

Hidalgo County Health & Human Services Department
Environmental Division
1304 S. 25th Street Edinburg, TX 78542
Phone (956) 383-0111 Fax (956) 383-7351
<http://www.hchd.org/index.html>

Application for **Mobile Food Vendors** Permit

NOTE: This application must be filled out completely. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Applications for a permit to operate does not guarantee that a permit will be granted. Permit approval is based upon the establishment or mobile food unit's compliance with state and local Health requirements. **MOBILE UNITS MUST BE PRESENT TO ISSUE PERMIT.**

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY: This mobile food vendor will operate within: () Hidalgo County () Other _____.

Mobile Vendor Business Name:: _____.

Mobile Vendor Owner: _____ **Phone:** _____.

Mobile Vendor Responsibility Party: _____ **Phone:** _____.

Residence Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____.

Date of Birth: _____ Identification Number/State: _____ Number of employees: _____.

E-Mail address (not required): _____ Hours of Operation: _____.

Mail Renewals to: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____.

Check One: () Proprietorship () Partnership () Corporation

Type of Vendor: () Unrestricted (open food) () Restricted (Prepackaged)

Vehicle: () truck, () Van, () Step-van () Trailer, () Pushcart, () Car, () Other (specify) _____.

Vehicle Make _____ Model _____ Year _____.

Color _____ License Plate # _____ State _____ Zip Code _____.

Name of Central Preparation Facility (CPF): _____.

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____.

Phone _____ Owner / Manager's Name _____.

Type of Food to be Sold From Mobile Unit: _____.

Days and Times working at CPF _____.

The mobile food unit must be inspected and have a permit affixed to it. Permit expiration date is indicated on the permit. Annual permit fees are based on the type of operation, and is as follows:

Hidalgo County

All Mobile Food Vendor Permits \$100.00

Fee payable to Hidalgo County Health and Human Services Department (HCHHSD)

All the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge and belief. Applicant acknowledges that the permit applied for shall be subject to all provisions of the orders and ordinances of Hidalgo County under which the permit is granted, and shall be subject to all provisions and statutes and ruled adopted under the statutes of the State of Texas governing food service establishments, retail food stores, mobile food units and roadside food vendors.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Additional Permit Requirements for Mobile Vendors

County of Hidalgo, Texas

The Information detailed below must be adhered to in addition to the statements made above for Mobile Food Vendors operating within the limits of Hidalgo County. Also, please contact Hidalgo County Planning Department at 956-318-2840 to determine if the site(s) used for vending is/are approved. Hidalgo County Health Department approval does not guarantee approval with other County Departments. These rules *do not* apply to the incorporated areas of Hidalgo County (City Limits). If any of the items below are missing from your application your permit may not be issue.

Vendor Staff

- Proof of Texas sales and use tax permit.** This permit application is available at: <http://www.window.state.tx.us/taxpermit>. For additional questions, call 1-800-252-5555.
- Itinerary Route.** This itinerary should include locations where sales occur. Your itinerary should be updated on a quarterly basis. For new operators, use your best judgment. A sample route sheet is attached for your convenience. This information may be submitted via fax to the health department if the location/route changes throughout the year.
- Written Permission to Use restrooms at Work Site.** If the vendor will be at one location for more than two hours, a written agreement shall be submitted to the health authority from a property owner within 300 feet of the mobile food establishment providing permission for use of restroom facilities with flushable toilets during all hours of operation. A copy of this agreement must be kept in the mobile unit for proof. Portable toilets may be accepted with an approved liquid waste hauler contract.
- Notarized statement from the Owner or Responsible Party of a Central Preparation facility.** These documents (found on pages) are used to state that the mobile food establishment uses the facility as its base of operation. This statement should also indicate that the central preparation facility has the proper waste water capabilities for the type of food the mobile vendor will be preparing. Not required if owner owns both CPF and mobile unit.
- Documentation of Central preparation Facility Use.** Mobile vendors are required to document on a log sheet the dates and times that service visits are conducted to the approved CPF. This includes re-stocking your mobile unit, obtaining fresh water and discarding waste water. This log sheet shall be maintain at the CPF and be presented to any health official upon request and during permit renewal. If using an approved liquid waste hauler, copies of trip tickets will be required to be presented during routine inspections and at permit renewal. A sample log sheet has been provided. This item is NOT required during the initial permitting process.
- Hidalgo County Fire Marshall Department.** Prior to Health Department approval, an Hidalgo County Fire Marshall Inspection must be conducted and passed. If you mobile unit does not require an inspection , the Fire Marshall will notify the Health Department.

