

## A Guide to Opening a Food Premises

### Introduction

**Everyone who intends to operate a food premises must notify the health unit where their business will be located.**

The protection of food is an important part in the operation of a food service business. It is estimated that approximately two million cases of food borne illnesses occur per year in Canada. Operating a safe, sanitary food premises can help to prevent these illnesses from occurring.

Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act a food premises is defined as: “a premises where food or milk is manufactured, processed, prepared, stored, handled, displayed, distributed, transported, sold or offered for sale, but does not include a room actually used as a dwelling in a private residence.” Food is defined as “food or drink for human consumption and includes an ingredient of food or drink for human consumption.

**Before you open your food premises**, consult a Public Health Inspector. A review of your facility plans and proposed menu can help to ensure your kitchen design, equipment and sanitary facilities are sufficient for your needs. Prior consultation will be beneficial to ensure you are meeting regulatory requirements prior to opening. You and the Public Health Inspectors share a common goal - **TO SERVE SAFE, QUALITY FOOD TO THE PUBLIC.**

The purpose of this guide is to provide information on what is required to operate a food premises, and on the services provided by the Community Health Protection Department.

### Food Premises Regulations

Operating a food premises in Ontario falls under Regulation 493/17 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. Public Health Inspectors conduct inspections of premises serving food to the public under this act and its regulations.

This regulation can be accessed at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/R17493#BK28> or you may contact our Health Unit for a copy at 1- 800-660-5853.

The Food Premises Regulation provides direction on the requirements of various types of food premises and exemptions to sections of the regulation in certain conditions. Consider what type of food premises you intend to operate and check the regulation for specific requirements.

- Mobile Food Premises - defined in Regulation 493/17 as “a trailer, cart or vehicle-mounted food premise or other itinerant food premise which is capable of being readily moved and in which food is prepared and offered for sale to the public”.
- Fixed Premises (includes production facilities, full service or take out)

### Planning

Plans and specifications to establish, build, change a food premises, or significantly renovate, require approval by a Public Health Inspector.

The layout of your establishment is important for good sanitation. Poorly arranged equipment may create health hazards and affect the viability of your operation.

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Good planning should allow for the smooth and orderly flow of work from receiving to serving and the return of soiled dishes and utensils to the dishwashing area. The design, construction and installation of food service equipment are important to the sanitary operation of a food premises.

An important issue to consider in the planning stage is the size of your kitchen. It must be large enough to accommodate the number and types of meals you intend to prepare and allow people and food to easily move from place to place to avoid crowding and cross-contamination. It is also important to consider the number of sinks required and the most appropriate location for each sink in order to allow for the plumbing to be roughed in the proper location.

## Property Site Plan

Provide a site plan showing the location, civic address, and lot and concession (if applicable) of your proposed establishment. In the plan, indicate the following:

- Source of Water – Indicate if your water supply is a municipal supply or a private water supply. If your water supply is a well, show the location of the well on your plan.
- Sewage Disposal – Indicate if your premises will be served by a municipal sewer system, or if private onsite sewage disposal is required or already in place. If the sewage disposal system is already in place, show the location of the system on the plan and provide any information available on the system i.e. date of installation and size.
- Garbage Storage – show location of garbage storage area, grease storage receptacle and recyclables.
- Parking – show parking areas and driveways.

## REMEMBER

Approval of plans by the Public Health Inspector does not mean that zoning, building, or other requirements by other authorities have been met.

## Water Supply

- You must be able to provide an adequate supply of hot and cold water under pressure.
- The water supply must be potable (safe to drink).
- If your water supply is not a municipal supply you may fall under Ontario Regulation 319 Small Drinking Water Systems. Any new premises that fall under this regulation must comply fully before opening.

## Sewage Disposal

- Where onsite sewage disposal is required, approval must be in place before construction begins. Refer to our website <https://healthunit.org/health-information/sewage-land-control/>, to obtain the appropriate permits. Areas not covered for sewage by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit includes Rideau Lakes, Westport and Tay Valley. Individuals residing in these areas should contact their township office.

## Garbage Disposal

Describe your method of garbage disposal and ensure that you provide:

- Sufficient, suitable enclosed areas for storage of garbage, grease and recyclables.
  - Sufficient outdoor garbage receptacles, especially if providing “take out” service.
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## Landscaping

- Plan parking areas and driveways so they will not interfere with sewage disposal systems and well water supplies.
- Provide for dust control in unpaved areas.

