waiver will be recorded as part of the record.

*The following cities provide their own permits and foodhandler cards*

<b>Tarrant County</b>
Azle
Bedford
Benbrook
Blue Mound
Burleson
Colleyville
Crowley
DFW Airport
Dalw. Gardens
Edgecliff Village
Everman
Forest Hill
Grapevine
Haltom City
Haslet
Hurst
Keller
Kennedale
Lake Worth
Lakeside
Linkwood
Mansfield
Pantego
Pelican Bay
Rendon
Richland Hills
River Oaks
Saginaw
Sansom Park
Southlake
Watauga
Westlake
Westworth Village
White Settlement

Fort Worth	X	817-392-7255
Arlington	X	817-459-6777
Grand Prairie	X	
N Richland Hills	X	817-427-6650
Eules	X	817-685-1625

***Be sure to check with the cities for their ordinances regarding mobile vending***



# Commissary Agreement

I agree to report to the commissary facility listed below each operational day for all cleaning and service operations, including filling water tanks disposal of wastewater, cleaning of equipment and utensils, and storage of supplies. I further agree to obtain all supplies from an approved source. This commissary facility meets all criteria for a commissary as described in the current Texas Food Establishment Rules, § 229.169 (b & c).

Failure to abide by this agreement may result in legal action being taken to revoke your permit to operate this Mobile Food Unit, Pushcart or Temporary food Establishment.

## DOING BUSINESS AS

(Legal Name of Business): \_\_\_\_\_

## OWNER

(Owner of the Mobile Food Unit of Pushcart):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

////////////////////////////////////

I agree to provide commissary services for the above mobile food unit, pushcart or temporary food establishment. My commissary facility meets all commissary criteria outlined in the Texas Food Establishment Rules, § 229.169 (b & c).

## BUSINESS NAME

(Name of commissary): \_\_\_\_\_

**BILLING ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_ **ZIP CODE** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** [ ] Owner or [ ] Authorized Agent

# Mobile Renewals

Mobile vehicles must be inspected before permit will be renewed or issued. Inspections are at this location:

Dr. Marion J. Brooks Building  
Tarrant County Public Health  
1101 S. Main Street, Room 2300  
Fort Worth, TX 76104  
***(NO HOOKUPS AVAILABLE)***

*Inspections are held Monday through Friday  
8 - 9 a.m. (none on holidays)*

Mobile vendors who do not own their own commissary must submit a letter on company letterhead from that commissary stating they are approved to use that facility at that location as their commissary.

A copy of the commissary permit is also required. This must be submitted every year.

*Payment is due by your expiration date otherwise a late fee of 10%-30% will apply the 11<sup>th</sup> of each month.*

Manager certification is required and additional employees must have food handler card/certificates.