

Mobile Food License Requirements



**Canton City Public Health
420 Market Ave. N.
Canton, OH 44702**

Getting Started

Step 1: Register your business

- Register your business with the Ohio Secretary of State.

<https://www.ohiosos.gov/businesses/information-on-starting-and-maintaining-a-business/starting-a-business/>.

- Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN).
- Register with the Ohio Department of Taxation.
- Obtain a Certificate of Tax Compliance through the City of Canton Income Tax Dept: 330-430-7900.

Step 2: Read through this entire packet

- Read through all of the different categories of mobile units to determine which applies to you.
- Become familiar with the requirements for all mobiles and the differences between them.

Step 3: Read the Mobile Food Unit Plan Review Questionnaire

- Review and complete the Mobile Plan Review Questionnaire. This document is used by the inspector during the plan review and pre-licensing inspection. All elements of this document must be provided to ensure compliance.
- Some mobile units are not equipped to conduct all licensed activities at/on the mobile unit. If another facility is used to accommodate these activities, that facility must register with the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). A copy of the registration must be submitted with the Plan Review Questionnaire. Additional information on this topic is explained in the General Notes section, Page 11.
- Attach copies of your business registration documents to your questionnaire.
- Contact Canton City Public Health if you have questions or need assistance: 330-489-3327.
- Submit the Mobile Food Unit Plan Review Questionnaire with all documentation.
- Allow two weeks for the Questionnaire to be approved.
- Our office will contact you to schedule a Pre-licensing Inspection

Step 4: Pass a Pre-licensing Inspection

- Review the Mobile Inspection Checklist. This will ensure you have everything you need to pass the pre-licensing inspection.
- A license will not be issued until the mobile unit meets all Food Safety Code requirements.
- You must transport your mobile unit from your storage facility to a parking lot located at 5th St and Cherry Ave NE. You must bring all of the equipment shown on your drawing to the pre-inspection appointment.
- At the inspection, the mobile unit must be fully operational, and utilities and equipment must be connected and properly working. The mobile must be set up according to the detailed drawing that was submitted with your Questionnaire.
- The operator's knowledge of food safety processes and procedures will also be tested at that time. A menu review will be conducted to ensure that all of the processes and procedures regarding storage, preparation, and service of the foods is satisfactory.
- When the mobile passes inspection, the operator will be given an application for the license.
- **The license fee must be paid immediately following a successful pre-licensing inspection.**

What is a mobile food unit?

The Ohio Administrative Code (OAC 3717-1) and Ohio Revised Code ORC (3117.01) defines a mobile food unit as:

"a food service operation or retail food establishment that is operated from a movable vehicle, portable structure, or watercraft and that does not remain at any one location for more than forty consecutive days. If the operation remains at any one location for more than forty consecutive days, the operation is no longer a mobile food service operation."

A mobile food unit is required to move to a new location every forty days. Moving the mobile unit a few feet or pulling an operation around the block and returning to the same location does not comply with the intent of the law. If the mobile unit does not move or cannot be moved every forty days, then the operation cannot be licensed as a mobile food service operation and must be licensed in a different food service category.

Ohio Administrative Code: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/rule-3717-1-01>

Ohio Revised Code: <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-3717.01>

What are the different types of mobile units out there?

Mobile units generally fall into six different categories:

1. Enclosed Trailer/Food Truck
2. Pushcart/Hot Dog Cart
3. Tow Trailer for Knock Down Mobile
4. Frozen Food Truck
5. Delivery-Type Trucks
6. BBQ Pits

Enclosed Trailer/Food Truck



Concession Trailers and Trucks are fully self-contained units with mechanical refrigeration, a complete plumbing system including a hot water tank, and plenty of storage space for multiple day events. These are generally considered “restaurants on wheels”.

Basic Requirements for Enclosed Trailers and Food Trucks:

1. Commercial equipment.
2. Mechanical refrigerators/freezers that are not moved from the concession unit.
3. Sink systems that are large enough to handle all items that must be washed, rinsed and sanitized in the concession. There must be a portable three compartment sink system with water under pressure and sink basins large enough to accommodate the largest piece of equipment at the concession for proper washing, rinsing, and sanitizing.
4. A handwashing sink with hot and cold water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a handwashing sign must also be provided in the unit.
5. A water system, with a recommended minimum of five gallons (i.e. holding tank) that can handle the hot water needs of the concession trailer must be installed.
6. A wastewater system (i.e. wastewater holding tank) must be provided in the unit, with a size of at least 15% greater than the supply water tank.
7. Adequate food and dry goods storage inside the unit.
8. Food sold/served from the Knock Down must be prepared at the concession or a licensed food facility. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen.
9. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.

Pushcart/Hot Dog Cart

Pushcarts usually come in two different configurations; those in which the operator stands inside the cart and those in which they stand behind the cart. Generally, there is no electric or mechanical refrigeration associated with a pushcart, due to the size and limited infrastructure of a push cart.



