



# 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.