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Mobile Food Units and Pushcarts

*Compliance with all applicable sections of the Indiana Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements 410 IAC 7-26 (Indiana Retail Food Code) is required. **Please review the following definitions and requirements, complete the included questionnaire, and submit with mobile plan review application, payment, layout, and proposed menu.***

Definitions

Mobile Food Unit – Means a retail food establishment that is a wheeled vehicle or trailer that is readily moveable and designed for the service of food from the interior of the unit that is intended to physically report to and operate from a commissary for supplies, servicing operations, and cleaning each operating day.

Pushcart – Means a retail food establishment that is a non-motorized unit designed as an open-air type operation, which is intended to physically report to and operate from a commissary for supplies, servicing operations, and cleaning each operating day. Examples would be an ice cream or hot dog cart. Pushcarts shall be limited to heating precooked food items (e.g. hot dogs, precooked sausages) and serving commercially prepared or commissary prepared food that will result in simple assembly.

Self-Contained Mobile Food Unit – Means a mobile retail food establishment that is approved to operate without a commissary. The self-contained unit is required to report to an approved servicing location for such things as obtaining potable water and disposal of wastewater and other wastes generated by the unit.

Commissary – Means a permitted food establishment to which a mobile food unit or pushcart returns to daily for such things as storage of food and supplies; cooking or preparing foods; cleaning of utensils and equipment; and servicing (refilling water tanks and disposal of wastewater). **Preparation of food or storage of any items related to the operation is prohibited in a private home or living quarters** (Reference Sections 423 and 424 of the Indiana Retail Food Code).

Mobile Food Unit Requirements

All mobile food units must meet the following requirements prior to permit approval by the Porter County Health Department.

Commissary Requirements:

Section 113 of the Indiana Retail Food Code – *The mobile retail food establishment must be transported to a commissary or servicing area or both, at least once daily for supplies, cleaning and servicing (i.e. obtaining potable water, dumping of wastewater).*

- Unless approved as a self-contained mobile food unit (**see additional requirements for self-contained mobile food units on this page**), each mobile food unit or pushcart must operate from a commissary for supplies, servicing, and cleaning each operating day. Self-contained mobile food units must have an approved servicing location for such things as obtaining potable water and disposal of wastewater and other wastes generated by the unit.
- The commissary must be a permitted food establishment that meets all applicable requirements of the Indiana Retail Food Code. **No food service operations allowed in a private home or living quarters** (*Reference Sections 423 and 424 of the Indiana Retail Food Code*).
- If using a permitted establishment that is not owned by the mobile food unit or pushcart operator, the operator must have a signed letter of approval or commissary agreement from the owner of a permitted establishment stating the operations that will be allowed to be conducted at the establishment.
- If the mobile food unit or pushcart operator owns a permitted food establishment that is located out-of-county or out-of-state, then a copy of the food establishment permit and most recent inspection must be provided.

Administration TO DO LIST:

Pre-approval requirements of newly constructed or remodeled Mobile Food Unit or Pushcart or Mobile Food Unit/Pushcart that has not previously been permitted in Porter County

- Submit a mobile plan review application and complete the questions included in this document.
- Submit a detailed floor plan of the unit, equipment specifications, and complete menu.
- Provide proof of permitted commissary and/or servicing location.
- Contact the Porter County Health Department, Food Service Division, 219-465-3525, option 4, to schedule a pre-operational inspection. The location for the inspection will take place at the Porter County Health Department. The unit must be fully equipped and operational for the inspection.

Permitting Requirements for Mobile Food Units or Pushcarts operating in Porter County

- **Complete a food permit application and submit permit fee.** We offer the following food permits:
 1. Annual Retail Food Establishment Permit for \$200.
 2. Partial Year Retail Food Establishment Permit (seasonal) that is valid for six (6) consecutive months for \$150.
 3. Temporary Permit for \$20 per day, \$100 maximum per event.
- **Provide proof of permitted commissary and/or servicing location.**

- **Attach a copy of a current Food Safety Manager Certificate with application** (if applicable). Visit the [ISDH website](#) for more information about the certified food handler requirements and exemptions and a list of entities offering training.
- **Provide a complete menu.** **Note:** Because the mobile food unit or pushcart design is related to the menu served, the Food Service Division must approve any change in the menu both now and in the future.

