

MOBILE UNIT OPERATIONS

Guidelines to opening and
operating a mobile
foodservice business.



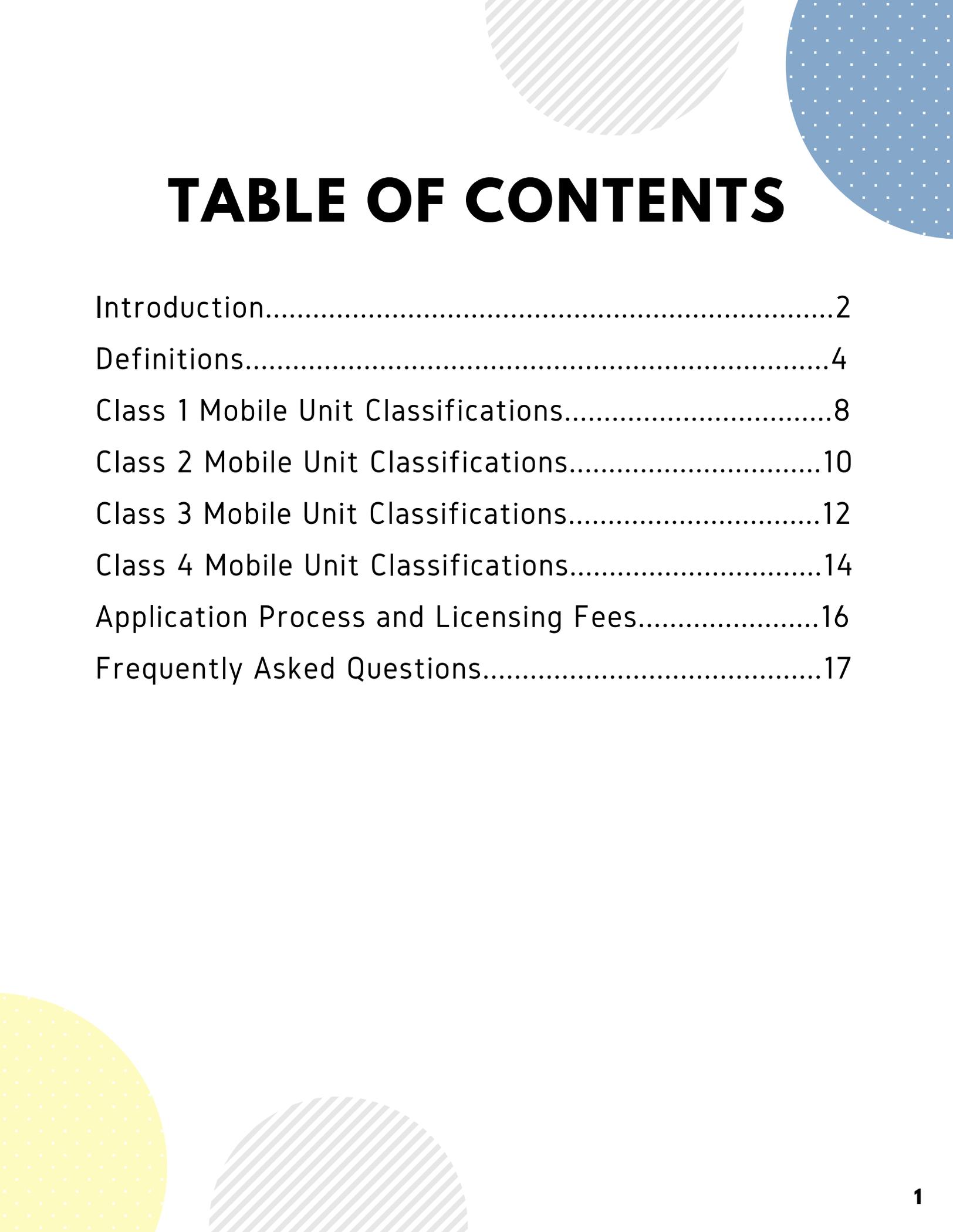


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INTRODUCTION

This Mobile Unit Operations guidebook was developed by Yamhill County Public Health (YCPH) and is intended to assist current and potential mobile unit operators in the process of opening and operating a mobile foodservice unit.

From hot dog stands and ice cream stands, to full-service food trucks, Yamhill County residents have enjoyed the large variety of foods and goods offered by local mobile units.

