



**Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services**

**Licensure & Regulatory Services**  
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## **GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING OR REMODELING A FOOD SERVICE FACILITY**

Are you planning to operate a new retail food service facility or alter an existing facility (either by renovation or the addition of equipment)? The information contained in this packet is intended to assist you in obtaining Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Licensure and Regulatory Services' approval for the use of the new facility or equipment. Please allow ten (10) business days for the initial review of the plans or information submitted. If you have any questions, please contact DHHS, Licensure and Regulatory Services at 240-777-3986.

### **LICENSES AND PERMITS**

#### **SECTION I: NEW FACILITIES**

- [ ] 1.1. Submit a complete set of architectural drawings to Licensure and Regulatory Services.
- [ ] 1.2. Apply for a Food Service Facility License with License and Regulatory Services (see Attachment A for the application).
- [ ] 1.3. If you are planning to provide alcohol beverages, obtain a liquor license by contacting the Board of Licensed Commissioners at 240-777-1999.
- [ ] 1.4. If your facility is a chain or franchise (i.e., there is more than one facility in Maryland with the same menu, processing systems, and facility layout), additional architectural drawings need to be submitted to the State of Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Office of Food Control for review and approval. Contact the State of Maryland Division of Food Control at 410-767-8400 for further information.
- [ ] 1.5. If your facility is serviced by public water and sewer, contact the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) at 301-206-

8000 or the City of Rockville at 301-314-8240 (if your facility is within that jurisdiction) for information on connecting to the public utilities. If your facility is serviced by an on-site water or sewage disposal system, contact the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, Well and Septic Section at 240-777-6300 to obtain approval for on-site systems.

- [ ] 1.6. Obtain a Trader's License by contacting the Clerk of the Circuit Court at 240-777-9460.
- [ ] 1.7. Provide Workers' Compensation Insurance or a Certificate of Compliance from the Workers' Compensation Commission (see Attachment B). Contact 1-800-0479 for more information.
- [ ] 1.8. Provide the name of an employee who has obtained a Montgomery County Certified Food Service Manager's card or who is enrolled in an approved food safety course. The Certified Manager must be an employee with the responsibility for implementing the facility's food safety (HACCP) plan (see Attachment C for more information).

## SECTION II: ALL FACILITIES

**Before construction or renovation work begins, you MUST obtain approval from Licensure and Regulatory Services in addition to obtaining a valid building permit.** Submit one complete set of architectural drawings which must include the following information.

- [ ] 2.1. Menu. List all the food items and beverages you plan to offer and submit a completed HACCP plan (see Attachment D). If your facility has a rotating menu cycle, provide a representative list of the food items and beverages you plan to offer.
- [ ] 2.2. General Layout. Provide scaled drawings identifying the location of all equipment, fixtures, walls, doors, lights, drains, counters, bathrooms, storage rooms, offices, refuse storage, wait staff areas, dining rooms, etc.
- [ ] 2.3. Finish Schedule. List the surface finish of the floors, walls, baseboards, and ceilings. Specify the material and color used for each finish. All finishes must be durable, smooth, washable, non-absorbent, and grease resistant.
- [ ] 2.4. Equipment Specification. List all the equipment to be installed. Include the type, manufacturer, model number, dimensions,

performance capacity, and how the equipment will be installed (casters, legs, or sealed to the floor and wall). Also include information that:

- [ ] 2.4.1. Equipment is listed by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org)) or equivalent. Equipment that is custom built must meet the standards of NSF;
- [ ] 2.4.2. Equipment is moveable or is sealed to adjacent surfaces, on casters, or spaced from walls and adjacent equipment to facilitate cleaning;
- [ ] 2.4.3. Floor mounted equipment is placed on approved 6 inch legs and counter mounted equipment weighing more than 80 lbs. is placed on approved 4 inch legs;
- [ ] 2.4.4. If the equipment is painted, a lead-free, non-toxic, light-colored, glossy enamel paint or high gloss varnish is used;
- [ ] 2.4.5. Shelving for walk-in units is constructed of durable, non-absorbent, and non-corrosive materials such as stainless steel;
- [ ] 2.4.6. The bottom shelf of a shelving unit intended for storing open foods or utensils is at least 18 inches from the floor;
- [ ] 2.4.7. The design of salad bars, buffets, and bulk food service equipment meets the design standards set forth in this guide. When unwrapped food is placed on display, provide covers or install guards to prevent contamination from a customer's sneeze or cough (e.g., a sneeze guard). The guards may be hung from the ceiling, anchored to the adjoining wall, clamped on the display counter, or be free-standing. Provide elevation information on the sneeze guard and submit a cross-section drawing of the installation. Also, provide equipment to maintain hot or cold food at the proper temperature;
- [ ] 2.4.8. All cracks, holes, and gaps between non-portable equipment are sealed or caulked;
- [ ] 2.4.9. An adequate number of preparation tables are provided to separate raw meats from ready-to-eat food items during preparation;