Mobile Food Unit General Requirements:

All mobile food units must have appropriate facilities for the specific type of food operation conducted on the mobile food unit or pushcart.

Food Sources

- All foods, beverages and ice must be obtained from an approved source. Any food preparation or food storage done off-site must be accomplished at a permitted food establishment.
 - No home prepared or home canned foods or foods that have been stored in a home are allowed.
1. For mobile units or push carts (must attach commissary agreement)
 - a. Commissary name and address:
 2. **For Self-contained mobile units** (must bring all receipts for food purchased to each event)
 - a. Will all food be purchased the day of the event and maintained under temperature control?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Water Supply

- All water must be obtained from an approved public water supply system or a regularly tested well.
 - If water is from an individual well, **the most recent drinking water test results shall be submitted with the application** and each year with renewal applications.
3. **Water source:** Public ☐ Private ☐
Servicing Area Name: **Servicing Area Address:**
Private Well: Last Test Date:
 - A mobile food unit requiring a water system shall have a potable water system under pressure.
 - The water system must have sufficient capacity to furnish enough hot and cold water for all food operation purposes such as food preparation, utensil cleaning and sanitizing, and hand washing.
 4. Hot Water Heater capacity must meet the minimum 10 gallon standard or on-demand such that hot water is provided at all times to the handwashing sink and in sufficient supply to maintain a temperature of at least 110F in the ware washing sink.
 - The mobile food unit fresh water tank must be:
 - (1) constructed of a food grade material
 - (2) enclosed from the filling inlet to the discharge outlet
 - (3) sloped to an outlet that allows complete drainage of the tank
 - (4) have an inlet that is 3/4" in inner diameter or less, and provided with a connection that will prevent its use for any other service
 - (5) provide 5 gallons of water dedicated to hand washing and an additional 10 gallons of water dedicated to ware washing of utensils only, as needed for units that will return to a commissary every evening. **Self-contained units must have a minimum 30-gallon fresh water tank.**

5. Your Fresh Water Tank Capacity: _____

- All connecting hoses must be food grade and clearly identified as to their use so as not to be mistakenly used for another purpose.
- Proper backflow/back-siphonage devices must be installed at the water source of the mobile food unit if water is continuously supplied at any given time (by a hose, pipe, etc.). The device must be approved for continuous pressure and no cross-connections or potential sources of contamination will be allowed.

Wastewater

- All wastewater (except water from clean ice) must be contained in a permanently installed retention tank that is at least fifteen percent (15%) larger in capacity than the water supply tank.
6. Your Wastewater Tank Capacity:
- The wastewater retention tank must be sloped to a drain that is one (1) inch in inner diameter or greater, equipped with a shut-off valve.
 - Wastewater must be removed in such a manner that a public health hazard or nuisance is not created.
 - Wastewater must be discharged into a sanitary sewer or other approved sewage treatment system.

Do not dump wastewater onto the ground or in a storm drain system.

7. Servicing Location (if different than commissary):

Handwash Sinks

- Hand sinks are required if there is any open food or beverage prepared in the mobile food unit.
- A hand sink must be capable of providing hands-free, continuous flow of hot and cold running water that is under pressure.
- Hot water must be able to reach a minimum of 85°F at the hand sink.
- The hand sink must be equipped with soap and paper towels.
- The hand sink must be easily accessible and used for no other purpose.
- If food preparation takes place outside of the unit, the outside area must also be provided with proper hand washing facilities. A portable hand washing station is acceptable at the outside prep area only and must also be equipped with **warm** water from a **free flowing spigot**, soap, paper towels, and a catch bucket to collect wastewater until it is properly disposed.