## Building Plan

A plan must be submitted (preferably to scale) of your facility showing the location of all rooms within the facility. This includes food preparation, dish cleaning and sanitizing, storage, service areas, washrooms, and locker areas.

## Layout of Facility

- Produce a diagram of all rooms. See example on page 5.
- Plan a good flow pattern for handling foods from receiving through to the serving of foods.
- Ensure adequate refrigeration and storage space to handle the volume of foods expected.
- Ensure adequate separation between dirty/clean dishes, and raw/ cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Living quarters must be completely separate from any room where food is prepared, served or stored.
- Provide conveniently located separate hand wash sinks in food preparation areas.
- Additional hand wash sinks may be required in bar areas or wait stations. Consult a Public Health Inspector.
- Provide an area where staff can store clothing, clean uniforms and personal belongings.
- Consider what foods you will prepare and whether additional food preparation sinks are needed.

## Washroom Facilities

- If you are building or renovating an existing premises, you must consult with your local building official(s) who will specify the number of washrooms required and the number of toilets and fixtures required in each wash room as per the requirements of the Ontario Building Code.
- If you are reopening an existing food premises, you must first obtain permission in writing from a public health inspector before altering floor space or altering the number of toilets and fixtures in a wash room. Refer to sections 24 and 25 of Regulation 493/17.
- All hand wash sinks must have a supply of hot and cold running water, liquid hand soap and a method of drying hands i.e. hand dryer, paper towels.

## Floors, Walls and Ceilings

- Describe the type of finish you plan to use on the floors, walls and ceilings throughout your establishment.
  - All finishes must be smooth, non-absorbent and easily cleanable in all areas where:
    - » food is prepared, served or stored
    - » utensils are washed
    - » washrooms are located
  - Base junctions where the wall and floor meet should be finished, for ease of cleaning.
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## Janitorial Facilities

- Every premises should have a utility sink for equipment such as floor mops.
- Adequate space is required for the storage of cleaners and cleaning equipment, and must be separate from food preparation and food storage areas.

## Equipment Plan

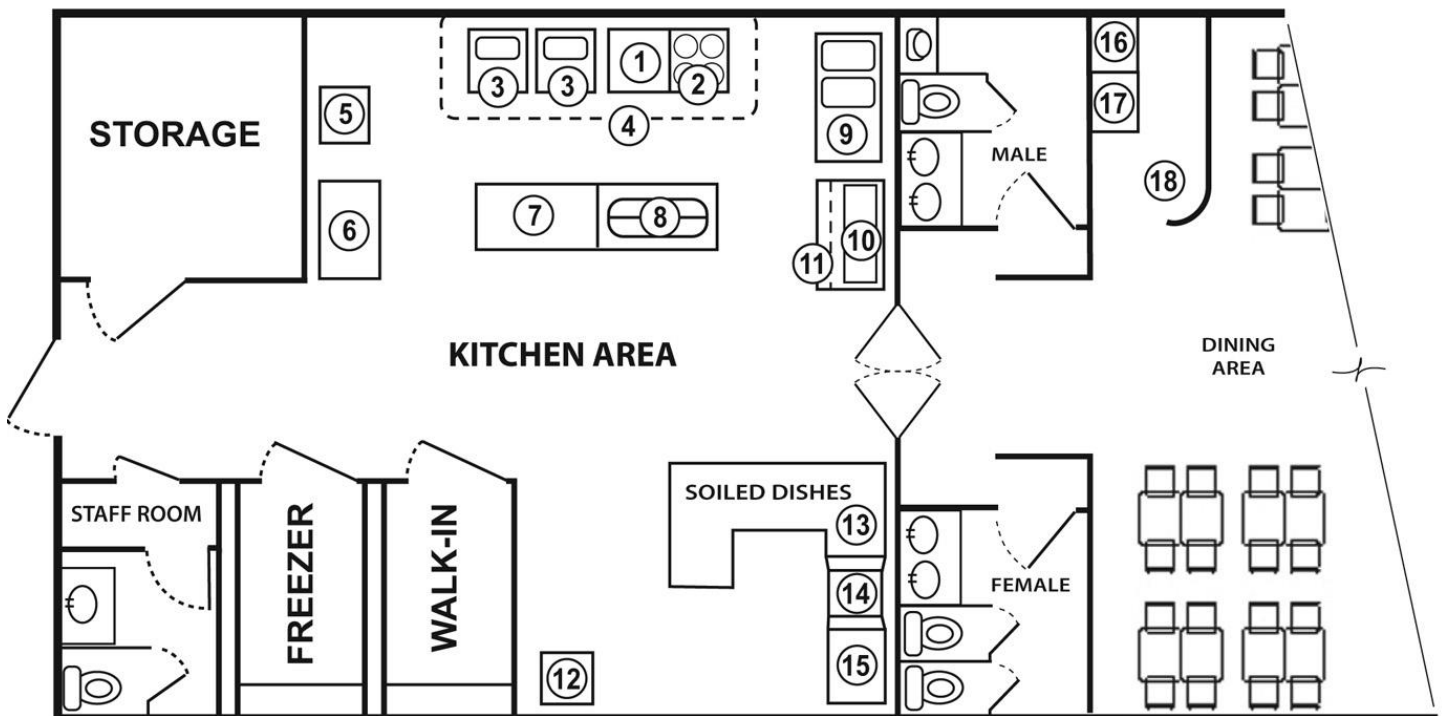
Show location of all equipment within the food premises:

- List all planned equipment.
- A three-compartment sink or commercial type dishwasher is required for dishwashing.
- Provide a sink large enough to clean your largest pots and and/or pans.
- Arrange and install equipment to provide easy access for cleaning.

## EXAMPLE

### Food Establishment Layout

EXAMPLE ONLY



#### SAMPLE EQUIPMENT LIST

- |                         |                               |                |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| ① Grill                 | ⑦ Work Table                  | ⑬ Pre-Wash     |
| ② Range & Oven          | ⑧ Pan Rack                    | ⑭ Dishwasher   |
| ③ Fryers                | ⑨ Vegetable Sink              | ⑮ Clean Dishes |
| ④ Canopy Hood           | ⑩ Salad Table                 | ⑯ Coffee Maker |
| ⑤ Handwashing Sink      | ⑪ Under Counter Refrigeration | ⑰ Hand Sink    |
| ⑥ Reach-In Refrigerator | ⑫ Utility Sink                | ⑱ Wait Station |

## Menu

Provide a sample menu for your establishment. What you plan in your menu has an important impact on the layout of your facility and the equipment needed.

Your menu selection will determine:

- Type and number of refrigeration units needed.
- Type and number of freezer units.
- Hot holding equipment necessary for safe handling of foods to be served hot.
- Flow process of foods through your facility.
- Display units for ready-to-eat foods.

Please complete the "[Notice of Intention to Operate a Food Premises](#)" form once the required information is available and send to your nearest health unit office.

## Food Safety Training

**Important note:** As of July 1, 2018, Regulation 493/17 requires that all food service premises\* have at least one supervisor or one food handler working at any time that the premises is operating.

\*"food service premise" means any food premise where meals or meal portions are prepared for immediate consumption or sold or served in a form that will permit immediate consumption on the premises or elsewhere.

Education of both food service employees and managers is probably the most effective method of obtaining compliance with the regulations. Training enables people to do their jobs well. It improves staff efficiency, gives them a sense of pride and promotes professionalism. The health unit provides several options for staff to receive their Food Handler Certification. This certification is accepted by health units across the province.

The Food Handler Training Program is provided by the Community Health Protection Department at the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. The seminar course is approximately 6 hours in duration. Each participant must complete an examination with a passing grade of 70% in order to receive certification as a Food Handler under the Ontario Public Health Standards and the Food Safety Protocol published by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. The health unit regularly conducts food handler certification courses throughout the year. If food service employees and managers are unable to attend the day course, they may wish to consider a home study course. Consult our website for other available study courses. To become certified, an exam must be proctored by health unit staff.

### Food Handler Training topics includes:

- Introduction to Food Safety and Legislation
- Food-borne Illness
- Microorganisms
- Conditions Bacteria Require for Growth (FATTOM)
- Allergens
- Safe Food Handling
- Understanding Cross-contamination
- Receiving and Storage
- Safe Food Service
- Food Handler Hygiene
- Cleaning and Sanitizing
- Pest Control
- Keeping Food Safe During Emergencies
- HACCP Food Safety Management

Contact our office to find out when the next safe food handling course is being offered or to enquire about the home study course or visit our website at [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org).

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## Other Agencies

The Community Health Protection Department at the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, has authority under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Ontario Building Code Act regarding regulations respecting both food premises and sewage disposal.

Operating a food premises may require approvals and permits from other provincial and municipal departments and agencies. The following agencies are some sources you should consult when planning a food premises.