What exactly is a mobile unit? A mobile unit refers to any vehicle that is self-propelled, or which can be pushed or pulled down a street or sidewalk, on which food is prepared, processed or converted, or which is used in selling and dispensing food to the consumer. Mobile units are more commonly known as food stands, food carts, or food trucks. For consistency, we'll refer to all of them as mobile units throughout this guide. Mobile food units have no size units, but must meet the following requirements:

- Mobile units must be on wheels that are functional and appropriate for the type of unit at all times
- Mobile units must be designed and constructed to move as a single piece. Units cannot be disassembled in one location and reassembled in another.
- The mobile unit and all operations and equipment must be integral to the unit. This does not include the use of one outdoor cooking unit, like a BBQ, allowed with Class 4 units.

INTRODUCTION

- Certain mobile unit classifications require potable water on-board. These tanks must be designed to be accessible and must be translucent to determine cleanliness. They should also be cleaned at least every 6 months. A mobile unit may connect to the public water system if it is available at the operating location.
- Mobile units with potable water tanks must also have a waste tank that is, at minimum, 15% greater than the freshwater tank. A mobile unit may connect directly to sewer if it is available at the operating location. If the unit cannot connect directly to the sewer, then the unit may not connect to the public water system.

When it comes to food safety, all mobile units must follow the same rules and regulations according to the Oregon State Law and the Oregon Food Code. These rules and regulations are based on the 2009 Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code Guidelines. These guidelines are based on public health practices and the latest science regarding food safety practices. View the Food Code here:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/retail-food-protection/fda-food-code>.

We hope this guidebook will help assist mobile unit operators through the full process of mobile unit ownership; from the pre-planning phase to the daily operations. We will make every effort to keep the content in this guidebook accurate. However, rules and regulations are subject to change.

Adapted from Multnomah County Health Department's Mobile Unit Playbook.

DEFINITIONS

Classifications

Mobile units fall into one of four categories based on size, type of food being served, and on-board equipment. Classifications are a way of grouping food carts into categories that help determine inspection and licensing requirements.

Commercial-Grade Equipment

Commercial grade equipment is designed to operate at a higher standard and capacity than most residential grade equipment. For example, commercial refrigerators typically have larger compressors, allowing them to cool food more quickly and keep foods cool during high use times when the door is open more frequently.

Commissary

A licensed kitchen that meets all health department requirements for the preparation, cooking, holding, and storage of food. Commissaries are inspected on a regular basis and typically contain commercial grade equipment. Mobile units may need a commissary depending upon the size and operational capacity of the unit. A mobile unit may not be used as a commissary for another unit.

Food Grade Hose

Food grade hoses are constructed of materials that are considered safe for the conveyance of potable water and are required for all potable water on mobile units. They can be purchased at most stores that sell recreational vehicle accessories and are white with a blue stripe. Garden hoses are not suitable for the conveyance of potable water.

DEFINITIONS

Greywater/wastewater

Greywater and wastewater are used interchangeably to describe the used water from hand sinks, prep sinks, dishwashing, and the processing of foods.

Greywater is different from "blackwater", which contains sewage. Greywater must be collected, transported, held, and disposed of in a manner approved by the health department and city agencies. Greywater should never be poured down storm drains or be allowed to drip or run onto the surface of your lot. Some mobile unit classes may require an agreement that proves greywater is disposed of properly.

Non-potentially Hazardous Items

Foods or beverages that do not require temperature control for the safety of the food product. This includes non-perishable foods. For example, soft drinks, commercially bottled water, chips, certain baked goods, crackers, apples, etc.

Perishable

Foods that are likely to spoil or become unsafe to consume in a short amount of time if not processed, used or kept refrigerated at 41°F (5°C) or below, or frozen at 0°F (-17.8°C) or below. Perishable foods include most meats, cheeses, cooked foods, and beverages that have not been processed in a manner that makes them shelf stable.

DEFINITIONS

Pod

A term used for parking lots or other areas where several mobile units rent space. Pods typically have garbage services, electric, and wastewater facilities.

Potable Water

Water that is suitable for drinking. Potable water must be collected, transported, and held in a safe manner. Potable water is required for handwashing and dishwashing on certain classes of mobile units and is typically transferred by a food grade hose. Potable water tanks must be large enough to accommodate the amount of water needed for the operation of the unit, including at least 30 gallons for dishwashing (if applicable), 5 gallons for handwashing (if applicable), and additional gallonage needed for food preparation and cleaning (if applicable).

