



Elkhart County Health Department

Environmental Health Services

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FOOD TRUCK BASICS

This document is only a brief outline of the requirements to operate a mobile food service.

The fully detailed requirements for planning and designing a mobile unit and commissary are found in Elkhart County Health Department's MOBILE FOOD SERVICE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS and FOOD SERVICE PLAN REVIEW CHECKLIST & APPLICATION FORM documents.

There are two parts to food truck operation

- The commissary is the base of operations where the truck returns each day for servicing and where storage of supplies, advanced preparation and cleaning occurs. EVERY MOBILE MUST HAVE A COMMISSARY.
- The truck itself

Identify types of food to be served and size and scope of operation required

- What equipment is necessary in the truck to prepare and serve? In the commissary?
- How big does the truck need to be? Whatever you think is big enough, it's not. Go bigger.
- Just big enough to barely fit the necessary equipment won't be big enough to work in. You'll wish you had more space.

Find a potential commissary

- It must have a servicing area with overhead protection for loading, unloading and cleaning the truck.
- An awning or canopy is the minimum requirement, a covered loading dock or garage door to completely pull inside are the best options.
- There must be an approved water supply connection to fill the fresh water holding tank and an approved sewer or septic system connection to drain the wastewater holding tank.

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Commissary Options

- A) Existing restaurant adding a mobile
 - Identify what modifications are necessary for commissary operations
 - Verify planning and zoning approval is possible
 - Building permits required?
 - ECHD plan review and approval
- B) Shared facility- co-op of existing food service
 - Is it already a commissary?
 - If not see A above
 - Plan review and written contract for shared facility
 - You must have your own food license to operate at the commissary
- C) Build new from the ground up
 - Verify planning and zoning approval is possible
 - Building permits required?
 - ECHD plan review and approval

The food truck

- Purchase used existing
- Purchase new pre-fabricated base model
- Order custom built model
- Submit plans for review and approval of layout before buying or ordering any unit
- What motor vehicle operator licenses, registrations and insurance are required?

After plans have been reviewed and approved and you have obtained any necessary building permits you may begin construction activities for the commissary and purchase the vehicle. You will need licensing inspections for the commissary and truck as well as any required motor vehicle licenses and solicitor/peddler permits before you can operate.



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MOBILE FOOD SERVICE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

This document is an overview of the minimum requirements that must be considered when planning a mobile food service. If you decide you wish to pursue opening/operating a mobile food service you will need to complete the **FOOD SERVICE PLAN REVIEW CHECKLIST & APPLICATION FORM.**

MOBILE UNITS:

Section numbers refer to Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements
Title 410 IAC 7-24

1. (Sect 113) All facilities licensed as a mobile food service must have an approved, licensed commissary.
2. (Sect 423, 424) There will be no food service operations (water supply, food preparation, food storage, utensil, or unit cleaning) in conjunction with a private residence or other living quarters.
3. (Sect 110, 111) All mobile units are licensed food service facilities. As such they must meet all requirements of 410 IAC 7-24 as applicable **including plan review** and approval. These requirements include, but are not restricted to:
 - a. (Sect 342, 373) Suitable hand washing facilities with hot water a minimum of 100 degrees Fahrenheit **4 GALLONS MINIMUM WATER HEATER CAPACITY**
 - b. Fresh water holding supply tank **FULL SERVICE UNITS 30 GALLONS MINIMUM CAPACITY**
 - c. Wastewater collection and holding system. Waste holding tank must be at least 15% larger than the supply tank. Any wastewater, including drainage from ice packed meat or seafood must be collected and disposed of in approved sewer or septic system.
 - d. (Sect 399) Cleanable walls, floors and ceilings. Auxiliary cooking or preparation areas outside of the vehicle must be set up on cleanable surfaces such as asphalt or concrete or must have flooring and may not be set up in area that will create dust conditions.
 - e. (Sect 413) Adequate fly, insect and rodent control (screens, air curtains, self-closing doors) for entire preparation and service areas. **Service windows must be self-closing or have air curtains.**
 - f. (Sect 410, 411) The unit shall have a minimum of 70 foot-candles of shielded lighting.
 - g. (Sect 259, 187) Adequate refrigeration, if required. Cold holding units must maintain cold foods at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below.
 - h. (Sect 259, 187) Adequate hot holding, if required. Hot holding units must maintain hot foods at 135 degrees Fahrenheit or above.
 - i. (Sect 307) Adequate ventilation where high heat, steam, or grease is produced.
 - j. (Sect 142) All food products must be from an approved source and prepared in an approved, licensed facility.
 - k. (Sect 170, 176, 226) Packaged food shall not be stored in contact with ice or water if water can enter the packaging. This includes beverage bottles and cans where the lip contact portion of the container can be contaminated by water from ice melt. Compartments or bins where food is

stored on ice shall be self-draining. Iced used as a cooling medium for the exterior surfaces of food, packaged food or equipment shall not be used as food or a food ingredient.

