



# San Patricio County Environmental Health Department

## *PLAN REVIEW FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS AND PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS*

When a Food Establishment is newly constructed or extensively remodeled, when a Food Establishment has a change of ownership, or when an existing structure is converted to use as a Food Establishment, properly prepared plans and specifications for such construction, remodeling, or conversion, shall be submitted to the Environmental Health Department for review and approval before construction, remodeling, or conversion is begun. The plans and specifications shall indicate the proposal layout, arrangement, mechanical plans, type of construction materials in work areas, and the type and model of proposed fixed equipment to be installed. No food establishment shall be constructed, extensively remodeled or converted except in accordance with the plans and specifications must be approved by the Environmental Health Department. Food facility owners/operators shall ensure during plan reviews, construction, and operation that their facilities comply with all applicable State, County, and City Plumbing, Mechanical, Electrical, Building, Zoning, and Fire Prevention and Protection Codes.

An Environmental Health Inspector shall inspect the Food Establishment prior to the start of operations to ensure compliance with the approved plans and specifications this Article and the Texas Food Establishment Rules.

The attached requirements represent minimal health code requirements, but are not to be considered as totally inclusive of all requirements. Any alteration of the set of plans must first be discussed with the Environmental Health Department office or it may result in noncompliance.

### **Submission of Plans:**

\_\_\_ A set of properly prepared kitchen schematic with specification/legend are required to be submitted to the San Patricio Environmental Health Department at 313 N. Rachal Ave., Sinton, Texas 78387, 361-587-3500. Recommendations may be made on this set of plans and discussed with the person who submitted plans to be reviewed.

### **Certificate of Occupancy:**

\_\_\_ A Certificate of Occupancy from the city shall be obtained before a Health Permit will be issued. Contact the City where you will be operating your establishment for information.

### **Development Permit: (unincorporated areas)**

\_\_\_ A Development Permit from the county shall be obtained for new construction if located within an unincorporated area before a Health Permit will be issued. Contact the Development Permit Department at 361-587-3563..

### **Alteration to Plans:**

\_\_\_ Before any alterations are made to the submitted and approved plans, the plan reviewer must be contacted and approval must be obtained.

\_\_\_ Failure to obtain approval for any changes may prevent the issuance of a health permit.

### ***You are ready to apply for your Health Permit when:***

\_\_\_ Food Establishment Plans have been approved      \_\_\_ Proof of Food Manager Certificate  
\_\_\_ Sales Tax    \_\_\_ DBA    \_\_\_ 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization legal verification

# MAJOR REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVED KITCHENS

## **Food Handler and Food Manager Certification:**

All establishments that handle open food must comply with the following:

\_\_\_a. All employees must obtain and maintain current Food Handler Certificate status. Food Handler classes are offered to the public by the San Patricio County Environmental Health Department. The cost is \$10 per person. Cash is the only acceptable method of payment. Texas State Accredited on-line Certificates are also accepted. We do not honor any Unaccredited Food Handler Certificates (Permits)

\_\_\_b. An **on-duty** manager must obtain and maintain current State Approved Food Manager Certificate. The Original Certificate must be posted A copy of these certificates must be presented to the county to be placed in the food establishment file.

\_\_\_c. During all hours of operation a food establishment must actively have a Certified Food Manager present.

## **Contamination Events**

\_\_\_A written policy must be in place for employees to follow when responding to the clean-up of vomit and diarrheal events

\_\_\_Procedures shall address the specific actions employees must take to minimize the spread of contamination and exposure of employees, consumers, food, and surfaces.

## **First Aid Kit**

\_\_\_First Aid Kits should be made readily available for emergency cases.

## **Water Supply:**

\_\_\_A connection shall be made to an approved public water system or a private source. **If** water supply from a private source is selected as a method to be used; then it is mandatory that the water well be tested prior to operating and must meet the state drinking water requirements. The private source must be tested annually or upon request by the Environmental Health Department. Original Lab results must be submitted for review.