Prepackaged

Foods that are wrapped in a durable, impermeable wrapper. Prepackaged foods are either processed and sealed in a commercial manufacturing facility or in a licensed commissary kitchen in accordance with health department rules and regulations.

Raw-to-finish Cooking

In this context, raw to finish cooking refers to the complete cooking, processing or preparation of any uncooked or undercooked animal product such as meat, fish, and unpasteurized eggs.



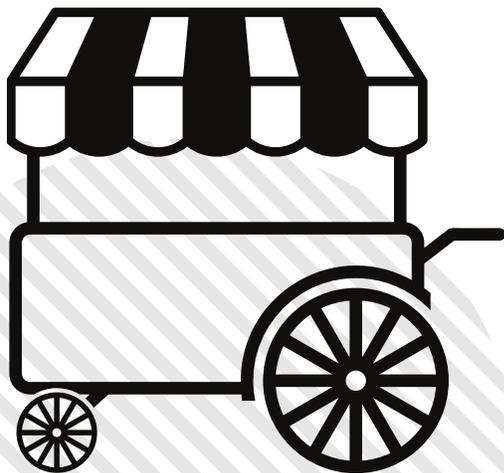
MOBILE UNIT CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASS 1 MOBILE UNIT

Class 1 mobile units are licensed to sell prepackaged items only.

These units are limited in that they can serve intact, prepackaged foods and beverages only.

- Prepackaged items allowed on these units include both commercially prepackaged items, such as individually wrapped baked goods or sealed, non-potentially hazardous beverages, and items produced in a licensed commissary kitchen under the rules and regulations of county and/or state foodservice operations.
- Prepackaged foods and beverages must be packaged in a durable, impermeable and food safe material.
- Preparation, cooking, warming, or assembly of foods or beverages is not allowed.
- Dispensed ice is not allowed. Ice is allowed to keep items cold, but it cannot be served to customers.





Typical Applications:

Beverage carts, limited service food carts



Restroom Access:

Restroom access is required. During the application review, the applicant must show that they have access to a restroom.



Commissary Requirement:

Access to a commissary kitchen may be required if the applicant plans to process and package their own foods, as an approved, licensed, and inspected kitchen would be required.



Potable Water Requirement:

Potable water not required as this unit only allows prepacked food and beverages.



Allowed Foods:

Intact, prepackaged, and non-perishable foods.
Non-perishable or non-potentially hazardous beverages.



Handwashing Setup:

Handwashing is not required because there is no bare hand contact with foods as all foods are required to be prepacked.



Dishwashing Sinks:

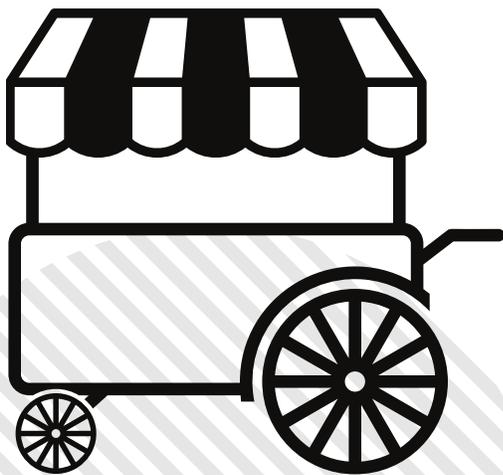
Dishwashing is not required as this unit only allows prepacked foods and beverages. If a commissary kitchen is needed, it should have an approved dishwashing method.

CLASS 2 MOBILE UNIT

Class 2 mobile units are licensed to sell unpackaged foods not requiring assembly or preparation.

Class 2 mobile units are very similar to Class 1. The primary differences are handwashing and packaging requirements.

- Unpackaged foods are permitted, but food is not allowed to be prepared, assembled, cooked, warmed, or stored on the mobile unit.
- Because unpackaged foods are permitted, a handwashing station must be present on-board.
- Insulated containers can be used to maintain water temperature for handwashing while the mobile unit is in operation.
- This class requires a wastewater agreement that proves wastewater is being disposed of properly.





Typical Applications:

Beverage carts, limited service food carts



Restroom Access:

Restroom access is required. During the application review, the applicant must show that they have access to a restroom.



Commissary Requirement:

Access to a commissary kitchen may be required if the applicant plans to prepare, cook, and assemble their own foods, as an approved, licensed, and inspected kitchen would be required.



Potable Water Requirement:

A minimum of 5 gallons of warm potable water is required for handwashing. More may be required if applicant plans to wash dishes on-board.