- l. (Sect 243) Single service items shall be protected from contamination.
- m. (Sect 171) Deli tissues or handled utensils are required for customer handling of non-packaged food items such as donuts.
- n. (Sect 254, 257) Probe thermometer (0-220 degrees Fahrenheit) accurate to +/- 2 degrees Fahrenheit to monitor internal food temperatures. Provide alcohol swabs or another approved sanitizer in order to clean the probe thermometer between uses.
- o. (Sect 256) Ambient air temperature thermometers accurate to +/- 3 degrees Fahrenheit are required in all hot and cold holding units.
- p. (Sect 294, 295) Limited service (prepackaged foods only) most commonly known as break truck units shall be provided with a labeled container of an approved sanitizer. Test kits are not required as the sanitizer shall be prepared at the commissary where test kits are required. Cleaners and sanitizers shall be stored in the truck cab unless an empty storage area of the mobile unit is available.
- q. (Sect 294, 295) Full service units must have a supply of sanitizer and the appropriate test kit.
- r. (Sect 146) Proper labeling is required for all pre-packaged food items. This includes name of product, name and address of manufacturer, net weight, and list of ingredients.

*** Please be aware that mobile units are required to return to the commissary for cleaning and servicing each evening (Sect 113). Mobile units that choose to operate at temporary events such as festivals and do not return to the commissary each day will be required to apply for a temporary food service license and licensing inspection for each event.**

COMMISSARIES:

1. All commissaries are licensed food service facilities. They must meet all requirements of 410 IAC 7-24 as applicable **including plan review** and approval. These requirements shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. (Sect 427) A servicing area with overhead protection where the unit can be loaded, unloaded, and cleaned.
 - b. (Sect 399, 402) Cleanable walls, floors and ceiling.
 - c. (Sect 411) Adequate lighting.
 - d. (Sect 323,327) Approved potable water supply.
 - e. (Sect 375) Approved sanitary sewer connection or approved septic system.
 - f. (Sect 342-349) Adequate hand washing facilities.
 - g. (Sect 259) Adequate commercial grade refrigeration and cooking equipment.
 - h. (Sect 305-310) Suitable ventilation and make-up air system where high heat, steam, or grease is produced.
 - i. (Sect 177,178, 243, 244) Adequate food and single service storage and protection.
 - j. (Sect 412-416) Suitable insect and rodent control.
 - k. (Sect 142) All food from approved sources, no home canned products.
 - l. (Sect 350-354) Suitable restroom facilities.
 - m. (Sect 381-385) Suitable garbage containers and waste disposal service.
 - n. (Sect 373) Suitable freshwater fill station and wastewater dump station if mobile unit is equipped with on board water and wastewater holding units.
 - o. Any other equipment necessary to the operation of the specific mobile unit.
 - p. (Section 355) Properly located mop sink.

- q. Approval from any other authorities, such as Building, Zoning, Public Works and Utilities and/or Fire departments.
2. Not all existing facilities are suitable for conversion to a commissary. There may be zoning restrictions that prevent this type of operation or there simply may not be space on the property to add a servicing area and meet all building and fire code requirements.

IDENTIFICATION OF MOBILE UNITS:

(As per the Elkhart County Food Service Ordinance # 2005-322, Section 4)

1. The name, address and telephone number of the licensee shall be conspicuously displayed on each licensed mobile unit with lettering not less than two (2) inches in height.
2. Elkhart County Mobile Food License Stickers shall be posted on the outside of the Mobile Food Service Vehicle and shall be plainly visible from the front and rear of the vehicle.
3. Mobile Food Establishment operators shall provide to the Elkhart County Health Department a list of their licensed vehicle(s). The list shall include; make, model, and color of the vehicle(s), vehicle license plate number(s) and the Elkhart County Mobile Food License Sticker number(s) assigned to the vehicle(s).
4. Mobile Food Establishment operators shall provide to the Elkhart County Health Department a schedule of dates and locations of operation to ensure inspections are performed on a routine basis.

