



MOBILE FOOD UNIT PLAN REVIEW PACKET

This packet is intended to help you through the plan review process and to assure that your mobile food unit meets the rule requirements. This document is a companion to the Alabama Food Establishment Sanitation Rules and must be completed as part of the plan review process.

This packet consists of the following information:

- **Applicant's Checklist for Mobile Food Units**
- **Mobile Food Unit Plan Review Application**
- **General Information**
- **Mobile Food Unit General Requirements and Limitations**
- **Mobile Food Unit Plan Review Worksheet**
- **Mobile Food Unit Operating Schedule**
- **Memorandum of Commissary Usage**

Please complete the attached documents and submit them with the required plan review fee to the local county health department. **Approval from the local county health department must be obtained prior to construction or operation of your unit.** The following materials must also be submitted with your completed packet:

1. Complete plans of the unit and commissary drawn to scale, including equipment location.
2. List of all equipment necessary for the operation of the unit.
3. A description of the construction materials used on the unit and in the commissary, including surface finishes for floors, walls, ceilings, and countertops.
4. Information relating to your base of operation (commissary), including times and dates of use.
5. A complete menu of food and beverages to be served/sold.
6. A list of your operating location(s) and approximate time schedule. If the unit operates on a designated route, you must specify your itinerary. Complete the **Mobile Food Unit Operating Schedule** on page 13.

APPLICANT'S CHECKLIST FOR MOBILE FOOD UNITS

This checklist is intended to help you track your progress through the plan review process. When all steps are completed, your mobile food unit should be ready for inspection and approval to operate.

- ☐ Submit plan review application and review packet, plans, and required fee. Obtain plan review approval **prior** to beginning construction.
- ☐ Receive plan review approval from the local county health department.
- ☐ Obtain any required approvals from other agencies, such as zoning/planning, building, fire marshal, or city or county authorities.
- ☐ Contact the local county health department at least two weeks prior to opening to schedule a preoperational inspection.
- ☐ Submit an application to operate the mobile food unit with the required fee (if applicable).

**MOBILE FOOD UNIT
PLAN REVIEW APPLICATION**

Business name: _____

Business address: _____

Owner name: _____

Individual ☐ Corporation ☐ Partnership ☐ Other ☐ _____

Owner mailing address: _____

Owner phone #: _____ Establishment phone #: _____

New construction ☐ Remodel ☐ Completion date: _____

Previously permitted to operate? Yes ☐ No ☐ Former name: _____

420-3-22-.09 of the Food Rules requires that a completed plan review packet be submitted and reviewed before your unit can be approved to operate. Incomplete plans may be returned for additional information.

I agree to comply with the provisions of the Alabama State Board of Health Rules for Food Establishment Sanitation 420-3-22-.09.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Upon submittal, please enclose a mobile food unit plan review fee in the amount of \$ _____. Make checks payable to your local county health department.

Please call the environmental office of your local county health department if you have questions about your plan review, fees, facility inspections, or how to obtain a food protection manager certification.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Fee received: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____

Approved ☐

Not Approved ☐

Comments: _____

GENERAL INFORMATION

A mobile food establishment is defined in 420-3-22-.01 (4)19. as "...except for *pushcarts*, a unit mounted on or pulled by a self-propelled vehicle; is self-contained with its own drinking water tank and waste water tank *unless handling only prepackaged foods*; is designed to be readily movable; and is moved daily to return to its commissary. A pushcart is a category of mobile food establishment." There is no size limit to mobile food units, except that they must meet the following basic requirements:

- Mobile food units must be readily movable and on wheels (excluding boats) at all times during operation.
- During operation, all food shall be held, stored, displayed, and served from the mobile food unit, *except that pull-behind trailer units used only for cooking may be allowed if pre-approved by the Health Officer.*

There are four types of mobile food units. The mobile food unit classifications are based upon the type of menu served. Mobile food units are not allowed to perform operations that exceed the limitations of the commissary.

Category 1 - These units can serve only intact, prepackaged foods and drinks. No preparation or assembly of foods or beverages may take place on the unit. No dispensed ice is allowed. (A permit may not be required for a unit serving only these items. Check with the environmental office of your local county health department for more information.)

Category 2 - These units may dispense unpackaged foods and ice and may heat, hold, and serve fully cooked foods. They may not use raw foods of animal origin or cool foods that have been heated.

Category 3 - These units may cook, prepare, and assemble food items to include raw foods of animal origin and/or may cool foods that have been heated. However, cooking of raw animal foods is not allowed on a pushcart.

Category 4 - These units may perform activities/operations of those designated as Category 2 and 3, and in addition, may perform an operation requiring a variance or HACCP plan. The variance and/or HACCP plan must be approved by the health department prior to the specialized process being used by the unit.

