

City of Alexandria Food Truck Pilot Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where can Food Trucks vend?

The pilot program adopted by City Council on May 17, 2014 allows food trucks to vend:

- in parking lots of public properties including parks and recreation centers, schools and other public properties where permission has been granted by the City. Certain public locations have been pre-approved for food truck vending. Those locations, and any changes to the locations, are posted on the food truck page of the City's website.
- in parking lots of private properties such as office buildings, hotels, multifamily buildings, industrial facilities, churches or other commercial locations that have parking lots, with the permission of the property owner.
- at Farmer's Markets located on a paved parking lot with the permission of the market master, and
- at Special Events approved by the City with a Special Events Permit.

Please note that a property that becomes exclusively used for Food Trucks (i.e. does not have another active use) requires a special use permit for an "outdoor food and craft market" as regulated by the Zoning Ordinance.

2. Do City parks and recreation centers have additional criteria for vending?

Yes, additional information for Food Truck vending at City parks and recreation centers may be found on the food truck page of the City's website.

3. Is the program temporary?

The program is scheduled to run from July 1, 2014 to October 31, 2015.

4. How do I apply for a Food Truck Vendor Permit?

A Food Truck vendor may obtain an application for a Food Truck Vendor Permit on the City's website, at the City's Permit Center, or at the Health Department. The application process starts with a Health Department inspection and ends with the final permit being issued at the Alexandria Permit Center. An appointment must be made ahead of time with the Health Department so we encourage you to call the Health Department at 703.746-4866 for more information.

Additionally, on Thursday, July 3, 2014 the City will hold a one day permit day when Food Truck vendors may come to City Hall to obtain all necessary permits. The information about the permit process can be found on the food truck page of the City's website.

5. How much are the fees for a Food Truck Vendor Permit?

Food Truck Vendor Fee: \$250 annually (\$125 for July 1 through December 31, 2014)

Food Truck application fee: \$100 annually

Health Department City and State Fees: \$90 annually

Health Department Plan Review Fee: \$200 (one-time fee)

Propane Tank Fire Safety permit fee: \$143 for 6 months

Business License Tax: \$250 annually

6. *How does a Food Truck Vendor pay taxes?*

Food Truck Vendors (including corporations, partnerships and individuals) doing business in the City of Alexandria are required to apply for a business license and pay the business license tax, within 30 days of starting business. The license tax for Food Truck Vendors, which are considered Retail Peddlers-Consumable Items Only, are not based on gross receipts but required to pay a flat license tax annually of \$250.00. Additional business license information can be found in the Tax Guide for New Businesses.

All Food Truck Vendors that sell food and/or beverages to be consumed by the purchaser at once must collect, report, and pay the City tax on meals to the City on a monthly basis. The tax is four percent (4%) of the total amount charged for the meal. This tax is in addition to the state sales tax. Additional information on taxable and nontaxable items is provided in the Meal Sales Tax Guidelines.

7. *Will Food Trucks be inspected for food safety by the Health Department?*

In addition to the inspection required to obtain the initial permit, Food trucks will routinely be inspected one to four times per year based on their menu and food preparation methods. Examples include:

no foods requiring temperature control for safety – 1x annually
food requires temperature control (but no cooking) for safety – 2x annually
foods requiring thorough cooking for safety – 3x annually
products that are cooked and then cooled (and possibly reheated) (food makes multiple trips through “Danger Zone”) – 4x annually

Food Truck vendors may receive follow-up inspections (in addition to routine inspections) if there are important food safety issues identified as a result of a routine inspection.

8. *Can a property owner apply for a permit to have a Food Truck on their property?*

The Food Truck Pilot Program is a program to permit the Food Trucks, not the property. The program requires that the property where the Food Trucks will vend to already be able to accommodate parking of vehicles and that the Food Truck vending is accessory to the main use on the property. If a property owner wants to change the use of their commercial property to accommodate Food Trucks on a more regular basis, they may apply for a special use permit for an outdoor food and craft market. For information regarding special use permits please call the Department of Planning and Zoning, 703.746.4666.

9. *Where can I file a complaint about a Food Truck?*

Complaints regarding food trucks can be made either through the City’s Call, Click, Connect system, through the food truck page on the City’s website, by calling a Zoning Inspector with the Department of Planning and Zoning at 703.746.4666, or by calling the Police Department Non-Emergency Line at 703.746-4444

10. *Where can I provide feedback about the Food Truck Pilot Program?*

Feedback about the Off Street Food Truck Pilot Program can be submitted on the food truck page on the City’s website or through the City’s Call, Click, Connect system.