

Avoid costly mistakes!

Prior to construction, remodeling, or change in type of food establishment, plan approval is needed from the Health Department.

When starting a new restaurant or taking over an existing facility, the task may seem overwhelming.

Various city and county departments must give approval before a food service establishment is given a license to operate.

Here are some questions to ask before signing a lease or buying an existing facility:

- Have you contacted the plan commission, building inspectors, or your local town hall about any proposed construction?
- Is the wiring, plumbing and physical structure suitable for the demands of a food establishment? (grease traps, 220V, hot water, etc.)
- Will you need handicap accessibility? (ramps, wide doorways, handrails)
- Will a fire suppression system or sprinklers be required? How about fire extinguishers?
- Does existing equipment meet current health code (National Sanitation Foundation [NSF] standards)?
- What are the requirements for obtaining a liquor license?
- How many restrooms will you need? (One public urinal/toilet per each 75 males/females. If occupant load is <150 and food/beverages are not consumed within the structure, you only need one restroom for employees.)

PLAN REVIEW

The Indiana State Department of Health's food code, Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements, 410 IAC 7-24, states in Section 110 that plans and specifications shall be submitted and approved by the local health department prior to construction, conversion, or remodeling of an existing retail food establishment and before the operation of a retail food establishment.



Plan review forms are available at the health department or at www.harrisoncountyhealth.com/for_operation.htm.

Items required for a plan review include:

- application
- questionnaire
- schematic layout of the facility
- menu
- list of equipment

The food inspector is generally available to answer questions Monday thru Friday 8:00 to 9:30 AM. The phone number is 812-738-3237. Plan approval is usually given within two weeks by way of an approval letter. There is no fee for the plan review.

PRE-OPERATIONAL INSPECTION / LICENSE

Inspections may be conducted on a periodic basis during the construction of a food establishment.

Once the equipment is installed and construction equipment and debris removed, call the health department to schedule a Pre-Opening Inspection. If any items are found to be out of compliance, you will be notified and another inspection will be arranged. The building inspectors and the health department usually try to coordinate their final inspections within several days of each other. The building inspectors will issue a Certificate of Occupancy and the health department will arrange for issuance of the annual food permit.



Food permit fees cannot be collected on-site. The owner must contact the health department to obtain the permit. Annual food permit fees are as follows (2024 and after):

- 1-5 employees - \$60 a year
- 6-10 employees - \$80 a year
- 11 or more employees - \$120 a year

The food permit fee is pro-rated. For instance, if you don't open until July, you will only owe a portion of the yearly total. There is no charge for non-profit groups.

POINTS TO CONSIDER....

- Remember – food for sale cannot be prepared in a private home!
- All businesses must apply for a Tax ID number by contacting the Indiana Department of Revenue, (812) 282-7729
- A certified food handler is required within 6 months of opening for most food service operations

DEPARTMENTS TO CONTACT

Indiana Department of Revenue

812-282-7729
1446 Horn Avenue
Clarksville, IN 47129
Tax ID Number

Harrison County Plan Commission

812-738-8927
Building and/or Sign permit

If you are building a new facility or doing a major remodel, your plans may have to be submitted to and approved by the State. Planning & Zoning will help you with this.

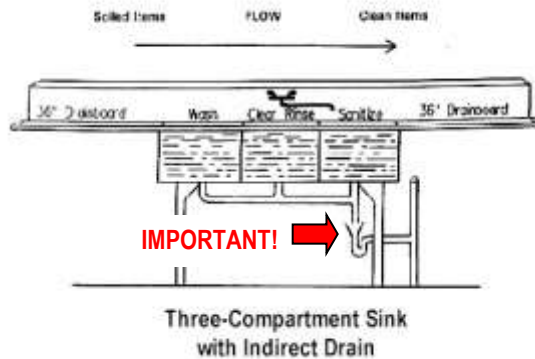
Harrison County Health Department

812-738-3237
Food Permit

REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

1. EQUIPMENT (must meet current NSF standards)

- 3-COMPARTMENT SINK – REQUIRED – a stainless steel sink with built in drainboard on each end. **Any sink in which food, utensils or equipment is placed must be equipped with an indirect drain in which the air gap is at least one inch** (see below).



- HAND SINK – REQUIRED – a handwashing sink is required in all food prep and utensil washing areas. More than one hand sink may be required depending on the kitchen size and set up. This sink must be easily accessible and within 25 feet of all food prep and utensil washing areas. A separate hand sink is required behind the bar (if there is a bar). Hand sinks are required if any open food or beverage is handled in the food establishment. They may be used for no other purpose than handwashing.
- MOP SINK – REQUIRED – provide a wall hung or curbed style mop basin for the proper disposal of liquid waste from cleaning operations. Install away from food prep surfaces. A mop sink is required in all food establishments.
- VEGETABLE/FRUIT PREP SINK – OPTIONAL – a stainless steel sink with one drainboard. Required if any vegetable or fruits will be rinsed. Must have an *indirect drain* (see above).
- MEAT PREP SINK – OPTIONAL – a stainless steel sink with one drainboard. Recommended if raw meats will be rinsed. Must have an *indirect drain* (see above).

- Chemical dishmachines require temperature and PSI gauges. Appropriate chemical test kits must be provided.

2. **VENTILATION** – commercial exhaust ventilation is required above all ranges, griddles, fryers and similar equipment to remove grease, smoke, steam, vapors, heat or odors. A fire suppression system may be required. This must be approved by the Indiana Building Commission and the local Fire Marshal.
3. **LIGHTING** – provide completely shielded fixtures or shatterproof sleeves on fluorescent tubes. A minimum of 70 footcandles of light shall be provided at food prep and washing stations.
4. **FLOORS** – in the kitchen, storage areas and restrooms, the floor must be smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable. Carpeting is not authorized in these areas.
5. **WALLS AND CEILINGS** – non-perforated, light-colored, smooth washable walls and ceilings must be provided in work areas.
6. **PLUMBING** – indirect connections must be used on all food service equipment (ice bins & machines, soda machines, dipper wells, etc.) Install vacuum breakers on all fixtures requiring them. All plumbing must be to current Indiana Plumbing Code requirements.
7. Provide an adequate amount of approved, easily cleanable metal shelving. Do not use wood shelving in the kitchen. All shelves must be at least 6" above the floor.
8. **DOORS** to the outside and to restrooms must be self-closing.
9. There must be a restroom for employee use with a self-closing door, toilet, toilet paper, covered trash can, hand sink, hot & cold running water (water temperature at least 100°F), hand soap, paper towels or powered air dryer, and hand washing sign. Floors, walls and ceiling must have the same characteristics as the kitchen. No rugs or carpet allowed in restrooms.
10. If you serve any food that is not pre-packaged or pre-cooked in an inspected facility, **you must have a food handler with the proper food safety certification**. Call the health department for upcoming classes and exams.

**So, you want to open a
food service
establishment?**



The Happy Chef, painting by Tim Nyberg

Guidelines from the Harrison County Health Department



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(812) 738-3237

www.harrisoncountyhealth.com