



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
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PROCEDURE FOR OPENING A FOOD ESTABLISHMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The following is applicable to all new food establishments. An establishment is considered new if it undergoes a change of ownership or remodeling.

- 1. In cases of new construction or remodeling of an existing establishment, one (1) set of plans showing a detailed layout of existing and/or proposed facilities must be submitted to the Montgomery County Environmental Health Department along with information on the type of water and sewage facilities. Such plans should be drawn to scale no smaller than 1/8".**

Minimum plans consist of:

- A. floor plans;**
- B. equipment plan with elevation**
- C. plumbing plan; and**
- D. wall sections**
- E. room finish schedule**

In addition, plans must show contractor, or person in charge of construction, a physical address, a contact person for plan approval and their telephone number. There is a \$50.00 new facility/extensive remodeling fee.

- 2. In all cases; new construction, new ownership or remodeling, the establishment must meet current requirements of the Montgomery County Environmental Health Department located at 301 N. Thompson, Suite 206, Conroe, TX.**
- 3. A pre-operation inspection of the establishment will be made when all equipment is in place and utilities are turned on. Approved plans must be on site for final inspection.**
- 4. Upon approval, the owner/operator must fill out an application for a health permit.**
- 5. Under no circumstances can a new establishment undergoing the permitting process be allowed to serve or process food before the permit has been obtained.**

6. No operation of a food service establishment shall be conducted in a private home or any room used for living or sleeping quarters.
7. At least one (1) Certified Food Service Manager is required to be employed at the food service establishment. Only pre-package establishments or establishments handling only non-potentially hazardous drinks are exempted from this requirement.

**CONSTRUCTION/EQUIPMENT FOR OPENING A FOOD SERVICE
ESTABLISHMENT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, TEXAS.**

THESE REQUIREMENTS ARE IN NO WAY COMPLETE. FOR QUESTION ON SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT OR CONSTRUCTION DETAILS, CONSULT THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH "RULES ON FOOD SERVICE SANITATION: OR THE CONSUMER HEALTH DIVISION OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, (936) 539-7839.

SUBMIT A SET OF DETAILED PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS WITH ELEVATION OF ALL EQUIPMENT.

RESTROOMS:

Restrooms shall be conveniently accessible to employees; must have lavatory with hot and cold running water, tempered by means of a mixing valve or combination faucet; be completely enclosed, well lighted, outside ventilation and have self-closing and tight-fitting doors. Floors, walls and ceiling shall be of smooth, cleanable, non-absorbent materials and light colored.

HAND WASHING SINKS:

Hand washing sinks shall be located to permit convenient use by all employees in the food preparation and utensil washing areas. Sinks used for food preparation or for washing equipment or utensils shall not be used for hand washing. This sink is not acceptable in the bathroom. It must be near the preparation area and must have hot and cold water.

DISHWASHING:

MANUAL CLEANING AND SANITIZING:

A three (3) compartment sink for washing, rinsing and sanitizing is required. This sink should be large enough to fully submerge the largest utensil. Drain boards or easily movable dish-tables of adequate size shall be provided for proper handling of soiled utensils prior to washing for clean utensils following sanitizing and shall be located so as not to interfere with the proper use of the dish washing facilities.

MECHANICAL CLEANING AND SANITIZING:

Mechanical dishwashers must meet all county and State requirements pertaining to water temperature and/or sanitizer injectors. In addition, a three (3) compartment is recommended for washing oversized cooking equipment and utensils.

When chemicals are used for sanitization, a test kit or other device that accurately measures the parts per million (ppm) concentration of the solution shall be provided and used.

EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS:

Equipment and utensils shall be designed and fabricated for durability under conditions of normal use. Floor-mounted equipment, unless readily moveable, shall be sealed to the floor or elevated to provide a six inch (6") clearance. Equipment on tables or counters, unless portable, shall be sealed to the table or counter or elevated on legs to provide a four inch (4") clearance.

Food-contact surfaces shall be easily cleanable; smooth and free of breaks, open seams, cracks, chips, pits and similar imperfections and free of difficult to clean corners and crevices. Wood is restricted to bakers' tables and cutting boards.

VENTILATION:

All rooms shall have sufficient ventilation to keep them free from excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, odors and fumes. All rooms from which obnoxious odors, vapors or fumes originate shall be mechanically vented to the outside.

Ventilation hoods and devices shall be designed to prevent grease or condensation from collection on walls and ceiling and from dripping into food or onto food-contact surfaces.

DISPLAY EQUIPMENT:

Food on display shall be protected from consumer contamination by the use of packaging, serving line or salad bar protector devices, display cases, or other effective means.

Enough hot or cold food facilities shall be available to maintain the required temperature of potentially hazardous food on display.