- [ ] 2.4.10. Adequate refrigeration and freezer space capable of maintaining proper temperatures is provided;
- [ ] 2.4.11. Adequate hot holding equipment capable of maintaining proper temperatures is provided if food is to be hot held;
- [ ] 2.4.12. Adequate equipment to rapidly cool and reheat food is provided, if those processes are indicated in the HACCP plan. This equipment must be able to restrict the time a food is in the temperature danger zone; and
- [ ] 2.4.13. If a charbroiler, pit barbeque, smoker, or similar cooking equipment of at least five square feet is installed, an air quality Permit-to-Construct from the Maryland Department of the Environment is obtained. Contact the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Environmental Policy and Compliance at 240-777-7770 for forms or additional information.
- [ ] 2.5. Plumbing Fixtures and Plumbing Riser Diagram (Note: The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is the agency responsible for issuing plumbing permits, except in the city limits of Rockville). Submit architectural drawings that indicate hot and cold running water is provided under pressure in all areas where food is prepared and where equipment and utensils are washed. Produce washing sinks in retail markets only need to be supplied with cold water. The hot water supply must be of sufficient quantity so that hot water is continuously provided, even during periods of peak demand. Refer to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) plan review guide ([www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prev-toc.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prev-toc.html)) for guidelines on sizing water heaters. Also, include information that:
  - [ ] 2.5.1. Utensil washing is provided via a three compartment sink or a mechanical dishwashing machine to properly wash, rinse, and sanitize equipment and utensils. One and two compartment sinks are not approved for utensil washing. Include information that:
    - [ ] 2.5.1.1. A test kit is provided for checking the sanitizer concentration if a chemical sanitizer is used. If hot water is used as the sanitizer, provide a maximum registering thermometer or temperature tape for checking the hot water temperature;

- [ ] 2.5.1.2. A three compartment sink is equipped with right and left integral drainboards. In addition, each compartment must be of sufficient size to accommodate the largest utensil or equipment being cleaned in the sink. Each vat of the three compartment sink must drain independently and indirectly; and
- 2.5.1.3. A mechanical dishwashing machine is equipped with:
  - [ ] 2.5.1.3.1. A pressure gauge for the final rinse cycle;
  - [ ] 2.5.1.3.2. Built-in temperature gauges for the wash and sanitizing cycles;
  - [ ] 2.5.1.3.3. A compartment of sufficient size to accommodate the largest utensil or equipment being cleaned in the unit;
  - [ ] 2.5.1.3.4. A booster heater capable of heating the water to at least 180°F. or an automatic chemical dispensing system; and
  - [ ] 2.5.1.3.5. A pre-rinse device.
- 2.5.2. Hand washing facilities are:
  - [ ] 2.5.2.1. Located in or adjacent to toilet facilities;
  - [ ] 2.5.2.2. Located in each food preparation, processing, and utensil washing area. Additional sinks may need to be installed so that no point is more than 25 feet from a hand sink;
  - [ ] 2.5.2.3. Equipped with soap and disposable hand towel dispensers;
  - [ ] 2.5.2.4. Provided with hot and cold water tempered by the use of a mixing valve or combination faucet. The minimum required hot water temperature is 110°F.;
  - [ ] 2.5.2.5. Provided with a splash shield if the hand sink is less than 18 inches from unprotected food preparation, food storage, or utensil storage areas. Splash shields must extend at least 12 inches above the rim; and