Dishwashing

- If preparing/handling open foods on the mobile food unit, provide a three (3) compartment sink to wash, rinse and sanitize utensils, dishware and equipment. Water must reach a minimum of 110 degrees F at the 3 bay sink. Each bay must be large enough to accommodate the largest piece of equipment or utensil. Proper drain boards, utensil racks, or movable dish tables must be provided for storage of soiled and clean dishes.
- If any of the above items are taken off premises for washing, they must be properly cleaned and sanitized in a permitted commissary.
- Proper sanitizer and test kit must be provided and used in each mobile unit and in the commissary.

Equipment

- All equipment and food contact surfaces must be in good repair, non-absorbent, corrosion-resistant, and easily cleanable.
- All equipment must be installed to allow easy cleaning.

- All refrigeration units installed in mobile food units must be able to maintain internal food temperatures at 41°F or below. All hot holding units installed must be able to maintain internal food temperatures at 135°F or above.
- Accurate and properly located ambient air thermometers must be provided in all hot and cold-holding units. A probe/stem thermometer must also be provided for monitoring internal food temperatures.
- Adequate power supply for operation of all equipment.
- Only single-service utensils and dishware shall be provided for use by the consumer.

Ventilation

- Commercial mechanical exhaust ventilation must be provided above ranges, griddles, grills, deep fat fryers and similar equipment to remove high heat, smoke, steam, odors, or grease.
8. Will your unit require mechanical ventilation? **Y/N**
 - Ventilation systems must meet local fire regulatory requirements.
 9. Have you contacted your local fire department for guidance on the type of hood required? **Y/N**
 10. Who will provide regular service to your mechanical vent hood?

Structure

- All floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces must be constructed of materials that are smooth, durable, corrosion-resistant, non-absorbent, and easily-cleanable.
- Exposed utility service lines and pipes shall be installed so they do not obstruct or prevent cleaning of floors, walls, or ceilings.
- Lighting inside the mobile food unit shall have a minimum of 70 foot-candles. All lights must be shielded or shatterproof.
- All outside openings (such as exterior doors, pass-through windows, etc.) must be protected against the entry of insects, rodents, and outdoor weather conditions by screens, fly fans, self-closing and tight-fitting doors.
- Any outside food preparation or serving area must be properly covered to protect the food from contamination (except over grilling unit due to fire safety reasons).

When facilities for cleaning utensils and equipment exist at the permitted commissary, water and wastewater systems are not necessary if mobile food units are serving only:

1. ***Food pre-packaged in individual servings and transported and stored under the required conditions; and/or***
2. ***Non-potentially hazardous beverages that are dispensed from covered urns or other protected equipment, and ice is not scooped.***

****Additional Requirements for Self-Contained Mobile Food Units:**

Mobile Food Units must use a permitted commissary for daily servicing operations unless:

- An approved servicing location is provided and used for such things as obtaining potable water and for disposal of wastewater and other wastes generated by the unit.
- The mobile food unit's water and wastewater systems are adequately sized and operated properly to serve the needs of the unit.

- Adequate storage areas are provided within the mobile food unit for all food products, dry goods, single-service articles, utensils and equipment, and cleaning supplies.
- Adequate facilities, as required by the menu, are provided, including food preparation and cooking equipment, hand sink, ware washing facilities, mechanical refrigeration, and any other necessary equipment.

Pushcart Requirements:

The minimum requirements of a pushcart are as follows:

- A pushcart must use a permitted commissary for storage of food and supplies, food preparation, cleaning and sanitizing utensils and equipment, and servicing operations.
- The pushcart must be constructed of food grade, easily cleanable surfaces.
- Have a permanently installed hand sink with free flowing hot (100°F) and cold water, soap and paper towels.
- The fresh water holding tank and appurtenances (pipes, hoses) must be:
 1. constructed of food grade material
 2. durable, corrosion-resistant and non-absorbent
 3. finished to have a smooth, easily cleanable surface
- Wastewater holding tank must be 15% larger than the fresh water tank.
- No sinks are required if serving pre-packaged foods only (e.g. packaged ice cream).
- The pushcart must have overhead protection.
- Must be able to reheat precooked hotdogs and sausage products within 2 hours.
- Potentially hazardous foods must be kept at 41°F or below or 135°F or above.

