



Mobile Food Establishments: HOW DO I START ONE?

A Mobile Food Establishment (Mobile FE) is a food establishment capable of being readily moved and operates in conjunction with a Support Kitchen. This includes, but is not limited to, trailer-type vehicles, lunchwagons, tour cruise boats, push carts and peddlers.

A passing inspection for the Mobile FE and Support Kitchen must be received from the Sanitation Branch before the Mobile FE can operate for business.

Support Kitchen requirements:

A Support Kitchen is required to have a current Food Establishment Permit and must be able to “support” the operation of the Mobile FE — this is determined by the inspector based on your business plan, menu, and the facilities of the proposed Support Kitchen. A Mobile FE may have more than one Support Kitchen. Private home kitchens are not allowed.

Applications & Forms

If the owner of the Mobile FE is not the owner of the Support Kitchen you must submit:

- “Application for Food Establishment Permit” & permit fee
Permit fee is based on the operations conducted at the Support Kitchen.
- “Support Kitchen Use Agreement” form
This form will detail operations conducted at the Support Kitchen and days & time of usage. This form requires the signature of the owner/agent of authority as consent to the use of their kitchen. If operation of a Mobile FE requires multiple Support Kitchens, an agreement form must be completed for each one. The form must be updated and submitted annually when the Food Establishment Permit for the Support Kitchen is renewed.

Mobile FE requirements:

Applications & Supporting Documents

- “Application for Food Establishment Permit”, permit fee & menu
Permit fee is based on the menu and food operations conducted on the Mobile FE.
- “Application for Plan Review”, plan review fee & plans (floor layout)
If a Mobile FE is to be built or purchased and was not previously approved by DOH, plans must be submitted. Plans do not have to be professionally made but must be drawn to scale. Top view & side view perspectives are required and should include placement of sink(s), equipment, pass-thru opening(s), etc. Push carts may need to provide additional information on equipment set-up and how the food and food contact surfaces will be protected. Upon approval of the plans, the Mobile FE can be constructed, purchased or set-up and prepared for inspection.



Mobile FE requirements (continued) :

Equipment Details

Sink(s):

A handwash sink is required when there is handling of open food. Water flow may be generated by gravity or an electric pump that allows both hands to be washed at the same time. Additional sink(s) and size of sink(s) will be determined based on the Mobile FE operation (food prep, warewashing, etc.). Mobile FE serving pre-packaged foods only does not require a sink.

Water tanks:

The potable water tank must be at least 5 gallons in capacity. The wastewater tank must be >15% in capacity than the potable water tank. Water tank capacity requirements will be based on the menu/ operations — more operations conducted on the Mobile FE will require more water. Water tanks must be of safe materials, durable, smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable.

Food equipment:

Hot-holding units must maintain food temperature of ≥ 135°F.
Cold-holding units must maintain food temperature of ≤ 41°F.
Any equipment used for the operation of the Mobile FE must be physically attached to the unit. Serving tables, hibachis, coolers, and other equipment used for the Mobile FE food operation are not allowed to be set on the ground, outside Mobile FE. A trailer on wheels attached by a hitch to a Mobile FE may be allowed for cooking purposes only. All food handling must be conducted within the Mobile FE.

Pass-thru and openings:

Pass-thru window(s) are recommended to be no larger than 5 square feet and is required to have a closure that is able to be put into place when window is not in active use. If there are more than one pass-thru, it is recommended that they be spaced at least 2 feet apart. Openings must be screened and protected from entrance of vermin and pests.

Materials and surfaces:

All surfaces of the Mobile FE must be durable, smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable.

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FAQ

Where can I find a Support Kitchen?

Any food establishment with a current permit with DOH may be used as a Support Kitchen.

Can I use my home kitchen as a Support Kitchen? No.

Where can I park and sell from my lunchwagon?

Contact City & County at (808)768-4385. We issue a food establishment permit but all Mobile FEs must comply with regulations of other agencies.

Can I cook outside of my lunchwagon? No.

All equipment to be used for Mobile FE operation must be on-board unit or attached to unit.

If you have additional questions, please contact your local Sanitation Branch office:

Oahu (808)586-8000 • Hilo (808)933-0917 • Kona (808)322-1507 • Maui (808)984-8230 • Kauai (808)241-3323