- [ ] 2.5.2.6. Designated for hand washing only.
- [ ] 2.5.3. Dipper wells are provided to store dispensing utensils used in serving frozen desserts. Dipper wells must have:
  - [ ] 2.5.3.1. A water source with control valve;
  - [ ] 2.5.3.2. An air gap at the point that water is introduced into the well; and
  - [ ] 2.5.3.3. An indirect drain.
- 2.5.4. Indirect drain connections are provided for:
  - [ ] 2.5.4.1. Dishwashing machines, refrigerators (unless self contained), steam kettles, ice machines, walk-in units, or any food service equipment that generates waste. Indicate that the equipment drains into an open-site drain; and
  - [ ] 2.5.4.2. Food preparation and utensil washing sinks. Multiple sinks must be provided with independent, as well as indirect, drains.
- [ ] 2.5.5. Direct connections are provided with an approved, properly installed vacuum breaker or backflow preventer for equipment directly connected to a potable water system and/or having a threaded hose bib. Contact WSSC or the City of Rockville for information on approved backflow protection devices;
- [ ] 2.5.6. Floor drains not regularly receiving waste are provided with an automatic trap priming system or 6 inch trap seal;
- [ ] 2.5.7. Waste water lines are not located over food preparation or storage areas;
- [ ] 2.5.8. Mop sinks are provided with hooks for hanging mops and brooms and an approved vacuum breaker;
- [ ] 2.5.9. Bathrooms (Contact WSSC or the City of Rockville for information on the required number of bathrooms and bathroom fixtures) are provided and:
  - [ ] 2.5.9.1. Are fully enclosed;

- [ ] 2.5.9.2. Have self-closing and inward opening doors;
  - [ ] 2.5.9.3. The materials used for the floors, walls, and baseboards meet the criteria specified in Section II.3 of this guide;
  - [ ] 2.5.9.4. Proper ventilation via mechanical ventilation in conjunction with screened louvers or forced make-up air is provided. Mechanical exhaust ventilation must exhaust at a rate of at least 2 cfm per square foot of floor area;
  - [ ] 2.5.9.5. Appropriate covered trash receptacles are provided, including a separate covered receptacle in the women's bathroom; and
  - [ ] 2.5.9.6. New facilities constructed with seats for on-site eating and facilities changing their operation to include on-site eating, are provided with a bathroom for the public. A customer must not pass through the kitchen or food storage area to access the bathroom.
  - [ ] 2.5.10. The location of garbage grinders and trash compactors is specified; and
  - [ ] 2.5.11. The location of a grease recovery unit is specified, if required. Contact WSSC Code Enforcement at 301-206-8000 or City of Rockville at 240-314-8240 for additional information.
- 2.6. Adequate lighting is provided and:
- [ ] 2.6.1. The type and location of lighting and the method of shielding is specified;
  - [ ] 2.6.2. The light levels, in foot candles, for each area, including the interior of walk-in units is specified. The minimum requirement is 50 foot candles in food preparation and utensil washing areas and 20 foot candles 30 inches from the floor in food storage, walk-in units, dining areas during cleaning, and bathrooms; and
  - [ ] 2.6.3. The type of shielding for lights installed inside any equipment is specified.

- [ ] 2.7. A dressing room or personal storage is provided specifying the type and location of lockers, hooks, etc.
- 2.8. Refuse disposal is provided. The information must specify:
  - 2.8.1. For exterior refuse disposal:
    - [ ] 2.8.1.1. The location and type of refuse containers;
    - [ ] 2.8.1.2. The non-absorbent material on which the refuse containers are stored;
    - [ ] 2.8.1.3. The procedure for cleaning refuse containers;
    - [ ] 2.8.1.4. The refuse containers are vermin proof; and
    - [ ] 2.8.1.5. The drainage method for refuse storage areas.
  - 2.8.2. For interior refuse storage:
    - [ ] 2.8.2.1. The location of trash receptacles;
    - [ ] 2.8.2.2. The procedure for cleaning trash receptacles; and
    - [ ] 2.8.2.3. The location of trash storage within facility, if applicable.
- [ ] 2.9. Kitchen and equipment ventilation is provided. Submit architectural drawings indicating that kitchen ventilation is designed and installed to remove grease droplets, vapors, toxic gases, excessive steam or heat, condensation, and smoke from a facility. All ventilation systems must discharge outside the facility and provide the system with make-up air. Make-up air vents must be designed to prevent the entrance of dust, dirt, insects, or other contaminating material. Ventilation of individual equipment may be required to prevent the accumulation of debris and prevent grease or condensate from dripping into food or onto food preparation surfaces. Also, provide information that:
  - [ ] 2.9.1. Bathroom ventilation is separate from other ventilation systems and is vented directly outside;
  - [ ] 2.9.2. The minimum air speed at the edge of the cooking surface is at least fifty (50) feet per minute in the direction of the exhaust;