FOOD HANDLING:

11. Who (job title) will be your Certified Food Safety Manager?
 (Title 410 IAC 7-22) _____
 (Please include a copy of the certificate)

How will employees be trained in food safety? (Section 135) _____

FOOD:

12. Please provide a list of all planned food suppliers (Section 155) _____

What is the procedure for obtaining/storing food/ingredients and how frequently? (Section 162) _____

Are temperatures checked and containers inspected for damage? Yes/No

13. Do you intend to make low-acid or acidified foods and intend your products to be shelf stable? Yes / No
 If so, have you passed the Better Process and Control School Exam? Yes ____ No ____ N/A ____
 (Please include a copy of your certification)

14. Do you intend to make reduced oxygen packaged (ROP, def. 73, Section 218)? Yes / No
 If yes, please list out the ROP foods _____

FOOD PREPARATION:

15. If the foods are prepared a day or more in advance, please list them out along with where made _____

16. Describe the procedure to minimize the amount of time potentially hazardous food will be kept in the temperature danger zone (41°F-135°F) during preparation (**Section 211**) _____

17. Describe the cooling procedures for pre-made cold foods (i.e. chicken salad) to minimize the time potentially hazardous food will be kept in the temperature danger zone (41°F-135°F) after preparation (**Section 212**) _____

18. What will be your procedure to prevent employees from touching foods that are ready-to-eat and will not be cooked or heat treated? (**such as, sushi, lettuce, buns, etc (Section 173)**) _____

19. Describe your date marking system (described under Section 191) for potentially hazardous (**defined under Section 66**) ready-to-eat foods (**defined under Section 72**)? (**Section 214**) _____

20. Will all produce be washed prior to use (Section 175)? Yes ____ No ____
If not, why? _____

If yes, where? _____

21. Provide a list of the types of food that will need to be thawed before cooking and the process that will be used to thaw the food. (e.g. frozen meat) (**Section 210**).

PROCESS	TYPES OF FOOD
Refrigeration	
Running Water less than 70°F	
Microwave as part of the cooking process	
Cook from frozen	
Other (describe)	

22. Provide a list of the types of food that will need to be cooled and the process that will be used to cool each of these foods (i.e. leftovers) (**Section 211, 212**).

PROCESS	TYPES OF FOODS
Shallow pans under refrigeration	
Ice and water bath	

Reduced volume (quartering a large roast)	
Ice paddles	
Rapid chill devices (blast freezer)	
Other (describe)	

23. What procedures will be in place to ensure that foods are reheated to 165°F or above? (**Section 206**)

24. Will "Time as a Public Health Control" (**Section 216**) be used for potentially hazardous food(s) (either hot or cold)? Yes _____ No _____ **Note: These procedures must be submitted and approved before their use.**

25. Will raw animal food(s) be offered to the public in an undercooked form (**sushi, rare hamburgers, eggs over easy, made from scratch Caesar dressing, etc.**)? Yes _____ No _____ (If yes, please attach your consumer advisory statement) (**Section 223**).

26. Who (line cook, kitchen manager, etc.) will be assigned the responsibility of taking food temperatures and at what steps will temperatures be taken (**cooking, cooling, reheating, and hot holding**)? (**Section 134**)

27. Describe how cross-contamination of raw meats and ready-to-eat foods will be prevented in a refrigeration unit(s) (i.e. **walk in coolers, under the counter coolers**)? (**Section 175**)

28. Describe the storage of different types of raw proteins (meat, seafood, eggs) in the same unit, and how cross contamination will be prevented? (**Section 175**)

SANITATION:

29. Who will be assigned the responsibility of ensuring the correct amount of sanitizer will be used? (**Section 134**)

30. What type of chemical sanitizer(s) will the unit use (**Section 282**) For the 3 compartment sink? _____
For sanitizer buckets? _____ For Sanitizer spray bottles? _____

31. Will the unit have test kits/papers on site for all types of chemical sanitizers (**Section 281**)?
Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

32. Does your unit have enough drainboards/utensils racks/carts for the air drying of equipment and utensils from the 3 compartment sink? (**Section 275**)

