



# Starting a Food Business

This guide was designed to assist those who are planning to open a food business in the Cities of Marietta and/or Belpre. Operating a food business can be challenging, but having a suitable facility design and the right tools in the beginning can help the process of opening a business run smoothly.

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## Greetings!

We want you to have a successful business. While this guide has been developed by the Marietta/Belpre Health Department (MBHD), we have also provided contact numbers for agencies that you will need to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken and the necessary permits are received. Contacting the agencies below will help you stay on track and on time. All necessary permits must be obtained before the MBHD can issue a food license.

OFFICE	SERVICE	PHONE #
Marietta/Belpre Health Department	Plan Review , Inspections, General Information & Plumbing	740-373-0611, Ext. 2304
Marietta City Engineering Department	Land Development	740-373-5495
Marietta City Zoning	Zoning Permits	740-373-9355, Ext. 2406
Southeast Ohio Building Department	Building Permits, Electrical & Occupancy	740-374-4185
Marietta Wastewater Treatment Plant	Pretreatment (Grease Trap)	740-373-3858, Ext. 103

## Where do I begin?

Every new or significantly altered facility serving or selling food and/or beverages in Marietta or Belpre must submit plans to the MBHD, City Engineering Department and Southeast Ohio Building Department. Plans must be submitted and approved before a license can be issued. Plumbing is reviewed and inspected by the MBHD plumbing inspector. A sanitarian in the Food Safety Program will review the plans to ensure that the design, facility and equipment meet the Ohio Revised Code and that they are adequate for the foods to be prepared, served or sold at the facility. The Southeast Ohio Building Department will ensure the structure and electrical service meets the code and will issue a Certificate of Occupancy.

This guide will help you determine **when** you need to submit plans, **who** you need to contact and **what** to expect as far as process and timeline.

There is a Plan Review Guide available through the MBHD to assist with the initial design of an operation. This is recommended if you are new to the business or if you need guidance with the design of your facility.

## PLANNING AHEAD

### What is required in my facility?

Every business is unique; the equipment required will be based on the menu. So make sure you have the space and equipment needed to store, prepare and serve those foods safely.

Many retail stores will not need the floor space or equipment that a restaurant would need. Likewise, a small operation may not need the equipment that a larger operation would require.

In general, you will be required to have the following...

- **Hand washing sink** that is for employee hand washing only
- **Commercial equipment:** no residential equipment will be permitted (look for NSF, ETL, UL commercial, etc. on the label)
- **Dry storage space** for canned goods, paper products & retail items
- **Employee lockers** or a designated area used only for employee belongings
- **Utility sink** with hooks or other means to hang mops to air dry
- **Adequate lighting** in food prep areas, storage areas and coolers
- **Smooth and cleanable surfaces** for floors, walls and ceilings in food storage or prep areas

Based on menu and equipment, many facilities will also need...

- **Dishwashing sink** with 3 compartments and 2 drain boards
- **Food/vegetable sink** for processing produce or other foods
- **Ventilation hoods** for grill line, cooking equipment and high temperature dish machines
- **Fire suppression** system for grease producing equipment (fryers, grill, etc.)
- **Grease interceptor** (grease trap) connected to dishwashing sinks to remove fats, oils and grease

The Plan Review Guide will provide a checklist to assist you with the decision making for necessary equipment and the operation layout. The Plan Review Guide must be completed and returned to the Marietta Belpre Health Department with a copy of the blue prints or floor plans (to scale). The plan review fee is 50% of the local license fee and must be paid at the time the Plan Review Guide is submitted.

## **Planning Your Operation**

Here are some important questions about food safety and preparation for your business. These questions may be asked during future inspections:

- How will the staff be trained in safe food handling practices?
- What food safety practices will be covered during staff orientation?
- Do you have someone certified in Level 1 food handling for every shift.
- Do you have someone certified in Level 2 food protection?
- What is your employee health policy and is it in writing?
- Do you have a written accidental vomit/fecal clean-up procedure?
- Do you have written disaster protocols?

## **Services...**

- Who will provide your waste pick-up?
- How will you handle grease waste and cleaning your grease interceptor?
- Do you have a Pest Control contract with a Certified Operator?
- Who will clean your hood system and /or fire suppression system?
- Who will provide support and maintenance for your dishwasher?
- Is your facility secure?