Allowed Foods:

All foods permitted under Class 1. Additionally, unpackaged foods are allowed but cannot be assembled, prepared, cooked, or warmed on-board.



Handwashing Setup:

On-board handwashing setup with 5 gallons of warm potable water is required.



Dishwashing Sinks:

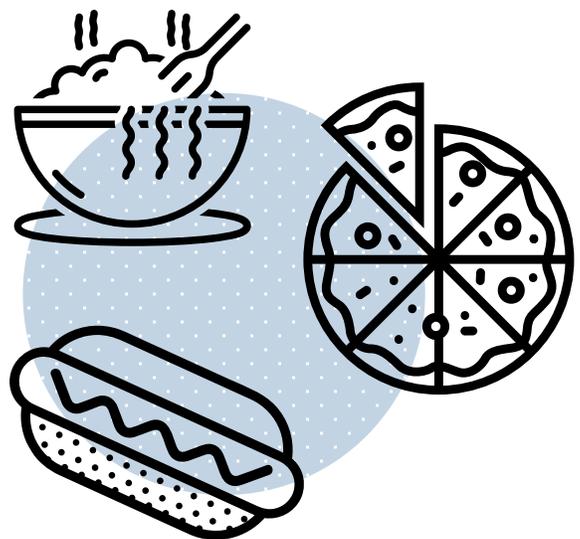
Dishwashing is not required as long as a licensed commissary is accessible and has approved dishwashing capacity. If a commissary is not used, adequate equipment would need to be present on-board to wash dishes.

CLASS 3 MOBILE UNIT

Class 3 mobile units are licensed to serve a full menu, with some restrictions.

Class 3 mobile units are allowed to prepare, assemble, and serve a full menu; however, raw animal products (meats, fish, and unpasteurized eggs) may not be processed or cooked on the unit.

- Insulated containers can be used to transport cooked proteins to the unit, since raw-to-finish cooking of raw proteins is not permitted on Class 3 mobile units.
- Food items, including cooked proteins, are allowed to be reheated on the unit.
- Additional restrictions may apply based on the equipment on-board, the space, and other operational considerations.
- This class requires a wastewater agreement that proves wastewater is being disposed of properly.





Typical Applications:

Beverage carts, full service food carts



Restroom Access:

Restroom access is required. During the application review, the applicant must show that they have access to a restroom.



Commissary Requirement:

Access to a commissary kitchen is often required. Since raw-to-finish cooking is not permitted on Class 3 units, an approved, licensed, and inspected kitchen would be required to cook food.



Potable Water Requirement:

A minimum of 5 gallons of warm potable water is required for handwashing. More may be required if applicant plans to wash dishes on-board.



Allowed Foods:

All foods permitted under Class 1 and Class 2. Additionally, a full menu can be served, with the restriction that raw animal products may not be processed, cooked or stored on-board.



Handwashing Setup:

On-board handwashing setup with 5 gallons of warm potable water is required.



Dishwashing Sinks:

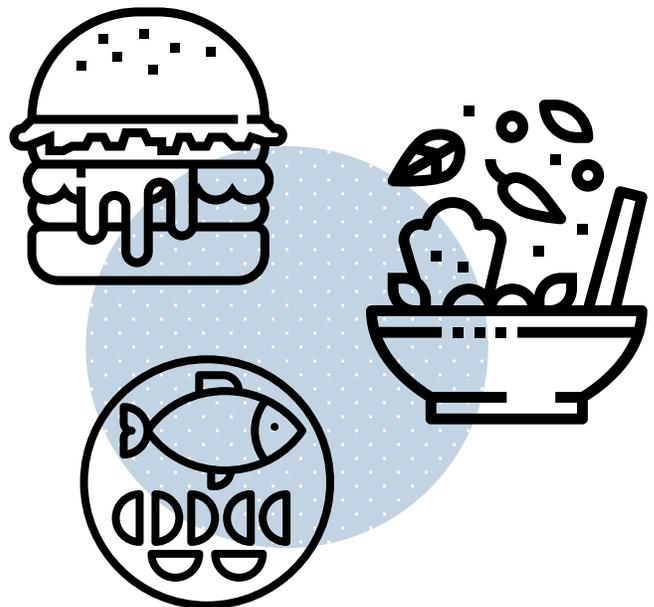
Dishwashing is not required as long as a licensed commissary is accessible and has approved dishwashing capacity. If a commissary is not used, adequate equipment would need to be present on-board to wash dishes.

