



HAWAII STATE
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

PROCEDURES FOR OPENING A MOBILE FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

Procedure for obtaining a permit from the State of Hawaii Department of Health Sanitation Branch to operate a land based mobile food establishment (lunch wagon, pushcart, trailer, etc.).

Permitting of a mobile food establishment involves the approval of a support kitchen and the mobile food establishment (push cart, lunch wagon, food trailer, etc.). ALL mobile food establishments must have a support kitchen. A mobile food establishment may have more than one support kitchen. The permit(s) issued will be based on the address of the primary support kitchen and the sanitarian that inspects the primary support kitchen will be responsible for the initial approval of the mobile food establishment.

Support Kitchen Requirements.

1. The support kitchen is required to be a food establishment with proper facilities that meet the requirements to support the operation of the mobile food establishment.
2. **Home kitchens are not allowed.**
3. A separate permit may be required for the support kitchen if there is food preparation and/or food storage and the support kitchen is not already permitted by the owner of the proposed mobile food establishment.
4. If the owner of the mobile food establishment is not the owner of the support kitchen, an existing permitted support kitchen may need to be shared. The sanitarian that inspects the support kitchen should be contacted to determine if a food establishment can be shared or if another support kitchen must be found.
5. If the support kitchen is acceptable, a "APPROVED FOOD ESTABLISHMENT AGREEMENT" form is required to be filled out and signed by the owners of the proposed mobile food establishment and the existing support kitchen.
6. If the support kitchen is connected to an individual wastewater system, in lieu of a public sewer, approval from the State of Hawaii Department of

Health Wastewater Branch is required because of a potential increase in wastewater generation.

Mobile Food Establishment Requirements.

1. Plan review.

If a mobile food establishment is to be built or purchased and was not approved in the past by the Sanitation Branch, properly drawn plans must be submitted to the Sanitation Branch with a plan review application and the required fee for review and approval. The plans should be easy to understand with dimensions given or drawn to scale. A proposed menu should accompany the plans so a proper review of facilities can be done. The plans should include the floor layout (top view looking down) and side view(s) where any pass-thru windows or other outer openings will be located. Equipment should be identified and details of the water supply and wastewater system must be included. Pushcarts may be required to show side views if necessary to provide information on equipment set up and how the food and food-contact surfaces will be protected. The sanitarian will review the plans and work with the applicant until the plans are satisfactory. Upon approval of the plans, the mobile food establishment can be constructed, purchased or set up and prepared for inspection.

2. Details of Requirements.

- a. A hand wash station within the mobile food establishment is required when there is handling of any open food.
- b. If the mobile food establishment sells only pre-packaged food, the hand washing requirement may be waived.
- c. Water. The minimum amount of water required for hand washing and minor utensil washing is 5 gallons. Additional water may be required depending on the amount of food handling/food preparation/cooking/equipment washing involved. Hot water is not required unless there is equipment washing involved.
- d. Water tank. The water tank should be designed to be of safe materials, durable, smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. The water must be dispensed thru a free-flowing nozzle (no push button type) into a sink. Water flow may be generated by gravity or an electric pump and must allow both hands to be washed at the same time.
- e. Wastewater tank. The wastewater tank must be at least 15% larger than the water tank. The tank should be designed to allow proper disposal of wastewater into an approved sewage system.
- f. Hand soap and disposable paper towels shall be provided for hand washing.

- g. Pass-thru window. The pass-thru window should be no larger than 5 square feet (2 feet by 2 ½ feet, 1 foot by 5 feet, etc.) and provided with an approved closing device that can keep the opening closed when not in active use. If there is more than one pass-thru window, they should be spaced at least 2 feet apart.
- h. Hot holding units shall hold hot foods at 135°F or higher.
- i. Cold holding units shall hold cold foods at 41°F or lower.
- j. A probe thermometer must be available for checking food temperatures.
- k. All surfaces of the mobile food establishment shall be durable, smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable.
- l. The mobile food establishment shall be vermin (insects, rodents, etc.) proof.
- m. All equipment shall be physically attached to the mobile food establishment. Serving tables, hibachis, coolers, and other equipment used for the food operation are not allowed to be set on the ground outside of the mobile food establishment. A trailer on wheels attached by a hitch to the mobile food establishment may be allowed **for cooking purposes only**. All food handling including cutting after cooking, shall be conducted within the mobile food establishment.
- n. **Connections to water lines, wastewater drains or plumbing, power lines and or other utility service lines are not allowed.**
- o. The Food Establishment Permit must be posted on the mobile food establishment and shall be easily visible to the public.
- p. The number of the food establishment permit shall be permanently displayed on 2 sides of the exterior of the mobile food establishment in characters not less than 4 inches high, of strokes not less than ¼ inch wide and of a color that contrasts the background.
- q. The mobile food establishment is required to return to the support kitchen as necessary for cleaning and servicing (washing of equipment, walls, floors, refilling the water tank, disposing of wastewater, etc.).
- r. If the owner of the mobile food establishment is not also the owner of the approved food establishment, the following shall apply:
 - (1) Written documentation detailing the operational agreement between the two parties shall be provided. The documentation required shall include, but not be limited to, the days, times, and specific types of operations to be conducted in the approved food establishment. The written documentation must be submitted annually along with the renewal application and fees;
 - (2) The approved food establishment shall be provided with a means by which use of the facility can be documented and verified by the director. Acceptable methods are:
 - (A) The use of time cards stamped by a punch clock sealed by the director;

- (B) A tamper-proof electronic log-in;
 - (C) Log-in sheets listing dates and times of commissary use shall be maintained on a form provided by the department. Each daily entry shall be initialed or signed by representatives of both the commissary and the mobile food establishment: or
 - (D) An alternative record keeping method approved by the director if such method adequately documents the usage of the commissary by the mobile food establishment.
- (3) These records shall be retained at the commissary for at least twelve months and shall be made available to the director upon request;
 - (4) Separate clearly designated storage areas for food, supplies, and equipment shall be provided in the approved food establishment for use by the mobile food establishment.
- (s) A private home kitchen shall not be used as an approved food establishment.

Prior to the final inspection, a food establishment permit application(s) must be submitted to the Sanitation Branch. The sanitarian will determine the permit fee amount based on the food operations involved. When the mobile food establishment and support kitchen are ready for inspection, the applicant can make an appointment with the sanitarian for an inspection at the support kitchen location. The mobile food establishment and support kitchen (if a permit is required) will be approved to operate upon submittal of the completed permit application, required fee, and a satisfactory inspection. The permits will be mailed to the operator, but the satisfactory inspection report with permit payment is recognized as the temporary permit to operate.

A mobile food establishment selling only pre-packaged non-potentially hazardous food such as bottled water, canned sodas, potato chips, and candy from approved sources, and whole, uncut fresh fruits or vegetables are exempt from the requirements of Hawaii Admin Rules Chapter 11-50 and are not required to obtain a food establishment permit.