## **Sewage Disposal:**

\_\_\_All sewage and wastewater shall be disposed into a public sewage system or an approved commercial sewage disposal system that meets state and local requirements

## **Walls and Ceilings:**

\_\_\_Walls and wall covering shall be designed, constructed, attached, and installed so they are smooth and easily cleanable.

\_\_\_Exterior walls, windows, and doors that remain open will be protected in a manner as to prevent the entry of all pests.

\_\_\_Except in areas used only for dry storage, concrete, porous blocks, or bricks used for indoor wall construction shall be finished and sealed to provide a smooth, nonabsorbent easily cleanable surface.

\_\_\_Ceilings in all food preparation areas shall be designed, constructed, attached, and installed so they are smooth and easily cleanable. This includes self-service areas, bars and server areas.

\_\_\_Attachments to walls and ceilings such as light fixtures, mechanical room ventilation system components, vent covers, wall mounted fans, decorative items, and other attachments shall be easily cleanable.

\_\_\_Studs, joists, and rafters may not be exposed in areas subject to moisture.

## **Floors:**

\_\_\_Exposed horizontal utility service lines and pipes may not be installed on the floor.

\_\_\_In food establishments in which cleaning methods other than water flushing are used for cleaning floors, the floor and wall junctures shall be covered and closed to no larger than one millimeter.

\_\_\_The floors in food establishments in which water flush cleaning methods are used shall be provided with drains and graded to drain, and the floor and wall junctures shall be covered and tightly sealed.

\_\_\_Carpeting may not be installed as a floor covering in food preparation areas, toilet rooms, refuse storage rooms, or other areas subject to moisture, flushing or spray cleaning methods.

\_\_\_ If carpeting is installed as a floor covering in areas other than those specified in the above paragraph, it shall be securely attached to the floor with durable mastic and installed tightly against the wall with the edges of the carpet secured.

\_\_\_ Floor coverings, mats, and duckboards shall be designed to be removable and easily cleanable.

#### **Shelving and Cabinetry:**

\_\_\_ Unfinished construction is not allowed anywhere. Interiors of all cabinetry and shelving shall be finished with a smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable surface.

\_\_\_ Shelving and racks shall store food and food-related items a minimum of six inches off the floor and provide an easily cleanable area between the floor and lowest shelf.

\_\_\_ Wooden shelves or racks are not permitted in refrigerated storage areas. Stainless steel or other non-corrosive metal shelving will be used in refrigerators, freezers, and walk-ins.

#### **Hand Washing Lavatories:**

\_\_\_ Post sign that states "All Employees Must Wash Hands" near hand-washing sink.

\_\_\_ Trashcan must be near hand-washing sink when using paper towels to hand dry.

\_\_\_ Lavatories designed only for hand washing are required if any type of food/drink preparation or ware washing is conducted within the establishment.

\_\_\_ Lavatories shall be conveniently accessible in food/drink preparation, food serving, ware washing areas, and toilet rooms. Hand sinks are not considered conveniently accessible in another room, example, walking through a doorway, or not being visible.

\_\_\_ Lavatories shall be equipped with hot (100 degrees F) and cold water supplied through a mixing valve or combination faucet.

\_\_\_ Lavatories shall be located to avoid contamination of food and food-related items and areas. Splashguards may be used to meet this requirement.

#### **Ware Washing Facilities:**

\_\_\_ A minimum three compartments, stainless steel sink is required for the manual washing, rinsing, and sanitization of equipment and utensils when preparing any potentially hazardous food.

\_\_\_ All ware washing sinks shall be sized to submerge the largest piece of portable equipment.

\_\_\_ Separate drain boards or other suitable equipment must be used for soiled and clean equipment and utensils shall be attached or adjacent to all ware washing fixtures.

\_\_\_ All mixed-drink type facilities or those using any glassware resulting in the need for a "dump sink" must have an adequate four-compartment sink with double drain boards or a three compartment sink and a separate dump sink.

\_\_\_ Automatic dish washing machines **may supplement** the installation of sinks for manual ware washing **but not replace** this minimum requirement.

#### **Chemical Test Kits:**

\_\_\_ Chemical test papers for the appropriate sanitizer are required for the testing of sanitizer solutions used in the food establishment. For example, bleach test strips, T-Strips or a waterproof thermometer for testing heat sanitizing dish machines.