Mobile Food Unit Category: 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL MOBILE FOOD UNIT INFORMATION

- Because the mobile food unit design is related to the menu served, the local county health department must approve any change in the menu. Failure to obtain approval for a menu change may result in closure of your unit.
- A mobile food unit may connect to water and sewer if it is available at the operating location; however, the fresh water tanks and waste water holding tanks must remain on the unit at all times.
- A mobile food unit may not serve as a commissary for another mobile food unit.
- A food protection manager certification is required for at least one person working in a mobile food unit at all hours of operation for Category 3 and 4 operations. Contact the local county health department for information on obtaining a food protection manager certification.
- All foods, single-service articles, single-use articles, and other items used for the operation of the mobile food unit shall be stored at the approved commissary other than during normal business operation of the mobile food unit. *Time/temperature control for safety (TCS) foods in packages or containers that have been opened, including opened or unpackaged TCS foods in holding bins on the mobile food unit, shall be discarded after each day's operation.*
- The business name and address of the commissary, as shown on the commissary's Food Permit, and telephone number of the commissary, shall be permanently placed on at least two sides of the mobile food unit. Lettering shall be legible, clearly visible to the public from the service area, and of a color contrasting with the unit exterior. The name shall be at least three inches high. The address and telephone number shall be at least one inch high.
- When obtaining a business license, be sure to provide a copy of the commissary food permit and authorization letter to operate in the given county.
- A copy of the commissary food permit and the most recent inspection score of the mobile food unit are required to be posted in public view within the unit at all times. During an inspection of the mobile food unit, a copy of the mobile food unit authorization letter should be available upon request.

- While this document contains some detailed information about the rules for the construction and operation of mobile food units, it does not contain all the requirements for your unit. Please refer to the Alabama State Board of Health Rules for Food Establishment Sanitation at:

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/environmental/rules.html>.

MOBILE FOOD UNIT GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

APPENDIX A REQUIREMENTS by menu and type of Mobile Unit

(*The key to the numbers is on the next page.*)

FOOD ITEM	PUSHCART	SELF-PROPELLED VEHICLE
Pre-packaged TCS* (For only pre-packaged ice cream, no permit is required)	1 or 2 6 9	1 or 2 6 9
Dispensing raw shrimp or raw fish (not pre-wrapped)	Not allowed on a pushcart	1 or 2 3 6 7 10
Unpackaged "Category 2" items	1 or 2 3 4 or 5 or 7 6 (for TCS) 9	1 or 2 3 4 or 5 or 7 6 (for TCS) 9
Heating or hot holding a pre-cooked TCS* food (unpackaged), or heating non-TCS*	1 or 2 3 4 or 5 or 7 6 (for TCS) 9 TCS must meet definition of Priority Category 2 Food	1 or 2 3 4 or 5 or 7 6 (for TCS) 8 9
Cooking raw TCS*	Not allowed on a pushcart	1 or 2 3 4 6 8 9

*TCS = Time/Temperature Control for Safety

THESE ARE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS BASED ON BROAD MENU CATEGORIES. A SPECIFIC MENU AND OPERATION MAY REQUIRE ADDITIONAL FACILITIES.

MOBILE FOOD UNIT PLAN REVIEW WORKSHEET

Key to chart on previous page

- 1- Operate from a commissary meeting all requirements of 420-3-22-.09. The commissary must have, at a minimum, facilities to store food at the required temperatures, a toilet facility and, *except when all food is prepackaged*, fill potable water tanks, empty wastewater tanks, provide a handwashing sink, provide an appropriate warewashing sink and all required items of the Food Sanitation Rules. If food preparation activities on the mobile unit generate grease or grease-laden vapors, the commissary must have a grease trap in accordance with local requirements.
- 2- Operate from a permitted food service establishment (which may be a separately - owned business under the restrictions of 420-3-22-.09) with facilities to store food at the required temperatures, a toilet facility and, *except when all food is prepackaged*, fill potable water tanks, empty wastewater tanks, provide a handwashing sink, provide an appropriate warewashing sink and all required items of the Food Sanitation Rules. If food preparation activities on the mobile unit generate grease or grease-laden vapors, the commissary must have a grease trap in accordance with local requirements.
- 3- Handwashing facility on-board the mobile unit; potable (drinking) water tank securely affixed on-board; wastewater holding tank securely affixed on-board, 15 percent larger than the potable water tank; warm water (100°F) provided at all times in adequate amounts.
- 4- Three-compartment sink on-board with chemical test papers provided and used.
- 5- Two-compartment sink on-board with chemical test papers provided and used.
- 6- Refrigeration/cold holding facilities on-board and/or facilities for hot holding food on-board, thermometers provided and used.
- 7- Four sets of food handling utensils, properly sanitized and prewrapped, on-board. (CHECK WITH THE LOCAL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WHERE OPERATION IS PROPOSED TO VERIFY IF THIS OPTION IS ALLOWED).
- 8- Cooking facilities on-board, to include thermometers, water under pumped pressure to all sinks, sufficient ventilation to remove vapors and smoke from the cooking area, screens or effective forced air barriers, self closing doors, shielded lights, and smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable floors, walls, and ceilings.
- 9- Transport entire mobile unit to commissary daily.
- 10 - (For vehicles used for dispensing only raw fish or shrimp) Maintain product in direct contact with ice with meltwater contained until delivery is completed. Meltwater shall be disposed in a sanitary manner at the commissary or in accordance with law. Insulated containers and all necessary articles used for dispensing must be in an enclosed part of the vehicle, such as in a covered bed of a pick-up or inside a van. The commissary must have the capability to wash, rinse, and sanitize all food contact surfaces, and for cleaning the vehicle.

