

MATAGORDA COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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- Food Service & Sanitation
- Animal Control
- Floodplain Management
- Solid Waste Management

BASIC GUIDELINES FOR APPROVAL OF FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

A **Food Service Permit** is required for anyone providing food for public consumption in Matagorda County, including the incorporated cities of Palacios and Bay City. **Completion of a Food Service Application and appropriate fee payment is necessary to be considered for a permit.** This fee and application should be returned to the Matagorda County Environmental Health office located at 2200 7th Street, 1st Floor, Bay City, Texas 77414. If you have any questions, please feel free to call or come by the Environmental Health Office. An inspection of your business premise must be made and approved before a permit is issued. A fee schedule is attached.

This is a partial list of basic food establishment guidelines. It is not intended to cover all requirements of the Matagorda County Environmental Health standards.

1. **Equipment Sanitizing** – For manual cleaning and sanitizing of equipment and utensils, a sink with two or three compartments shall be provided for use. Either a commercially approved dishwasher or a three compartment sink is required for dishware that comes in contact with the customer. Sink compartments shall be large enough to accommodate the immersion of the utensils for which it is designed. A two compartment sink may be used for pots and other equipment with the compartments large enough for washing and sanitizing equipment.
2. **Hand Basins** – Hand sinks with hot and cold water shall be conveniently located in food preparation areas.
3. **Separate Food Preparation Sink Required** – Food preparation will not be permitted in sinks used for cleaning and sanitizing of utensils and equipment.
4. **Mop Sink Required** – A mop sink separate from dishwashing, food preparation and food storage is required on all new construction or change of ownership.
5. **Restrooms** – All operators or managers providing services to the public or all new construction for **Food Service Establishments** with a dining area shall be required to provide and maintain a restroom (for males and for females) that shall be available for use by the public. **Minimum Construction Standards are as follows:**
 - a. Light colored, smooth, easily cleaned walls to a four (4) foot level.
 - b. Automatic vent fans.
 - c. Mixed hot and cold water on new business or new construction.
 - d. Self-closing doors.
 - e. Soap and towels or air dryer.
6. **Ceilings and Walls** – In food preparation, food storage, and dishwashing areas, as well as restrooms and vestibules, walls and ceilings shall be light colored, smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleaned. Studs, joists, and rafters shall not be exposed. If exposed in any other area, they shall be finished to provide an easily cleaned surface.
7. **Floors** – Floors shall be sealed concrete or covered with a smooth, easily cleaned covering in the food preparation, food storage, and dishwashing areas as well as the restrooms and vestibules. Floor and wall junctions shall be covered and sealed.

8. **Lighting** – In food preparation areas, food storage and dishwashing areas, bulbs shall be shielded against breakage.
9. **Buildings and Doors** – Buildings and doors shall be sealed to make them insect and rodent proof.
10. **Equipment** – Equipment shall meet NSF Commercial Restaurant Standards and be easily movable to facilitate cleaning, or sealed to the floor, or elevated at least six (6) inches.
11. **Refrigeration Equipment/Freezers** – All refrigeration equipment and freezers must be provided with an approved and easily readable thermometer in good working order.
12. **No Unfinished Wood Surfaces** – All wood surfaces in the food preparation and storage areas must be of a smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleaned material. All wooden surfaces must be sealed and painted.
13. **Refuse Storage Areas** – Approved dumpsters or other approved covered garbage containers are required. The dumpsters and/or cans must be kept clean. **THEY MUST:**
 - a. Be adequate and convenient to each business.
 - b. Provide outside water for cleanup of storage area.
 - c. Be on a solid, smooth surface such as asphalt or concrete.
 - d. Be emptied on a regular basis.
14. **Adequate dry storage areas** – will be provided so that all bulk foods, canned goods, equipment, and single service items can be stored at least six (6) inches off the floor and the floors under the storage shelves can be easily cleaned.
15. **Plans** – Plans shall be submitted to and approved by the Matagorda County Health Department prior to renovation or construction of a food establishment.
16. **A final inspection** – by the Matagorda County Health Department and approval by the inspection department is required before a Food Service Permit will be issued.
17. **An acceptable bacteriological analysis** – will be required of any business operating on a water well and furnishing water to the public or to employees for consumption or as a food. Water samples will be submitted to a state approved laboratory for bacteriological analysis.
18. **Sewage disposal** – Any business that maintains an individual on-site disposal system will operate and maintain this system according to the Matagorda County Septic Order and the Rules of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). A copy of the system permit should be kept on file.
19. **A Heimlich Maneuver Poster** – must be displayed by all establishments serving food for public consumption. Contact the Health Department for poster requirements.
20. **A Food Service Permit** – will be issued upon final inspection and approval of all Food Service establishments. This Permit must be displayed in a prominent location at all times for public viewing along with a copy of the inspection form.

FOOD SERVICE PERMIT FEES

RETAIL FOOD STORES AND FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

FOOD PERMITS	FEES
Number of Employees	
1 – 10 Employees	\$ 100.00
11 + Employees	\$ 150.00
Roadside Vendors	\$ 120.00
Mobile Food Unit	\$ 170.00
TEMPORARY PERMITS	
Mobile Food Unit - 6 Days	\$ 70.00
Mobile Food Unit - 180 Days	\$ 120.00
LATE FEE FOR EXPIRED PERMITS	\$ 50.00
RE-INSPECTION	\$ 50.00

**All permits, with the exception of temporary permits, are good for one year from the date of issue.
NO REFUNDS will be issued for any Food Service Permit Application Fee.**