Mobile Vending Unit Physical Inspection Checklist

- License Plate – Present and current
- Adequate Clean & Waste water Capacities – Waste water tank must be sized with a minimum capacity of 15% larger than potable water tank's capacity.
- Water tank Security – All tanks must be permanently mounted to unit.
- Waste water tank Clean-out Valve – Clean -out valve must be located on the exterior of unit; diameter of clean out must be 1” in diameter or larger and may not be the same size as clean water fill up valve; clean-out valve must be located at height below clean water fill up valve.
- Clean Water tank Fill Valve – Fill valve must be located on exterior of unit; fill valve must be located at height above waste water clean-out valve; fill valve may not be the same size as waste water clean-out valve.
- Hand washing sink – hand wash sink present and available for convenience use.
- Ware Wash Sink – 3 compartment ware wash sink present; fill faucet able to reach all compartment for filling ; compartments capable of holding water; compartments must be large enough to fully submerge all food contact wares requiring regular washing.
- Splash Guard – A splash guard may be required between hand sink and ware washing sink to prevent possible contamination.
- Hot Water Heater – Water heating device present and secured in unit.
- Exterior Openings – All exterior openings such as doors, windows, and vents must be provided with screening material to prevent pest or contaminant entry.
- Cold Hold Unit – Mechanical cooler/refrigerator present in unit; it is highly recommended that unit is equipped with commercial refrigeration unit; residential refrigeration units often lack the capability to maintain food items at appropriate temperature in mobile unit operating environment.
- Cleanable Surfaces - All interior surfaces must be constructed of smooth, durable, easily cleanable, non-absorbent materials.
- Physical Condition – No conditions present which may pose a risk to food or personal safety. The outdoor walking and driving areas shall be surfaced with concrete, asphalt, or gravel or other materials that have been effectively treated to minimize dust, facilitate maintenance, and prevent muddy conditions.

*This checklist is solely intended to provide guidance in adherence to the Texas Food Establishment Rules. This guidance is not all inclusive of the rules and regulations pertaining to mobile vending units.

MOBILE FOOD VENDOR RESPONSABILITIES

- 1. NO HOME PREPARED FOOD MAY BE SERVED TO THE PUBLIC.**
- 2. THE USE OF EXTERNAL FOOD PREPARATION AND STORAGE EQUIPMENT IS NOT ALLOWED.** All equipment **MUST** be contained within or on the mobile unit and **MUST** be properly enclosed.
- 3. REFRIGERATION AND HEATING:** You must have adequate hot and cold food storage facilities to maintain food products at the required temperatures. Hot foods must be held at 135° or above. Cold foods must be stored at 41° or below. Inadequate refrigeration may result in permit suspension.
- 4. THERMOMETER:** Metal stem dial thermometers with a range of 0-220°F and accurate to $\pm 3^\circ\text{F}$ must be provided on mobile food units on which food is prepared in order to monitor food temperatures. Locate additional thermometers in all refrigeration units.
- 5. LABELING:** All food must have complete and proper labels.
- 6. MOBILITY:** The health authority **may prohibit alteration, removal**, attachments, placement or **change** in , under, or upon the mobile food establishment that would **prevent** or **otherwise reduce ready mobility**.
- 7. WATER/UTILITIES:** All mobile food units that are required to have water supplies must have properly designed waste water holding tanks of a 15% greater capacity than the hot and cold water supply. The holding tank must be permanently installed in the unit and equipped with a drain valve to empty the tank on the outside of the vehicle. Leaking waste water tanks may result in permit suspension. At no time during operation is the mobile unit to be attached to a water hose or any other permanent water supply. Also, permanent utilities (i.e. gas, electricity) may not be attached to the mobile unit at **ANY** time.
- 8. HOT AND COLD WATER:** If the mobile food unit's operation requires hot and cold water, it must be supplied and working at all times during operation. Failure to comply may result in permit suspension.
- 9. HANDWASHING:** Soap and towels must be supplied to the hand sink of UNRESTRICTED type operations at all times.
- 10. CERTIFIED FOOD MANAGER / FOOD HANDLER:** Mobile units are required to have at least (1) food manager certificate and all other employees registered as food handlers within 30 days of employment.