## **Facilities...**

- Is there enough hot water capacity for the busiest time of day?
- Do you have storage space needed for dry goods?
- Are floors, walls and ceilings constructed with easily cleanable materials?
- Do you have a designated employee area?
- Is there room to expand the operation?

## **Equipment...**

- Is there enough space in the coolers and freezers to prevent overstocking and allow for air circulation?
- How will hot foods be kept hot?
- How will cold foods be kept cold?
- Do you have thermometers for taking food temperatures?
- Is all your equipment commercial?

## **Processes...**

- How will you date mark ready-to-eat food products?
- How will you ensure that a "first in, first out" system is used for foods?
- How will foods be properly thawed?
- Do you keep temperature logs?

- How will you avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods?
- Can large amounts of leftover foods be properly cooled?

## **Fixed Equipment**

Equipment that is fixed because it is not easily movable must be installed to allow for easy cleaning. This means that it must be spaced from adjoining equipment or sealed to adjoining walls or equipment.

Table mounted equipment that is not easily moveable must be up on legs or sealed to a table.

Floor mounted equipment (in kitchen areas) that is not easily moveable shall be sealed to the floor or elevated on 6 inch legs.

## **Plan for Easy Cleaning**

There are several things that can be done to prevent the amount of future maintenance necessary for your facility and provide ease of cleaning.

Consider the following:

- Stainless steel on walls at the grill line, behind and around grease producing equipment.
- Place heavy equipment on casters, so that it can be moved easily, especially at the grill line. This makes it easier to clean behind and between equipment.
- Avoid sealing equipment and sinks to walls. Instead brace and set equipment at least 4 inches from the wall and other equipment. This makes it easier to clean behind.

## **Food Safety Education**

Educating employees is an important part of planning for a successful food business. The Ohio Uniform Food Code requires that a Person-in-Charge (PIC) be present during all hours of operation. A Level I Training class is required for **ALL** food handlers and a Level II Training is required for the manager of food preparation.

The PIC must understand basic food safety concepts, and will need to demonstrate knowledge by compliance with the food code or answering questions during an inspection. This person must make sure that safe food handling practices are followed to lower the risk of foodborne illness.

## **PLAN REVIEW**

- The Plan Review Guide will provide a checklist to assist you with the decision making for necessary equipment and the operation layout.
- The Plan Review Guide must be completed and returned to the Marietta Belpre Health Department with a copy of the blue prints or floor plans (to scale).
- The plan review fee is 50% of the local license fee and must be paid at the time the Plan Review Guide is submitted.

- The Marietta Belpre Health Department has 30 days to review all facility plans.
- The Plan Review Guide is to make sure the design and equipment in a facility are adequate for the storage, preparation and service of the foods on the menu or food list.

### Who must submit plans?

- **New facilities:** New construction and facilities that have never been licensed as a food operation in the past.
- **Remodeled or altered facilities:** Major changes or alterations such as installation of a walk-in cooler, a ventilation hood, or expanding a kitchen.
- **Change of business:** Changes in layout or equipment (example: converting a bakery into a full service restaurant or where equipment has been added to the kitchen).
- **Change of Ownership:** At the sale of a business anything that had been “grandfathered” will need to be brought up to current code.

**\*If you are not sure whether plan review is required, please contact the MBHD.**

### What is the process?

- After the MBHD have received a set of plans, plan review guide, application and payment of fees the MBHD will begin reviewing the plans.
- MBHD has up to 30 days to complete the review, but we will do our best to follow your schedule for opening. Please be patient.
- If there are any questions about the plans, or changes that need to be made, we will contact you (generally by phone and/or e-mail) to discuss any issues.
- When plans are approved, we will notify you (by phone and/or e-mail). A formal approval letter will be mailed to the Contact person noted on the plan review application.
- After the construction is completed the MBHD will conduct a Pre-licensing inspection.
- At this point if nothing is left and the facility meets the code requirements the license fee is paid and a license is issued.

### LICENSING

- After plans have been approved, Certificate of Occupancy issued and all work is completed, the MBHD will need to conduct a pre-licensing inspection.
- The opening inspection can be conducted once you have all the required ‘sign-offs’ from the appropriate state and local agencies. (Newly constructed facilities will need to have final approval from the Southeast Ohio Building Department before a license can be issued).
- If there are no outstanding issues and the license payment has been made, an inspection sheet will be given indicating permission to operate.