#### **Thermometers:**

\_\_\_ Refrigerators, freezers and hot holding units used for the storage of potentially hazardous food shall have accurate, readily visible thermometers. Range of thermometer shall be 0 to 220 degrees Fahrenheit.

\_\_\_ Stem thermometers are required for the monitoring of food temperatures. Stem thermometers shall be accurate and available to the staff.

#### **Utility Service Sink (mop sink):**

\_\_\_ At least one utility sink or curbed cleaning facility shall be provided for the cleaning of mops and similar floor cleaning tools and the disposal of mop water or other wastewater.

\_\_\_ The utility service fixture shall be located to avoid the contamination of food and food related items and areas.

\_\_\_ The utility service fixture shall be provided with hot (100 degrees F) and cold water.

\_\_\_ A vacuum breaker or approved vacuum breaker device shall be installed if a hose is connected.

**Plumbing:**

- \_\_\_ Soda machines shall have an adequate backflow prevention device when connected to a potable water supply.
- \_\_\_ Approved backflow prevention devices shall be installed on devices connected to the potable water system, such as: chemical injectors, attached hoses, spray wands and other similar instances where there is a direct connection between the potable water system and non-potable water. This includes the outside faucets.
- \_\_\_ Except for properly trapped open sinks, there shall be no direct connection between the sewage system and any drains originating from equipment in which food or utensils are placed. Such fixtures shall be drained through an indirect waste with a minimum one-inch air gap, where applicable. Examples would include, but not limited to, ice machines, food preparation sinks, floor drains in walk-in boxes, steam tables, salad bars, etc.
- \_\_\_ The Environmental Health Department does **NOT** regulate the installation of grease traps.
- Owner/operators must contact the Pre-Treatment Services Division of the Water Department with-in their city regarding the need, size, and proper plumbing installation of grease traps.**
- \_\_\_ As general rule grease traps should be located outside. If a G. T. has to be installed indoors, the top of the trap shall be flush with the floor. An exception to this rule may apply when the grease trap is located above another floor. Grease traps shall be accessible for cleaning and be maintained as required.
- \_\_\_ Water heaters shall be adequately sized to provide a constant and ready flow of hot water to all supplied fixtures.
- \_\_\_ Water heater shall be behind a door or otherwise enclosed if it is located in the kitchen.

**Equipment Design and Installation:**

- \_\_\_ Only equipment designed and constructed for commercial use is allowed in food establishments. Residential, home-type freezers, ranges, ovens, etc. are not permitted.
- \_\_\_ If *immobile*, the installation of freestanding equipment such as: refrigerators, fryers, tables, shall be:
  - 1) Sealed to the floor
  - 2) Installed on a raised platform of sealed concrete; or
  - 3) Elevated on legs to provide a minimum six-inch clearance between floor and equipment.
- \_\_\_ Sufficient space shall be provided for easy cleaning between and behind each unit of floor-mounted equipment, or the space between it and adjoining equipment units and adjacent walls shall be closed and sealed.
- \_\_\_ A minimum three-foot working space/aisle shall be maintained throughout the establishment in food preparation, food serving, and ware washing and storage areas.
- \_\_\_ The tops of all walk-in boxes and vent-hoods shall be extended to the ceiling and properly sealed.

**Ventilation:**

- \_\_\_ A vent-hood system is required when any operation within the kitchen produces excessive heat, steam, condensation, grease-laden vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and/or fumes and shall meet the requirements of your city.
- \_\_\_ Easily removable, easily cleanable filters are required in vent-hoods and ventilation systems and shall be maintained clean.

**Toilet Rooms:**

- \_\_\_ Toilet rooms shall conform to all building, plumbing, and health code requirements.
- \_\_\_ Toilet facilities shall be conveniently located and shall be accessible to employees at all times.
- \_\_\_ Toilet rooms shall be completely enclosed and have tight-fitting self-closing solid doors.
- \_\_\_ Toilet rooms shall have forced-air ventilation to the outside of the establishment.
- \_\_\_ Toilet room shall be provided with a covered trash receptacle.
- \_\_\_ Sink must have hot and cold running water.
- \_\_\_ Toilet rooms must provide toilet paper on dispenser, hand soap and disposable towels on a dispenser.