- Municipal, town or city Building Inspectors for building permits
- Municipal, town or city zoning departments for zoning by-laws
- Fire Marshall's Office
- Liquor License Board of Ontario
- Ontario Hydro re electrical permits
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency (if processing food and labelling requirements)
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (agriculture related food premises)

Additional legislation that may apply to your food premises could include:

- Ontario Fire Code (Municipal Fire Department)
- Ontario Building Code (Municipal Building Department)
- Local Municipal by-laws (e.g. garbage areas, zoning and property standards)
- Alcohol Licensing/Liquor Licence Act
- Smoke-Free Ontario Act
- Small Drinking Water System Regulation (HPPA Ontario Regulation 319)
- Healthy Choices Act (Menu Labelling)

## Health Unit Office Locations

### Main Office:

Brockville: 458 Laurier Blvd., Brockville ON K7G 1T2, 613-345-5685

### Branch Offices:

Gananoque: 375 William Street South, Suite 200, Gananoque ON K6V 7A3, 613-382-4231

Kemptville: 2675 Concession Road, Kemptville ON K0G 1J0, 613-258-5941

Smiths Falls: 25 Johnston Street, Smiths Falls ON K7A 0A4, 613-283-2740

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**COMMUNITY HEALTH PROTECTION DEPARTMENT**

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OPERATE A FOOD PREMISES**

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate Name/Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Town/City \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Municipality \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Organization** (Please v one)

Sole Proprietorship

**List of Owners or Directors of Corporation**

Partnership 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Corporation 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Please indicate if:**

New Premises  Alteration  Re-opening  Temporary  Permanent   
Date of Opening \_\_\_\_\_ Water Source \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Certified Food Handlers \_\_\_\_\_  
Months of Operation if not year round: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed No. of Food Handlers \_\_\_\_\_  
Sewage Disposal Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Licensed by L.L.B.O. Y  N  Proposed No. of Managers \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours Open: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Outdoor Patio Y  N  Total Seating \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACH THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR NOTICE:**

1. Property Site Plan
2. Building and Equipment Plan
3. Brief Description of Your Proposed Operation
4. Enclose a Menu

**Please mail, e-mail or fax this completed form to the Health Unit**

**MAIN OFFICE:**

458 Laurier Blvd.  
**Brockville** ON K6V 7A3  
Tele: 613-345-5685 Fax: 613-345-7148

25 Johnston Street  
**Smiths Falls** ON K7A 0A4  
Tele: 613-283-2740 Fax: 613-283-1679

Email: [protection@healthunit.org](mailto:protection@healthunit.org)

## Checklist: Planning Guide for Opening a Food Premises

- Call your local Public Health Inspector for food premises requirements.
- Review Food Premises Regulation (Ontario Regulation 493/17) and Guide to Opening a Food Premises
- Contact your Building and By-law Departments for local requirements
- Draft a floor plan layout of the proposed food premises
- Provide name of business and business address when established
- Provide owner/operator name, mailing address and telephone number
- Submit floor plan and menu to your local Public Health Inspector for review
- Call your local Public Health Inspector for an opening inspection

## General Requirements for a Food Premise

- Separate hand wash basin with a liquid soap dispenser and paper towel dispenser
- Three-compartment sink with a drain rack for cleaning multi-use eating utensils and/or
- Commercial mechanical dishwashing machine for cleaning multi-use eating utensils
- Double utensil washing sink with a drain rack –only allowed if disposable dishes/cutlery are being used for serving to the public
- Vegetable preparation sink may be required
- Adequate cold storage refrigeration and freezer space
- Accurate thermometers for all refrigeration and freezer equipment
- Food probe thermometer for checking internal food temperatures
- Adequate hot holding equipment
- Adequate dry food storage space and bulk food containers, shelving 6 inches off floor
- Adequate sanitizer and sanitizer test strip papers
- Adequate lighting with protective shields or covers in all food handling/preparation/storage areas
- Floors covered with a smooth, non-absorbent, washable surface
- Walls covered with a smooth, non-absorbent, washable surface
- Ceilings covered with a smooth, non-absorbent, washable surface
- Walk-in cooler floor, walls ceiling, and shelving shall have smooth washable surface
- Separate area for floor waste water, slop sink and cleaning chemicals
- Adequately sized exhaust canopy vented to outside air
- Storage space for staff belongings
- Washroom shall be equipped with liquid soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers
- For minimal washroom requirements check Washroom Facilities on page 4
- If not connected to a municipal drinking water system, contact the health unit for risk assessment of drinking water system
- Integrated pest management system in place
- Windows and doors screened if you wish to leave them open for ventilation.
- Necessary number of safe food handling-certified supervisors and/or food handlers to have one on site at all times establishment is operating