



# Hays County Development Services

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(P) 512-393-2150 (Web) [www.hayscountytx.com](http://www.hayscountytx.com)

## Food Establishment - Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. Do I need a permit to sell food in the county?**

A. Yes, whether you are wanting to operate a retail food establishment, restaurant or sell food from a mobile vehicle.

**Q. Do I need to be a Certified Food Manager or Food Handler to sell food in the county?**

A. Yes. Every food establishment in the county must employ at least one Certified Food Manager. Other food employees must complete an accredited food handler training course.

**Q. Where can I become a Certified Food Manager or Food Handler?**

A. These courses are available online. The course must be approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services. (<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/foodestablishments/>)

**Q. Is there a different permit for a Food Establishment vs Mobile Food Establishment?**

A. Yes. A mobile food establishment must be mobile and move daily. A food establishment would be a "brick & mortar" location.

**Q. How many inspections and how often do I get inspected as a mobile food vendor?**

A. You will have to be inspected before you receive your permit. You will be inspected at least twice per year in addition to inspections in response to any consumer complaints.

**Q. Do I have to renew my food permit?**

A. Yes. All Food Establishments must renew annually at the end of each calendar year. It is the responsibility of the owner of the Food Establishment to renew annually.

**Q. What is a commissary for a Mobile Food Establishment? Is my Food Establishment a commissary?**

A. A Commissary or Central Preparation Facility must be visited daily by a Mobile Food Establishment -- A Commissary is a facility that is an approved and permitted retail food establishment at which food is prepared, stored, and wrapped; and the Mobile Food Unit is supplied with fresh water and ice; and emptied of waste water into a proper waste disposal system, and cleaned, including washing, rinsing, and sanitizing of those food-contact surfaces or items not capable of being immersed in the Mobile Food Unit utensil-washing sink. **Use of a private residence as a central preparation facility is prohibited.**

**Q. Does the county have "seasonal" permits, if I only operate a few months out of the year?**

A. No. each permit expires at the end of each calendar year.

**Q. What is a public water supply and who needs it?**

A. You will need a public water supply if: (1) you have 15 or more service connections or (2) serve at least 25 individuals at least 60 days out of the year. Please visit the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/pws.html>) for additional details.

**Q. Who do I contact about a complaint on a Food Establishment or Mobile Food Establishment?**

A. You can call the Hays County Development Services at 512-393-2150 and speak with an Environmental Health Specialist or email us at [foodcomplaints@co.hays.tx.us](mailto:foodcomplaints@co.hays.tx.us)