OUTDOOR GRILL/SMOKER/COOKER DESIGN GUIDELINES:

These guidelines are based on Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements
410 IAC 7-24 and other applicable codes as noted.

- 1) (Sect 205) Materials for construction may not allow the migration of deleterious substances or impart colors, odors, or tastes to food and under normal use conditions shall be:
 - a) Safe
 - b) Durable, corrosion-resistant, and non-absorbent.
 - c) Sufficient in weight and thickness to withstand repeated washing.
 - d) Finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface.
 - e) Resistant to pitting, chipping, crazing, scratching, scoring, distortion and decomposition.
- 2) (Sect 229) Food contact portions shall be:
 - a) Smooth
 - b) Free of breaks, open seams, cracks, chips, inclusions, pits and similar imperfections.
 - c) Free of sharp internal angles, corners and crevices.
 - d) Finished to have smooth welds and joints.
 - e) Accessible for cleaning and inspection either:
 1. Without being disassembled.
 2. Disassembling without the use of tools.
 3. Easily disassembled with use of handheld tools.
- 3) (Sect 216) Non-food contact portions exposed to splash, spillage or other food soiling or that require frequent cleaning shall be constructed of a corrosion resistant, non-absorbent, and smooth material.
- 4) (Sect 232) Non-food contact portions shall be free of unnecessary ledges, projections, and crevices and designed and constructed to allow easy cleaning and facilitate maintenance.
- 5) (Sect 259) Equipment shall effectively maintain proper food temperatures when used to hold foods hot at or above 135°F before serving.
- 6) The equipment shall have minimal risk of outside fire. (Indiana Department of Fire and Building Safety)
- 7) The use of 55-gallon drums or other types of storage tanks shall not be permitted unless proof of original and previous use can be verified and it can meet all of the requirements listed above.

Sections from 410 IAC 7-24 (Indiana Food Code) Pertaining to the Operation of Mobile Units

410 IAC 7-24-113 Mobile Retail Food Establishment

Sec. 113. (a) A mobile retail food establishment **must be physically transported to a commissary or servicing area, or both, at least once daily** for all:

- (1) supplies;
- (2) cleaning; and
- (3) servicing operations.

410 IAC 7-24-16 “Commissary” defined

Sec. 16. “Commissary” means a **registered** (*registered means licensed by the Health Department*) catering establishment, restaurant, or any retail food establishment in which food, food containers, or food supplies are:

- (1) kept;
- (2) handled;
- (3) prepared;
- (4) packaged; or
- (5) stored;

from which meals are catered and **mobile retail food establishments** or pushcarts **are serviced**.

410 IAC 7-24-85 “Servicing area” defined

Sec. 85. “Servicing area” means an operating base location to which a mobile retail food establishment or transportation vehicle returns for such functions as the following:

- (1) Vehicle and equipment cleaning.
- (2) Discharging liquid or solid wastes.
- (3) Refilling water tanks and ice bins.
- (4) Boarding food.

410 IAC 7-24-427 Overhead protection on outdoor servicing areas

Sec. 427. (a) Servicing areas **shall be provided with overhead protection**, except that areas used only for the loading of water or the discharge of sewage and other liquid waste through the use of a closed system of hoses, need not be provided with overhead protection.

All servicing operations except for water and sewage must take place in a covered servicing area. This includes cleaning the vehicle and equipment, loading food and supplies, unloading equipment into the commissary for cleaning, unloading trash, etc. The purpose of the protected servicing area is to have a clean and dry area for these operations. It provides protection from precipitation and wind blown debris as items are carried into the unit or commissary and helps to limit contamination caused by tracking water, mud, and snow/slush into the commissary and the mobile unit.