Basic Requirements for Pushcarts:

1. Pushcarts usually have a grill, flat top, or hot hold steam table that is part of the body of the cart.
2. A cold storage unit is installed into the body of the cart as cold holding is achieved through ice as the coolant.
3. For events greater than four hours, mechanical refrigeration must be provided to maintain time and temperature for safety of food cold at 41° F and below.
4. A handwashing sink with hot and cold running water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a handwashing sign must be provided.
5. There must be a 3-compartment sink system with water under pressure and sink basins large enough to accommodate the largest piece of equipment at the concession for proper washing, rinsing, and sanitizing.
6. Food sold/served from the Push Cart must be prepared at the concession or a licensed food facility. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen.
7. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.

Tow Trailer for Knockdown Mobile



A knockdown mobile consists of a tent and tables which are set up and knocked down at each event. At first impression it may seem like the easiest way to obtain a mobile food business but in reality, they require the most work of all the mobile food unit types.

Basic Requirements for Knockdown Concessions:

1. The knockdown mobile must have all the infrastructure of an enclosed trailer or food truck. See Page 4.
2. Mechanical refrigeration is required. Coolers with ice are NOT permitted.
3. There must be a portable 3-compartment sink system with hot and cold running water under pressure and sink basins large enough to accommodate the largest piece of equipment.
4. A handwashing sink with hot and cold water under pressure, hand soap, paper towels, and a handwashing sign must be provided.
5. Food grade hoses and backflow prevention must be provided.
6. There must be a wastewater disposal system in place to properly collect all of the waste water that is generated from the 3-compartment sink and handwashing sinks. A holding tank or "blue boy" is generally used for this purpose.
7. The stand must be set up on top of a tarp placed on the ground for easy clean-up. The tarp must be used regardless of the type of ground you are setting up on: concrete, asphalt, grass, dirt.
8. Commercial equipment is required including mechanical refrigeration, chest freezers, hot holding units, etc.
9. An overhead covering must be provided to protect the food from potential overhead contamination. The tent must be able to be set up on BOTH asphalt AND grass.
10. Food sold/served from the Knock Down must be prepared at the concession or a licensed food facility. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen.
11. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.

Frozen Food Truck

A frozen food truck is a mobile motorized or non-motorized concession on wheels that normally contains a commercial freezer and only prepackaged frozen product. These are considered mobile retail food establishments since the food is prepackaged and never opened.

Basic Requirements for Frozen Food Trucks and Concession Carts:

1. The frozen food in the licensed mobile unit must be received in its frozen state, prepackaged, and from a licensed commercial distributor.
2. Frozen food being held in storage before sale to the public is prohibited from being stored inside a non-licensed residence.
3. Just like all of the other types of mobile units, commercial equipment is required.
4. A plumbing system, handwashing sink, or three compartment sink is not required since no open food or preparation is taking place. This will be noted on the back of the license.
5. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.



Delivery Type Truck

Delivery type trucks carry prepackaged and non-prepackaged hot and cold type foods.

Basic Requirements for Delivery Type Trucks:

1. These truck types carry only prepackaged hot or cold foods and are not required to have a handwashing or three compartment sink system.
2. Foods must maintain proper holding temperatures at all times.
3. Packaged food on these trucks must come from a wholesale type facility that is inspected and licensed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
4. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.



BBQ Pit

BBQ pit is virtually an oven on wheels. The cooking unit is mounted to the frame of the trailer unit.

Basic Requirements for Mobile Cookers or BBQ pits:

Mobile Cookers / BBQ pits should contain the following:

1. The mobile cooker/BBQ pit must have all the infrastructure of an enclosed trailer or food truck. See Page 4 for more information.
2. Mechanical refrigeration is required. Coolers with ice are NOT permitted.
3. Most mobile cooker trailers utilize an auxiliary unit either consisting of another trailer or knockdown concession stand due to infrastructure needs. See Page 6 for additional information.
4. In the case of mobile cookers and BBQ pits, residential and custom-made equipment such as grills and smokers may be conditionally approved on a case by case basis by the licensor. Equipment such as cut oil barrels are not acceptable as they can create a chemical contamination risk.
5. Food to be served from the Mobile Cooker or BBQ Pit must be prepared at the concession or a licensed food facility. No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen.
6. The original license must be at the unit at all times during operation. Copies of the license are not accepted. A violation with possible suspension of the unit will be recorded for every mobile that does not have the original license available.



Mobile Layout Example

This information is printed on the back of the license.

