

Starting A Food Business at the University of Texas:

New food establishments must comply with the Texas Food Establishment Rules, current building/plumbing codes, and the plan notes listed below. In addition, a pre-treatment device notification form must be filled out (<https://ehs.utexas.edu/documents/EHS-Pre-Treatment-Device-Notification-Form.pdf>)

1. Refrigeration: All refrigerated units are to hold foods at or below 41°F.

2. Restrooms (two are normally required). If the facility has only carry-out or seating for less than 20 people, and less than 10 employees, then only one employee restroom is required by the Health Department. Two restrooms are required if alcohol is served on the premises or more than 20 seats are provided. Each restroom must have a hand sink with hot (at least 100°F) and cold water, mechanical air ventilation to the outside, and a solid, self-closing door. Restrooms may not open directly into a kitchen. The total number of restrooms for a child care facility is dependent on the “minimum standards” of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (834-3195) as it relates to child care.

3. Sinks:

A. Service sink, mop sink, curbed floor sink: At least one of these 3 types of sinks must be available for mop washing and disposal of mop water in an approved waste water disposal system. A drying rack is required for mops to air dry. This sink must be provided with a backflow preventer on any threaded hose bib to protect the water supply. Note: the mop sink may be located in a different area of the building than the kitchen.

B. Hand washing sink: Shall be located to allow convenient use by employees in food preparation (generally within 25 ft. but may be required to be closer during review by inspector), food dispensing, ware wash areas, and any wait station where ice is dispensed, bar area or in a walk-in where meat is cut or trimmed. At least one hand sink will be required; additional, separate hand sinks may also be required. Small kitchens with food prep and ware washing in close proximity may be allowed to use one hand sink to serve both activities. Other hand sinks must be associated with restrooms. Provide at least 12” tall splashguards if a hand sink is located near food prep, open food, ice, or clean food contact surfaces. Otherwise, the hand sink must have at least 18” lateral separation from these. A sign or poster that notifies food employees to wash their hands shall be provided to all hand washing sinks and be clearly visible. A small, swinging door (as in a bar area) could separate a hand sink from a work area, otherwise no doors separating hand sink from work areas. Each sink must be supplied with hot (100°F) and cold water, soap and disposable towels. Child care facilities must have hot water in the diaper changing area and kitchen. If plans do not provide sufficient hand sinks to meet the requirements of the facility you will be asked to provide a revised plan with additional hand sinks.

C. Ware wash area: A commercial dishwasher or 3 compartment sink is required in most cases. Dish machines must be able to effectively sanitize all equipment and utensils. They must dispense a chemical sanitizer or provide a final rinse of at least 180°F (single, stationary rack machines are required to reach 165°F in the sanitize cycle for at least 15 seconds). Test strips are required. Above-the-counter dish machines are required to have Type II vent-hood. Ware washing sinks shall be of sufficient size to immerse the largest piece of equipment. Cold and hot (100°F minimum) water under pressure delivered through a mixing valve shall be provided. Provide at least 2 integral drain boards or 1 integral drain board and a mobile dish cart.

Drying racks or shelves will aid in adequately air drying all wares. Facilities with very limited ware washing and using disposable containers may request a variance to install a 2 compartment sink (example: convenience store). These sinks are required to have a drain board. The sinks must have an indirect connection to the sanitary sewer (at least a one inch air gap). This includes all food prep sinks and ware wash sinks.

4. Ceiling construction: Ceilings over open food, ice, soda fountains, ware washing, restrooms and bars must meet construction criteria and be smooth, durable, nonabsorbent, and cleanable. Open rafters, trusses or grid work and exposed duct work, pipes or utility lines are prohibited. No open structure permitted. If drop down acoustic tiles are used, they must be properly constructed. These tiles are to be washable and have a smooth surface without pinholes. Painted dry wall or boards are acceptable.

5. Walls/Floors: Must be constructed of approved materials. Cleanable water-based enamel paint is acceptable for most wall surfaces. Areas that are subject to regular cleaning and splash may be covered with FRP, stainless, or galvanized metal. Floor/wall junctures shall provide no greater than 1/32" gap. Baseboards are required. Caulk wall/floor junctures to prevent the collection of food particles and water. Masonry (brick/concrete) wall/floor junctures DO NOT require baseboards since a masonry juncture provides no gap. Raw brick and concrete in the kitchen area requires sealing. The sand grout of all tiles needs to be sealed. Epoxy grout does not require sealing. VCT floor tiles require a coat of wax to seal out liquids.

6. Solid Waste: Dumpster and grease barrels shall rest on a machine laid asphalt or concrete pad. These containers must have tight fitting lids and drain plugs in place.

7. Outdoor Cooking facilities: Barbeque pits or smokers shall be enclosed, and if screened in, at least a 1/16" mesh screen is required. They shall rest on a concrete or asphalt pad. The meat may only be placed on the smoker; no food prep allowed in this enclosure. Any seasoning, cutting, etc. must take place inside the establishment. Outdoor bars and wait stations will be approved on a case by case basis by EHS.

8. Water and Sewage Systems: Contact EHS to ensure all water/sewage systems comply with regulations. Will require filling out the pre-treatment device forms and dye testing.

9. Protecting the Water Supply: Threaded hose bibs are required to have a backflow prevention device attached. Spray hoses and fill hoses shall hang at least 1 inch above the maximum flood rim of a basin or the hoses shall be provided with an atmospheric vacuum breaker or backflow prevention device.

10. Indirect Connections: Jockey boxes, ice bins, ice machines and sinks (as identified above in # 3) must be provided with indirect connections to the sewer. Floor sinks are required on new construction.

11. Lighting: Adequate amount of light shall be provided to all areas. At least 20 foot candles is required where food is provided for customer self-service such as buffet and salad bars or where fresh produce or packaged foods are sold. At least 50 foot candles is required at surfaces where employees are working with food using utensils or knives, slicers, grinders, saws, or where employee safety is a factor.

12. Outer Openings: All windows, vents and exterior doors shall be tight fitting. If needed, use weather stripping to provide a tight fit. All exterior doors shall have a self-closure. Screens on windows and doors shall be at least 1/16" mesh. Roll up doors to be screened or the proposed food service area provided with physical doors to create a separate walled room. Exhaust fans must be screened, or if they are louvered, must automatically close when the fan is disengaged.

13. Food Contact Surfaces: Stainless steel, Formica, polished marble, Corian, machined stone, approved ceramics or plastics may be used for food contact surfaces.

14. Counters: All raw wood must be painted in areas that come in contact with food, liquid or food containers of any kind. Included is the underside of the bar above the ware wash and/or hand sink (and the splash area).

15. Toxic Materials: Specify an area where chemicals are to be stored. A well-labeled, separate shelf or cabinet is best.