410 IAC 7-24-358 Mobile water tank and mobile retail food establishment water tank materials

Sec. 358. (a) Materials that are used in the construction of a mobile water tank, mobile retail food establishment water tank, and appurtenances shall be as follows:

- (1) Safe.
 - (2) Durable, corrosion-resistant, and nonabsorbent.
 - (3) Finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface.
- (b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-359 Enclosed system; sloped to drain

Sec. 359. (a) A mobile water tank shall be as follows:

- (1) Enclosed from the filling inlet to the discharge outlet.
 - (2) Sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank.
- (b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-360 Inspection and cleaning port; protected and secured

Sec. 360. (a) If a water tank is designed with an access port for inspection and cleaning, the opening shall be in the top of the tank and as follows:

- (1) Flanged upward at least one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) inch.
 - (2) Equipped with a port cover assembly that is as follows:
 - (A) Provided with a gasket and a device for securing the cover in place.
 - (B) Flanged to overlap the opening and sloped to drain.
- (b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-361 "V" type threads; use limitation

Sec. 361. (a) A fitting with "V" type threads on a water tank inlet or outlet shall be allowed only when a hose is permanently attached.

- (b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-362 Tank vent; protected

Sec. 362. (a) If provided, a water tank vent shall terminate in a downward direction and shall be covered with:

- (1) sixteen (16) mesh to one (1) inch screen or equivalent when the vent is in a protected area; or
 - (2) a protective filter when the vent is in an area that is not protected from windblown dirt and debris.
- (b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-363 Inlet and outlet; sloped to drain

Sec. 363. (a) A water tank and its inlet and outlet shall be sloped to drain.

- (b) A water tank inlet shall be positioned so that it is protected from contaminants, such as:
- (1) waste discharge;
 - (2) road dust;
 - (3) oil; or
 - (4) grease.
- (c) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) or (b) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-364 Hose; construction and identification

Sec. 364. (a) A hose used for conveying drinking water from a water tank shall be as follows:

- (1) Safe.
 - (2) Durable, corrosion-resistant, and nonabsorbent.
 - (3) Resistant to the following:
 - (A) Pitting.
 - (B) Chipping.
 - (C) Crazing.
 - (D) Scratching.
 - (E) Scoring.
 - (F) Distortion.
 - (G) Decomposition.
 - (4) Finished with a smooth interior surface.
 - (5) Clearly and durably identified as to its use if not permanently attached.
- (b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-365 Filter; compressed air

Sec. 365. (a) A filter that does not pass oil or oil vapors shall be installed in the air supply line between the compressor and drinking water system when compressed air is used to pressurize the water tank system. **(b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-366 Protective cover or device

Sec. 366. (a) A:

- (1) cap and keeper chain;
 - (2) closed cabinet;
 - (3) closed storage tube; or
 - (4) other approved protective cover or device;
- shall be provided for a water inlet, outlet, and hose.
- (b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-367 Mobile retail food establishment's water tank inlet

Sec. 367. (a) A mobile retail food establishment's water tank inlet shall be as follows:

- (1) Three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) inch in inner diameter or less.
 - (2) Provided with a hose connection of a size or type that will prevent its use for any other service.
- (b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-368 System flushing and disinfection

Sec. 368. (a) A water tank, pump, and hoses shall be flushed and sanitized before being placed in service after the following:

- (1) Construction.
 - (2) Repair.
 - (3) Modification.
 - (4) Periods of nonuse.
- (b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a critical item.

410 IAC 7-24-369 Using a pump and hoses; backsiphonage prevention

Sec. 369. (a) A person shall operate a water tank, pump, and hoses so that backsiphonage and other contamination of the water supply are prevented.

(b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-370 Protecting inlet, outlet, and hose fitting

Sec. 370. (a) If not in use, a water tank hose inlet and outlet fitting shall be protected using a cover or device as specified under section 366 of this rule.

(b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-371 Water tank, pump, and hoses dedication

Sec. 371. (a) Except as specified in subsection (b), a water tank, pump, and hoses used for conveying drinking water shall be used for no other purpose.

(b) Water tanks, pumps, and hoses approved for liquid foods may be used for conveying drinking water if they are cleaned and sanitized before they are used to convey water.

(c) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) or (b) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-372 Sewage holding tank of mobile retail food establishment; capacity and drainage

Sec. 372. (a) A sewage holding tank in a mobile retail food establishment shall be as follows:

(1) Sized fifteen percent (15%) larger in capacity than the water supply tank.

(2) Sloped to a drain that is one (1) inch in inner diameter or greater, equipped with a shut-off valve. **(b)** For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.

410 IAC 7-24-373 Removing mobile retail food establishment wastes

Sec. 373. (a) Sewage and other liquid wastes shall be removed from a mobile retail food establishment at an approved waste servicing area or by a sewage transport vehicle in such a way that a public health hazard or nuisance is not created.

(b) For purposes of this section, a violation of subsection (a) is a noncritical item.