- At this point, the operation is licensed and approved to operate. The printed license will be given to you at this time or sent to you in the mail.
- The license must be displayed at the establishment.
- The license is good from March 1<sup>st</sup> to the last day of February.
- The license renewal is mailed the last week of January and due on or before March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- A 25% penalty will be assessed to any application received after March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **Fee Calculations**

Fees are calculated using the State Cost Methodology, which is a formula that takes the time in the program divided by the total hours worked to come up with a percentage. Then the percentage is used for salaries, fringe benefits and other expenses. This information used is from the last complete year, therefore it is always one year behind.

## **Categories of Food Operations**

The Ohio Uniform Food Code assigns risk levels to an operation. The risk level determines what type of license is issued as well as how many inspections are required each year. Below are general guidelines used to assist in determining risk level. (Note: The risk level of the operation will ultimately be determined by the sanitarian during plan review.)

### **Risk Level I - poses a small health risk to the public.**

Examples of Risk Level I activities include:

- Coffee, self-service fountain drinks, prepackaged beverages
- Pre-packaged refrigerated or frozen potentially hazardous foods
- Pre-packaged non-potentially hazardous foods
- Baby food or formula

### **Risk Level II - poses a higher health risk to the public than Risk Level I because of hand contact or employee health concerns but little possibility of foodborne illness exists.**

Examples of Risk Level II activities include:

- Handling or preparing non-potentially hazardous food
- Holding for sale or serving potentially hazardous food at the same proper holding temperature at which it was received
- Heating individually packaged and processed potentially hazardous foods for immediate service

**Risk Level III - poses a higher health risk to the public than Risk Level II because of the following concerns: proper cooking temperatures, proper cooling procedures, proper holding temperatures, contamination issues, or processing a raw food product.**

Examples of Risk Level III activities include:

- Handling, cutting, or grinding raw meat products
- Cutting or slicing ready-to-eat meats and cheeses
- Assembling or cooking potentially hazardous food that is immediately served, held hot or cold, or cooled
- Reheating in individual portions only
- Heating of a product from a sealed package and holding it hot

**Risk Level IV - poses a highest health risk to the public**

Examples of Risk Level IV activities include:

- Handling or preparing food that includes cooling & reheating
- Offering raw meat, poultry products, or fish
- Serving a primarily high risk clientele (immuno-compromised, elderly)
- Using time in lieu of temperature as a control for bacterial growth
- Reheating bulk quantities of leftover potentially hazardous food more than once every seven days
- Caterers or other similar food service operations that transport potentially hazardous food

**What is the fee for a food license?**

See the Plan Review Guide for an updated fee schedule for food licenses. Make check or money order payable to 'Marietta/Belpre Health Department'.

- FSO = food service operation (dine in: restaurant, school, day care)
- RFE = retail food establishment (take out: grocery store, carry out, pizza shops)
- Noncommercial = exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code (non-profit, charitable or educational groups)



## **Checklist of Basic Requirements for Opening a Food Business**

Read 'Starting a Food Business' to help with the design of the facility based on menu items and processes.

Submit food service & plumbing plans to the Marietta/Belpre Health Department and the Southeast Ohio Building Department.

Submit application and plan review fee to Marietta/Belpre Health Department.

Receive approval of plans from the Southeast Ohio Building Department. Obtain proper permits before work is performed by licensed contractors.

Complete work and obtain inspection as necessary.

(NEW FACILITY) Obtain approval from the Southeast Ohio Building Department for a certificate of occupancy (CO) or temporary CO, if applicable.

OR (FACILITY ALTERATION) Obtain final approval for any work performed.

Contact the Marietta/Belpre Health Department for a pre-licensing inspection.

### **Before the licensing inspection make sure that:**

All construction and projects are complete.

Kitchen/food areas are clean and in working order.

Hot water is available at all sinks.

Refrigerated equipment is running at 41°F or below.

Dish machine (if used) is in operation & test strips are available.

Building Department and plumbing approval is available on site.

Obtain Vendors License and Liquor License (if applicable).