I have read and understand the items of responsibility listed above, and I agree to comply with all of the requirements.

Signature of Mobile Food Vending Owner / Operator

Date

MOBILE FOOD VENDING INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

RESTRICTED MOBILE FOOD VENDOR means a Mobile Food Vendor offering only prepackaged food or prepackaged ice cream. A Restricted Vendor will fall under one of three categories:

- 1) if the vendor is purchasing food, the vendor must provide a copy of the commercial kitchen's Texas Food Manufacture's permit (or Meat Safety Assurance, if applicable) from the Texas Department of State Health Services, or;
- 2) The vendor is preparing their own food at a commercial kitchen and is an employee of the same kitchen, or;
- 3) The vendor is leasing space from a commercial kitchen and is **NOT** an employee. The vendor must apply for and obtain a Hidalgo County Health Permit at the leased space location.

UNRESTRICTED MOBILE FOOD VENDOR means a Mobile Food Vendor offering food that is packaged or prepared on the mobile unit, including the slicing or peeling of fruits and vegetables.

1. **Permits for Mobile Food Vendor** must be obtained before operating within Hidalgo County. Permit applications may be obtained at 1304 S. 25th St. Edinburg, TX 78542. Permits expired annually, one year after the day they are approved, and must be renewed on or before expiration date. An additional permit is required for vendors selling fresh seafood. Call the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at (800) 792-1112 for further information. All vehicles must have current State of Texas license plates. Mobile vending units equipped with water and waste water retention tanks must have an agreement with an approved liquid waste hauler. If your unit generates any grease or grease by products will need to have an approved and permitted grease trap / interceptor.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL MOBILE VENDING UNITS:

1. **Single service items:** Only disposable place settings are to be given to customers.
2. **Vehicle Construction (excluding pushcart):** The interior of the vehicle must be constructed of smooth, easily cleanable surfaces. The vehicle must be **completely enclosed**. N(No open truck beds; windows must be screened or kept closed.) The vehicle must be equipped with facilities to hold potentially hazardous foods at a temperature either above **135°F**. Or below **41°F**. Sterno is not an acceptable means of maintaining food temperatures. **NOTE:** it is a violation to take hot foods, place them in a Styrofoam or igloo-type cooler, and carry the cooler into a building to sell the food.
3. **Ice beds, when used:** No foods may be bedded in ice except for canned drinks and milk cartons. Foods may be placed in a container, and the container must be bedded in the ice. Ice used for this purpose may not be used in beverages and must drain to a **holding tank**, which is of at least 15% greater capacity than the ice beds.
4. **Trash Receptacles:** Must be provided for all mobile units.