LIGHTING AND PROTECTIVE SHIELDING:

Sufficient lighting must be provided in all areas of the establishment. Provide shielding for all lighting fixtures located over, by or within food storage, preparation, service and display facilities, and facilities where utensils and equipment are cleaned and stored.

FLOORS:

Floors and floor coverings of all food preparation, food storage and utensil washing areas, and the floors of all walk-in refrigerating units, dressing rooms, and vestibules shall be constructed of smooth durable material and shall be maintained and good repair.

Carpeting is prohibited in food preparation, equipment and utensil washing areas, food storage areas and toilet room areas.

Establishments utilizing concrete, terrazzo, ceramic tile or similar flooring materials, and where water flush cleaning methods are used, the junctures between walls and floors shall be coved and sealed.

Installation of exposed horizontal utility lines and pipes on the floor is prohibited.

DRAINS:

Floor drains shall be provided in floors that are subject to condensation or cleaning by being water flushed or in areas where pressure spray methods for cleaning are used.

WALLS AND CEILINGS:

Walls and ceilings in food preparation areas, food storage areas, equipment and utensil washing areas, walk-in refrigeration units, toilet rooms and vestibules shall be smooth, non-absorbent, light-colored, easily cleanable, and shall be maintained in good repair. Studs, joists and rafters shall not be exposed in the above areas and utility service lines and pipes shall not be unnecessarily exposed in these areas.

UTILITY FACILITY:

At least one (1) utility sink with hot and cold water or curbed cleaning facility with a floor drain shall be provided and used for the cleaning of mops and for the disposal of mop water or similar liquid wastes.

DRESSING ROOMS AND LOCKER AREAS:

If employees routinely change clothes within the establishment, room or areas shall be designated and used for that purpose only. Whatever a dressing room is required or not, lockers or other suitable facilities must be provided for the proper storage of personal belongings.

BREAK AREA:

Employees shall consume food and use tobacco in designated areas only. An employee break area shall not be designated for that purpose if it may result in contamination of food, equipment, utensils or other items needing protection.

POISONOUS OR TOXIC MATERIALS:

Each of the three categories of toxins shall be stored and located to be physically separated from each other. They must be stored in cabinets or in similar physically separated compartments used for no other purpose, Poisonous or toxic materials shall not be stored above food, food equipment, utensils or single-service items.

GARBAGE AND REFUSE:

There shall be a sufficient number of containers to hold all garbage and refuse that accumulates.

Containers stored outside the establishment; dumpster, compactors and compactor systems shall be easily cleanable and shall have tight-fitting lids, doors or covers and be kept covered when not in actual use. In containers designed with drains, drain plugs shall be in place at all times except during cleaning.

Suitable facilities, including hot water and detergent or steam, shall be provided and used for washing containers. Liquid wastes from compacting or cleaning operations shall be disposed of as sewage.

Garbage and refuse containers: dumpster and compactor systems located outside shall be stored on or above a smooth surface of non-absorbent material, such as concrete or machine-laid asphalt that is kept clean and maintained in good repair.

INSECT AND RODENT CONTROL:

Outside openings shall be protected against the entrance of insects or rodents by tight fitting, self-closing doors, closed windows, screening, controlled air currents or other means. Screen doors shall be self-closing and screens for windows, doors, intake and exhaust air ducts and other openings to the outside shall be tight-fitting and free of breaks. Screening material shall not be less than sixteen (16) mesh to the inch.

PREMISES:

The walking and driving surfaces of all exterior areas of food service establishments shall be surfaced with concrete or asphalt, or with gravel or similar material effectively treated to facilities maintenance and minimize dust. These surfaces shall be graded to prevent pooling and kept free of litter.

PLUMBING:

Plumbing shall be sized, installed and maintained according to law. There shall be no cross-connection between the potable water supply and any non-potable water supply (permitted for air-conditioning and fire protection only). Devices shall be installed to protect against backflow and back-siphonage at all fixtures and equipment (i.e. dishwashers and outside faucets with a hose attached) unless an air gap at least twice the diameter of the water supply inlet is provided between the water supply inlet and the

fixture's flood level rim (i.e. mop and dish sinks). Grease traps, if used, shall be easily accessible for cleaning.

WATER:

Water shall come from a State approved water system. If individual well, contact T.C.E.Q. @ 512-239-1000 for inspection and approval. State approval on individual water wells must be obtained prior to County approval of food establishment. (State I.D. #, chlorinator, and monthly water test required)

Public wells must have an automatic chlorinator installed and a water sample must be submitted to an approved laboratory to check for bacteria. The test must be negative before a health permit is issued and must be done on a monthly basis there after.

SEWAGE:

Sewage shall be connected to a State approved public sewage disposal system or County approved individual On-Site Sewage facility. For more information contact Montgomery County permitting office @ 936-539-7836. Permit to operate an individual O.S.S.F. should be available upon final approval of food establishment.

***Food permits must be obtained prior to opening.**