MOBILE FOOD UNIT PLAN REVIEW WORKSHEET

Mobile food units shall comply with the applicable requirements in the Alabama State Board of Health Rules for Food Establishment Sanitation, 420-3-22. These rules may be obtained at <http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/environmental/rules.html>.

Please complete the questions on this worksheet that apply to your mobile food unit. Be as specific as possible.

1. List all menu items (including drinks and condiments).
2. Where will food be purchased?
3. Describe how and where foods will be cooked and prepared. Will any foods be prepared in advance? If so, please describe.
4. Describe how foods requiring cooling will be rapidly cooled at the commissary and/or on the unit? What will become of leftover foods?

5. How will hot and cold food temperatures be maintained on the unit?

6. What is the address of the commissary? List the approximate time and days of the week you will be using your commissary (This includes servicing the unit and any food operations). **The unit shall report to the commissary on all days of operation for all supplies and for all cleaning and servicing operations.**

7. What is the source of drinking water for use on the unit? Describe how water will be transported to the unit and how the water system is constructed. What is the size of the fresh water storage tank?

8. How will wastewater be removed from the unit? Describe how wastewater will be transported from the unit to the approved wastewater disposal location at the service area of the commissary. What is the size of the wastewater storage tank? (The volume of the waste tank must be 15 percent greater than the volume of the potable/fresh water storage tank.)

9. If frying occurs on your mobile food unit, how and where will you dispose of used cooking oil/grease?

10. (A) What is the power source for the mobile food unit?

(B) Describe how foods will be transported to and from the mobile food unit.

(C) Describe how hot and/or cold holding temperatures will be maintained during transit to the vending site.

11. How many handwashing sinks will be located on the unit? How will handwashing cleanser (soap), drying devices, and handwashing sign(s) be provided? (Handwashing sinks must be plumbed with hot and cold water through a mixing valve faucet.)

12. Describe how equipment and utensils will be washed. If equipment and utensils are washed on the unit, a hot water heater with enough capacity to meet the extra demands of the operation must be installed on the unit.

13. Describe how garbage will be stored and where it will be thrown away. What methods of insect and rodent control will be used in your unit and how will outer openings be protected (screens, fly fans, garbage cans with tight fitting lids, etc.)?

14. Where is your restroom facility located for each location of operation where activities exceed two (2) hours?

15. For pushcarts, describe the type of overhead protection provided for your unit (ceilings, awnings, umbrellas).

16. Where and how will the unit be cleaned? If you plan to wet mop the unit, where will you dispose of mop water?

MOBILE FOOD UNIT OPERATING SCHEDULE

- ☐ I plan on operating at one location.

Location address: _____

- ☐ I plan on operating at multiple locations or on a route.

List all locations where you plan to operate. If operating on a fixed route or in multiple locations, indicate the approximate time and days of the week or date you will be at each location. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Operating Location	Time	Day of Week or Specific Date

You are required by law to notify your local county health department if your operating location or route changes. If you relocate to another county, you must first notify and obtain permission from the new county prior to operation.

COMMISSARY USAGE AGREEMENT

The following permitted food service establishment, known as _____, located at _____, hereby agrees to provide access for usage, including outside of normal business hours, as a commissary to _____, to operate their mobile food unit. This commissary is to be used for all preparation and/or storage of food items, dishwashing, unit servicing, or any other purposes as required by the local public health authority. **It is the responsibility of the commissary permit holder to ensure compliance with the approved mobile food unit plan of operations. This includes requiring that the mobile food unit return to the commissary daily.** Failure to comply, including preventing priority or priority foundation item violations on the mobile food unit, shall be noted on the commissary inspection report and may be grounds for suspension or revocation of the commissary food permit and the authorization to operate a mobile food unit.

This agreement between the above-mentioned two parties is valid for the current permit year only and must be renewed after that date. **However, if this agreement is terminated, the commissary shall promptly inform the local county health department, and the mobile food unit must immediately cease operations until another commissary agreement is secured and provided to the health department.** This agreement becomes void if the food service establishment does not have a current permit to operate.

Signed by:

Food Service Establishment Owner: _____ Date: _____

Mobile Food Unit Owner: _____ Date: _____

For office use only:

Approved by: _____ Date: _____