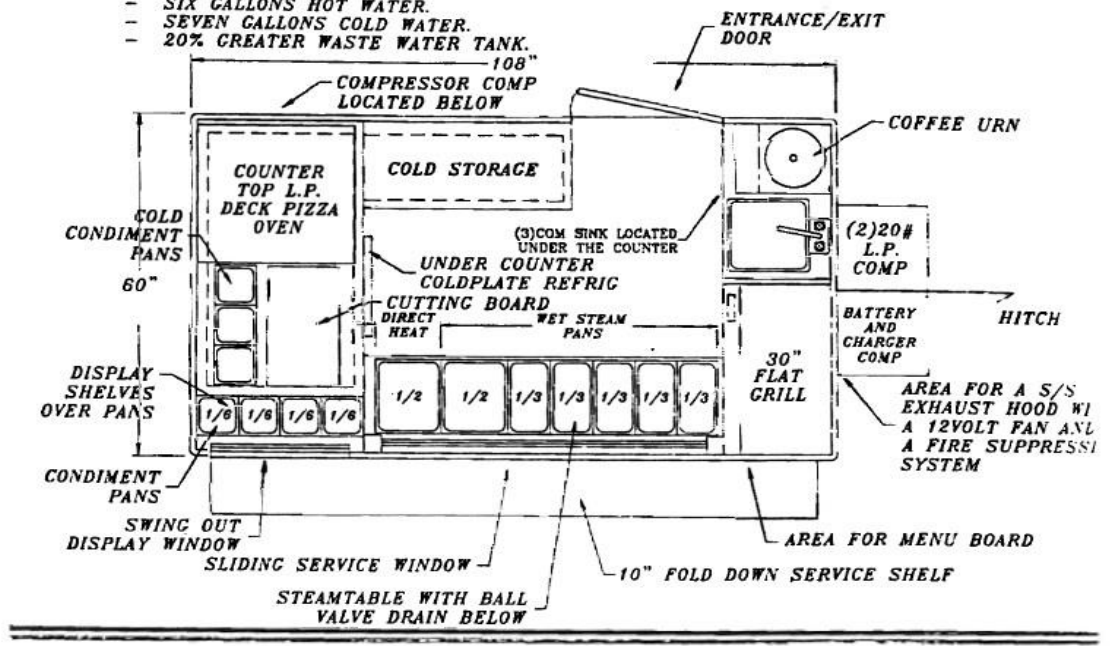
MENU:
 GYROS
 CHEESE STEAK HOAGIE
 CHICKEN PHILLY
 PIZZA STEAK
 CHICKEN PARMESAN
 PEPPERONI ROLL
 MEATBALL & CHEESE
 PREPACKAGED SOFT DRINKS

CONTACT:
 ANDREW DEIKUN
 SUMMIT CO. Health Dept
 1100 GRAHAM RD CIR
 STOW, OH
 330.926.5642

ASSE 1012 or 1024
 required

License #:
 VIN #:
 TOW BEHIND TRAILER

- NOTES:**
- QUILTED S/S INTERIOR WALLS AND CEILING.
 - TREAD PLATE FLOOR.
 - (1) SKYLIGHT.
 - (3) COM. SINK WITH 6" x 10" x 6" BASINS.
 - 10" x 12" x 6" HANDSINK.
 - SIX GALLONS HOT WATER.
 - SEVEN GALLONS COLD WATER.
 - 20% GREATER WASTE WATER TANK.
 - STAINLESS STEEL EXHAUST HOOD.
 - QUILTED STAINLESS STEEL EXTERIOR.
 - FIBERGLASS ROOF.
 - FIBERGLASS STRIPE.
 - PROPANE TANKS ARE SUPPLIED BY OTHERS.



General Notes:

- A mobile food unit is a restaurant on wheels. All food preparation, handling, storage, sanitation, employee illness procedures, and vomit and diarrhea clean-up procedures that pertain to a restaurant also apply to a Mobile Food unit.
- Every mobile food unit must have a mobile food license in order to sell food.
- A pre-inspection must be completed by Canton City Public Health prior to licensing. Additional inspections may be conducted wherever you are set up and selling food. When an inspection is conducted by a health district other than the licensing district, a copy of the inspection report may be sent to the health district issuing the license. Mobile food unit licenses expire annually on March 1 and must be renewed.
- We do not pro-rate the cost of the mobile food license for a partial year. We do not issue license refunds.
- Local regulations/ordinances may limit where a mobile food unit sells and operates. For more information, please contact Canton City Zoning at 330-438-4122.
- All mobile units must have permanent identification on the body of the unit with individual lettering of at least 3 inches tall and 1 inch wide. The sign must contain the following information:
 1. Company name
 2. City of origin
 3. Area code and phone number
- All equipment in a licensed mobile unit must be of commercial grade and approved by a recognized food equipment testing agency, i.e. NSF, UL Listed, etc. **No residential equipment is allowed.**
- Mechanical refrigeration is required. Coolers with ice are not acceptable.
- A food grade water hose and backflow prevention device must be used for potable water. Pictures are included.
- The local health department must post on the back of each license the layout of the operation including the location and type of major equipment, the menu, the license plate number or unit number, any restrictions or exemptions regarding the unit, commissary location (if applicable), and Environmental Health Specialist information.
- Food to be served from the mobile unit must be prepared at the concession or licensed food facility (with approved transport equipment). No food preparation will be allowed from an unlicensed home kitchen and brought to the concession for sale.
- If the mobile operator cannot perform all necessary activities in/at the mobile operation, then a licensed food facility can be used for these activities. The food facility must be licensed by a local health department and/or the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). A copy of the license and registration must be submitted with your Plan Review Questionnaire and maintained on your food unit. To obtain registration with ODA, contact:

Ohio Department of Agriculture Food Safety Division

Phone (614) 728-6250 Fax (614) 644-0720

Email: foodsafety@agri.ohio.gov