- [ ] 2.9.3. Air is exhausted from within the hood and air movement is uniform through the hood;
- [ ] 2.9.4. Hood equipment is capable of capturing sudden clouds of steam, vapor, or smoke;
- [ ] 2.9.5. The hood systems are installed to facilitate cleaning and are constructed of stainless steel or durable, smooth, easily cleanable materials (paint is not approved). Interior reinforcing and the fire suppression system must be smooth, easily cleanable, and not create a surface on which grease or condensation will collect and drip;
- [ ] 2.9.6. The hood has a smooth interior and is free of interior lips or edges that may allow grease or dirt to accumulate;
- [ ] 2.9.7. The hood is provided with an approved means to capture and dispose of accumulated grease, such as a removable grease trough;
- [ ] 2.9.8. The distance between the bottom of the hood and the top of the cooking surface is as short as possible, without causing injury or interfering with kitchen personnel at work;
- [ ] 2.9.9. Canopy-type hoods overhang the cooking equipment a minimum of 6 inches on all sides for Underwriters Laboratories (UL) 710 listed hoods. Fabricated canopy-type hoods overhang the cooking equipment a minimum of 12 inches on all sides. The minimum depth must be 24 inches;
- [ ] 2.9.10. Filters are baffle-type or a type approved by the Fire Marshall. Filters must fit tightly against the supporting framework and be easy to remove for periodic cleaning. The bottom of the filter frame is equipped with ¼ inch weep holes. The joints between adjacent filters must prevent the passage of air.; and
- [ ] 2.9.11. The hood ventilation is not blocked by overshelves, broilers, or salamander units unless approval is obtained by this office.
- [ ] 2.9.12. Contact the Department of Permitting Services at 240-777-6200 and Fire Code Enforcement at 240-777-2457 for additional requirements. If your facility is located

within the City limits of Rockville or Gaithersburg, contact those jurisdictions for additional requirements.

2.10. The following miscellaneous items are addressed:

2.10.1. Storage systems:

- [ ] 2.10.1.1. The type, manufacturer, model number, and location of shelving, platforms, etc.;
- [ ] 2.10.1.2. The location for storing cleaners/toxic items, single use items, equipment, utensils, and food, which must be in a separate cabinet or room. Exposed food and utensils must be stored at least 18 inches from the floor;
- [ ] 2.10.2. Doors: All doors to the outside are self-closing and rodent proof;
- [ ] 2.10.3. Choking Posters: Choking posters are provided and posted. Posters may be purchased from the American Red Cross at 301-588-2515;
- [ ] 2.10.4. Delivery: Adequate equipment is provided for the hot and cold transportation of potentially hazardous foods;
- [ ] 2.10.5. A minimum of 36 inches of aisle space is provided in front of equipment;
- [ ] 2.10.6. The method used to dispense single service items or self-service condiments and the location of those items; and
- [ ] 2.10.7. The storage location of clean and soiled laundry. If on-site laundry service is provided, show the location of the washing machine and dryer.

## **Contact Information:**

Department of Health and Human Services, Licensure and Regulatory Services:  
240-777-3986

Department of Permitting Services, Division of Building Construction: 240-777-6200

Department of Permitting Services, Well and Septic Office: 240-777-6300

Office of the Board of Licensed Commissioners (Liquor Control): 240-777-1999

Clerk of the Circuit Court: 240-777-9460

Workers' Compensation Commission: 1-800-492-0479

Fire Code Enforcement/Fire Marshall: 240-777-2457

Department of the Environment, Division of Environmental Policy and Compliance:  
240-777-7770

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission: 301-206-8000

State of Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Food Control:  
410-767-8400

City of Rockville, Inspection Services: 240-314-5040 ([www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov))

City of Barnesville: 301-972-8411 ([www.barnesvillemd.org](http://www.barnesvillemd.org))

City of Gaithersburg: 301-258-6330 ([www.gaithersburgmd.gov](http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov))

City of Laytonsville: 301-869-0042 ([www.laytonsville.md.us](http://www.laytonsville.md.us))

City of Poolesville: 301-428-8927 ([www.ci.poolesville.md.us](http://www.ci.poolesville.md.us))

City of Washington Grove: 301-926-2256 ([www.washingtongrovermd.org](http://www.washingtongrovermd.org))

National Sanitation Foundation: ([www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org))

Underwriters Laboratories: ([www.ul.com](http://www.ul.com))

Food and Drug Administration: ([www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)) For the plan review guide click on:  
([www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prev-toc.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prev-toc.html))

American Red Cross: 301-588-2515 ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))