**Lighting:**

- \_\_\_ Adequate artificial illumination shall be provided in accordance with the following minimum requirements.
- \_\_\_ At least 110 lux (10 foot candles) at a distance of 75 centimeters (30 inches) above the floor in walk-in refrigeration units and dry storage areas and in other areas and rooms during periods of cleaning is required.
- \_\_\_ At least 220 lux (20 foot candles) at a surface where food is provided for consumer self-service such as buffets and salad bars or where fresh produce or packaged foods are sold or offered for consumption, inside equipment such as reach-in and under counter refrigerators. The light shall be installed at a minimum distance of 75 centimeters (30 inches) above the floor in areas used for hand washing, ware washing, and equipment and utensil storage, and in toilet rooms.

\_\_\_ At least 540 lux (50 foot candles) at a surface where a food employee is working with food or working with utensils or equipment such as knives, slicers or grinders where employee safety is a factor.

\_\_\_ In areas where food or food-related items are handled, stored, or displayed all lighting shall be equipped with break-resistant, plastic shielding.

#### **Garbage and Refuse Disposal:**

\_\_\_ Garbage and refuse containers, dumpsters, and compactor systems shall be stored on a smooth surface of nonabsorbent material, such as concrete or machine laid asphalt.

\_\_\_ All trashcans not in regular use and have food debris must have a tight fitting lid.

#### **Laundry Facilities:**

\_\_\_ Laundering shall be restricted to washing and drying items necessary to the operation of the establishment.

\_\_\_ If a washer is provided, a dryer must also be provided for the drying of washed items. (Exception: Washing of only soiled wiping cloths placed directly into sanitizer solution and stored does not require a dryer.)

\_\_\_ Washers and dryers may be located in dry storage areas containing only prepackaged items, otherwise separate rooms shall be provided for laundry facilities.

#### **Insect and Rodent Control:**

\_\_\_ Outside openings shall be effectively protected by tight-fitting, self-closing doors, closed windows, screening, or other means to prevent entry of insects and rodents.

\_\_\_ Air curtains or plastic thermal curtains are strongly recommended on exterior service doors and may become a requirement if insect exclusion problems are noted during the future operation of the establishment.

\_\_\_ Insect control devices that are used to electrocute or stun flying insects shall be designed to retain the insect within the device.

\_\_\_ Insect control devices shall be installed so that: the devices are not located over a food preparation area; the dead insects and insect fragments are prevented from being impelled onto or falling on exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens and unwrapped single-service and single-use articles.

\_\_\_ May not have any pesticides in establishment, pest control must be done by a licensed applicator

#### **Toxic Material Storage:**

\_\_\_ All poisonous or toxic materials shall be stored in cabinets or in similar physically separated compartments or facilities used for no other purpose. Such materials shall not be stored above or immediately adjacent to or in areas where food or food-related items are handled, prepared, washed, or stored.

#### **Dry Storage Areas:**

\_\_\_ Food storage shall be adequate for the operation of the establishment. Food shall be protected from contamination by storing the food in a clean, dry location where it is not exposed to splash or dust, and is at least (6) six inches above the floor.

#### **Self-Service Areas:**

\_\_\_ Areas designated for customer self-service shall have smooth, easily cleanable, nonabsorbent flooring which shall extend at least (3) three feet from the perimeter of the self-service area.

\_\_\_ Properly installed and effective sneeze guards shall protect self-service food displays.

\_\_\_ At self-service displays where customers are allowed second portions of food, a sign shall be posted advising the customers that clean tableware is to be used upon their return to the self-service area.

\_\_\_ Must have proper utensils at all food items.

#### **Living Areas:**

\_\_\_ A private home may not be used for conducting food establishment operations.

**Requirements may vary depending on the type of food service operation.**

**Refer to Texas Food Establishment Rules for further rules TAC 25 Chapter 228  
<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/laws-rules.aspx>**