CLASS 4 MOBILE UNIT

Class 4 mobile units are licensed to serve a full menu with little restrictions

The size of many Class 4 mobile units and the equipment contained within them, often allows for a full menu to be prepared and served.

- A full menu of various food items are allowed to be prepared, assembled, and served, including the storage, preparation and cooking of raw animal products (meats, fish, and unpasteurized eggs), on the unit.
- Additional restrictions may apply based on the equipment on-board, the space, and other operational considerations.
- This class requires a wastewater agreement that proves wastewater is being disposed of properly.





Typical Applications:

Beverage carts, full service food carts



Restroom Access:

Restroom access is required. During the application review, the applicant must show that they have access to a restroom.



Commissary Requirement:

Access to a commissary kitchen may be required depending upon unit design, space, and equipment on-board. Typically, Class 4 mobile units are large enough to not need a commissary kitchen.



Potable Water Requirement:

A minimum of 5 gallons of warm potable water is required for handwashing, plus additional water is needed to fill a three compartment sink at least 2 times for dishwashing.



Allowed Foods:

All foods permitted under Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3. Additionally, a full menu can be prepared and served with minimal restrictions.



Handwashing Setup:

On-board handwashing setup with 5 gallons of warm potable water is required.



Dishwashing Sinks:

A three compartment dishwashing sink or approved commercial dishwasher is required. The sink or dishwasher must be large enough to accommodate your largest ware.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND LICENSING FEES

Mobile units that would like to operate in Yamhill County, are subject to a Mobile Unit Plan Review, a License Application, and a Pre-opening Inspection, and must pay an annual fee. The annual fees are subject to change and may increase on a yearly basis.

1. A mobile unit that has not previously been licensed in Yamhill County in the last year, or a previously licensed mobile unit planning an extensive remodel, are required to complete and submit a plan review and license application and pay their respective fees. These documents can be found on our website (<https://hhs.co.yamhill.or.us/publichealth/page/restaurant-licensing>) or picked up at our Public Health office.
2. Fees are due annually and are subject to change each year. Each license expires December 31 of each year and must be renewed. Warehouse and/or commissary fees may also apply. See our website for the most current licensing fees: <https://hhs.co.yamhill.or.us/publichealth/page/restaurant-licensing>
3. Once the plans have been approved, a pre-opening inspection will need to be scheduled, at least one week prior to opening, by calling our office at 503-434-7525.
4. Once the mobile unit has passed the pre-opening inspection, it may begin operating. The first statutory inspection is conducted within 45 days of opening.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can I cater with my mobile unit?

No, current rules do not allow mobile units to be used in catering operations.

When do I need to notify the county of my mobile unit operations?

Notify YCPH if you are a new mobile unit, making significant changes to your menu, making extensive renovations to a previously licensed mobile unit, planning to move your mobile unit from its listed operational location, or if you are planning to close your mobile unit.

Can I store my dry ingredients at home?

No, you cannot store ingredients at home unless they are exempt per the food code (see document located here:

<https://hhs.co.yamhill.or.us/publichealth/page/exempt-foods>).

I have a mobile unit license from another county in Oregon. Can I use it to operate my mobile unit in Yamhill County?

Mobile units currently licensed in another Oregon county, that arrive in and leave Yamhill County in the same day, are not required to obtain a local license. However, YCPH does need to be notified that you are operating in Yamhill County. Please call our office at 503-434-7525. If you wish to park the unit in Yamhill County overnight or longer, such as for an event, you must notify YCPH, pay a \$25 fee, and receive an inspection. Under all circumstances, you must comply with all local rules and regulations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I'm serving whole, intact fruits (such as an apple) on my unit, do they need to be in a covered container?

If the apples for sale are in an area where customers can serve themselves or in a location where contamination is possible, they need to be wrapped or protected by a container, or placed behind a sneeze guard. This only applies to fruits that are assumed to be ready to eat in current form. For example, you would not be required to wrap a banana or an orange as the peel is typically not consumed.

Does my mobile unit need to be hardwired or can I use an extension cord?

Under current rules, your unit is not required to be hardwired; however, a hardwire connection is often beneficial. Some situations require your unit to have electricity at all times. For example, if you will be holding foods overnight on your unit that require refrigeration, you would need to have electricity running all night. Extension cords left out overnight run the risk of being tampered with at many unsecured Pod locations.

How much potable water do I need?