SPECIFIED REQUIREMENTS FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF MOBILE FOOD VENDING UNITS

PUSHCART

1. **Cart construction:** The cart must be constructed of smooth, easily cleanable surfaces. The cart size is not part of the Health Department approval process. The cart must be equipped with facilities to hold potentially hazardous foods at a temperature either above **135°F** or below **41°F**. **Sterno** is not an acceptable means of maintaining food temperatures. A (small) **trash receptacle** must be provided on the cart. **Ice** used for bedding beverages must drain to a **holding tank**, which is of at least 15% greater capacity than the ice beds.
2. **Types of Food:** With the exception of hot dogs, snow cones or other foods approved by the health authority only **prepackaged** food may be sold from a pushcart. This means that the food must be prepared and wrapped at the approved kitchen facility, then transported to the cart. The prepackaged food must be either individually labeled, or a “blanket label(s)” may be placed on the cart, if the packaged food is handed to the customer by staff. Labels must include the following information:
 1. the name of the item
 2. a list of ingredients in order of predominance
 3. the net weight of the item
 4. the name and address of the product manufactured
3. **Unrestricted Food Carts:** Unrestricted food carts must have clear covers on top and three sides of the preparation area. Unrestricted food carts are also required to have a 3-compartment sink on the unit with hot and cold water supplied under pressure. The unit must be equipped with a retention/holding tank of at least 15% greater capacity than the water supply. The waste water connections must be below fresh water inlets.
4. **Condiments:** Condiments, if provided, must be in covered containers with service utensils or from squeeze or pour-type bottles with lids.
5. **Beverages:** beverages must either be canned or be dispensed from covered containers with spigots or pumps.

PREPACKAGED FOODS

1. **Description:** All foods sold is prepackaged or pre-wrapped at an approved kitchen.
2. **Beverages:** must either be canned or be dispensed from covered containers with spigots or pumps.
3. **Condiments:** must be in covered containers with service utensils or from squeeze or pour-type bottles with lids.
4. **Type of food allowed:** Only prepackaged food may be sold. The food must be prepared and wrapped at an approved kitchen. Then transported to the unit. The prepackaged food must be either individually labeled, or a “blanket label(s)” may be placed on the cart, if prepackaged food is handed to the customers by staff. Labels must include the following information:
 1. the name of the item;
 2. a list of ingredients in order of predominance
 3. the net weight of the item
 4. the name and address of the product manufacturer.

FOOT PEDDLERS (restricted Permit)

1. **Description:** All food sold is prepackaged at and prepared at an approve kitchen.
2. **Conveyance:** A specific type of conveyance is required (I.e one ice chest or cooler).
Farmer's market vendors may provide more than one conveyance at approved farmer's market venues only.
3. **Types of food allowed:** See Prepackaged Foods section above.

FOOD PREPARATION UNRESTRICTED

- 1. Description:** The unit is a complete “Kitchen on wheels.” The food may be prepared on the unit and does not need to be prepackaged.
- 2. Sinks:** There must be a **three-bay sink** on the unit for utensil washing. A **separate sink for hand washing** is also required. Soap and single use towels (paper towels) must be supplied to the hand washing sink.
- 3. Water: Hot** and cold or tempered water, under pressure, must be supplied to all sinks. The water must be supplied from an approved source.
- 4. Retention/Holding Tank:** The unit must be equipped with a permanently mounted potable water tank and a retention/holding tank of at least 15% greater capacity that the combines water and ice supply. The waste water connections must be below the fresh water inlet.
- 5. Certified Food Manager / Food Handler:** Unrestricted mobile units operating in Hidalgo County are required for the owner and the manager to obtain a food manager certificate and all other employees obtain the food handlers certificate.

NOTE: The purpose of this document is to provide only basic information and answer commonly asked questions. Call (956) 383-0111 for additional questions.

When your mobile vending unit meets all of the requirements, bring the mobile unit to 1304 S. 25th St Edinburg, TX 78542 in order to have the vehicle inspected. You do not have to bring the unit in with power source for permit inspections. If the unit passes inspection, a permit will be issue. If the unit does not meet the requirements, an additional inspection will be made.