33. How will cooking equipment, cutting boards, counter tops, and other food contact surfaces which cannot be submerged in a sink be sanitized? (**Section 318**)

POISONOUS/TOXIC MATERIALS & PERSONAL CARE ITEMS:

34. Where will poisonous or toxic materials be stored? (**Section 457**)

35. Will the owner ensure that insecticides and rodenticides are "Approved for Use in Food Establishments" and that they are applied in a safe manner? (**Section 134**)

36. Will all spray bottles be clearly labeled? (**Section 456**) Yes _____ No _____

37. Where will first aid supplies be stored? (Section 471) _____

PLUMBING:

38. Are hot and cold water fixtures provided at every sink? (Section 342) Yes _____ No _____

39. If a water supply hose is to be used for potable water, is it made from food-grade materials? (Section 370)
Yes _____ No _____

40. What is the MAKE AND MODEL of the hot water heater? List the recovery time, volume, and capacity.
(Section 341)

41. Do you plan to install a grease trap on the unit? Yes _____ No _____

42. What would be the frequency of cleaning of the grease trap? (Section 381)

43. What will be your procedure for cleaning the floor of the unit?

HAND WASHING & TOILET FACILITIES:

41. Handwashing sinks are required in each food preparation and dishwashing area (Section 359)

How many hand sinks will be provided? _____

42. If a toilet room is included, is the door self-closing? (Section 351) Yes _____ No _____

43. If a toilet room is included, is it equipped with adequate ventilation? (Section 437) Yes _____ No _____

Room Finish Schedule (What the interior of the facility will look like.)

44. Please include which materials (i.e. quarry tile, stainless steel=SS, plastic cove molding, etc.) will be used in the following areas (Section 409).

AREA	FLOOR	COVING	WALL	CEILING
Cook's Line				
Prep Line				
Food Storage				
Chemical Storage				
Toilet Room				
Dish Area				
Other				

45. How will all outdoor service areas be covered? (Section 424) Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

Personal Belongings

46. Describe the storage location for employees' coats, purses, medicines and food/beverage (Section 440, 469)

47. Where is the designated area for employees to eat, and drink? (Section 148) _____

Equipment

48. Will all of the equipment meet the design and construction for the American National Standards Institute

(ANSI) standards or meet **(Section 226)**? Yes _____ No _____

49. Will the utensils and food storage containers be made from food-grade quality materials? **(Section 226)**

Yes _____ No _____

50. Will any pieces of used equipment be utilized? **(Section 474)** Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

If yes, please list equipment types: _____

51. Is the ventilation hood system sufficient for the needs of the unit (seek professional guidance)? **(Section 445)**

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

52. What would be the frequency of cleaning of the ventilation hood system? **(Section 443)**: _____

53. Will all of the equipment used for the storage of potentially hazardous food be able to meet the minimum temperature requirements (frozen food 0°F, cold food 41°F, hot food 135°F)? **(Section 273)**

Yes _____ No _____ N/A _____

54. Please list equipment types for the hot and cold holding of foods on the mobile unit and during commuting and service. **(Section 213)**

55. Will each refrigeration unit have an ambient air thermometer? **(Section 260)** Yes _____ No _____

Insect and Rodent Harborage

56. Will all outside doors be self-closing, when applicable, and rodent/insect proof? **(Section 421)**

Yes _____ No _____

57. Will screens be provided on any open windows/doors to the outside? **(Section 421)** Yes _____ No _____

58. Will air curtains be installed (made from either plastic or mechanical); if so, where on outer openings? **(Section 421)** _____

59. Will any insect control devices be used? **(Section 419)** Yes _____ No _____ If so, Where? _____

60. Will all pipes and electrical conduit chases be sealed (i.e. ventilation systems, exhaust and intake be protected)? **(Section 422)** Yes _____ No _____

61. Will the area around the unit be maintained clear of unnecessary debris or other harborage conditions? **(Section 453)** Yes _____ No _____

62. Do you plan to use a pest control service? Yes _____ No _____ Frequency _____
Company _____

Refuse and Recyclables

63. Please describe the method for handling solid waste during and then after daily operation of the mobile unit.