Potable water requirements are based on the classification, size, and use of your mobile unit. Class 1 units do not have a potable water requirement, while Class 2,3, and 4 units must have a minimum of 5 gallons for handwashing. More is often required if you plan to wash dishes on-board or need water for prep and/or cooking of foods. During your mobile unit plan review, YCPH will help you determine how much potable water you will need on your mobile unit.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What should I do with my wastewater/greywater?

Greywater, or wastewater, is used water from hand sinks, prep sinks, dishwashing, and processing of foods. Greywater must be collected, stored, and disposed of in an approved manner. Greywater should never be poured down a storm drain or be allowed to drip or run onto the surface of your lot.

Greywater typically contains food debris, which can attract rodents if not properly disposed of. During your plan review, you will be required to sign a wastewater agreement that proves wastewater is being collected and disposed of properly.

Can I use water from a well?

Yes, you can use water from a well. However, the well must meet water testing guidelines set forth by the State of Oregon. If you use water from a well, you must be able to provide testing documentation. Visit the Oregon Domestic Well Safety Program website for more information:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/SourceWater/DomesticWellSafety/Pages/index.aspx>

Do I need to wash my hands every time after I handle money, even if I don't make any bare hand contact with food I'm serving?

As long as you're not making direct, bare hand contact with food, you are not required to wash your hands after handling money. This means you must use utensils, deli paper, or other barrier to serve foods. Although handwashing is not required in this instance, frequent handwashing is always encouraged.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it my responsibility to maintain a shared garbage or recycling area?

While there may be a common garbage or recycling area shared by more than one unit, it is not the sole responsibility of one unit. All operators have a responsibility to use and maintain the area properly to avoid rodent and insect infestations. Keep dumpster lids closed and keep food debris from accumulating around the containers. Improperly maintained garbage areas can provide food and shelter for pests, which can adversely affect you and all other operators in the pod. If a rodent infestation is reported and confirmed, it is considered a code violation and abatement can be enforced.

I have a food handler certificate from other state or another county in Oregon. Does Yamhill County accept these?

Food handler cards from other states are not accepted. Current food handler certificates from other counties within Oregon are accepted. Current ServSafe food handler and manager training certifications from the National Restaurant Association are also acceptable. Any operator or employee that interacts with food must show proof of a food handlers certificate during the inspection process. These are good for three years and are available online at <https://www.orfoodhandlers.com/eMain.aspx>

Can I use a household refrigerator?

Residential equipment is not recommended, as commercial refrigerators have more cooling capacity, but is acceptable as long as you can prove it has the ability to hold refrigerated foods at 41°F or below. Cooling of hot foods in a residential refrigerator is never allowed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Pod owner provides a portable restroom on our lot with hand sanitizer. Is this suitable for the restroom requirement?

Rules require that restroom facilities for employees have warm running water, soap, and paper towels. If a portable restroom meets these requirements, it can be used, though most do not. Hand sanitizer is not an acceptable substitute for handwashing. The only exception to this rule, is if your unit is truly mobile and does not reside in one location for more than 2 hours at time. Contact YCPH for more details on this exception.

How do I find a commissary? Is that the same as a commercial kitchen?

A commissary kitchen and commercial kitchen are essentially the same. Both must be currently licensed and inspected by YCPH. Contact YCPH for more information and for help locating an approved kitchen.

Can I cool cooked foods on my mobile unit?

Yes, mobile units can cool cooked foods on-board. However, you must prove that your mobile unit has the capacity to properly cool cooked foods. During your mobile unit plan review, YCPH will help you determine if cooling is a possibility on your mobile unit.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a Food Handler Certificate? Do I need one?

A person acquires a food handler certificate after completing a food safety course and taking an exam. This course covers basic food safety concepts including, not limited to, hand washing, cross-contamination, and temperature control. All persons handling and serving food on the mobile unit must have a valid food handlers certificate. These certificates are valid for 3 years. Visit the Oregon Food Handlers Card website for more information and to obtain a certificate: <https://www.orfoodhandlers.com/eMain.aspx>

What is a warehouse? Am I required to have one?

A warehouse is any building, separate from a mobile unit, used to store food and food related goods. They are not always required but may be needed when a mobile unit lacks sufficient storage. Warehouses are typically located in close proximity to your unit and must be secured from rodents, insects, and tampering. Warehouses are licensed and inspected on a regular basis along with the corresponding mobile unit.

Where can I go for more information?

A great resource is the Oregon Health Authority Food Safety Program. Visit their website here for more information about food safety and licensing of mobile food units:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/FOODSAFETY/Pages/regs.aspx>