



REQUIREMENTS FOR OPENING A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

The Somerset County Department of Health (SCDOH) is responsible for reviewing your application to operate a retail food establishment. You will be required to comply with Chapter 24, *Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments and Food and Beverage Vending Machines*. The following guide will help you prepare your application. **Plans must be submitted at least 30 days prior to construction or renovation.** Plans are required when a new food establishment will be constructed, the conversion of an existing structure for use as a food establishment, or the remodeling or change of type of a retail food establishment.

PRE-PLANNING

- Ensure compliance with the regulations of the following Departments: Zoning and Construction.
- Thoroughly review a copy of Chapter 24. If you do not have a copy of this regulation, please contact this Department.
- It is recommended that you schedule a meeting with an inspector to discuss any questions regarding licensing and /or plan review issues.
- Complete a plan review application which is to be submitted with the plans and equipment specifications. Fees are required to be submitted. Please make checks or money orders payable to the appropriate Township or Borough. (Check with Township or Borough for appropriate fee.)

PREPARATION OF PLANS

- Submit kitchen / facility plans including 3 copies of floor and plumbing plans. Include equipment specifications, cut sheets and 1 copy of proposed menu. Plans will be reviewed within 30 business days.
- Plans and specifications must include, where applicable, data relating to the grounds, building exterior, and any other information necessary for review.
- If the water source is a well, the water quality must be analyzed by a NJDEP certified laboratory prior to opening. You will be required to test the water quality as per N.J.S.A. 58:12A-1 of the NJ Safe Drinking Water Act.
- A pre-opening inspection is required prior to opening. This needs to be scheduled once you have satisfactorily completed all Construction Department inspections, i.e. plumbing, electrical, fire and building.

The following information **must be included** in the plans:

Floors: All floors must be smooth, easily cleanable and of a light color. All construction details must clearly show the following:

- a) Construction materials
- b) Location of floor drains
- c) Details on juncture between floors and walls

Walls & Ceilings: Kitchen walls must be smooth, easily cleanable and be of a light color. Ceiling tiles must be clean and in good repair. Complete details must be provided, including:

- a) Materials
- b) Finish
- c) Color



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Doors & Windows:

- a) Indicate self-closing devices on doors where required
- b) Indicate screening or other insect control devices

Lighting:

- a) Indicate placement of all light fixtures in relation to equipment
- b) Indicate illumination level (in foot candles) for all areas; including toilet rooms, storage areas, etc. Specific intensities must be shown for food preparation areas and utensil washing areas.
- c) Light shields must be provided in food prep areas.

Plumbing: Detailed plumbing plans must be submitted to the plumbing inspector for approval. Plumbing must comply with the NJ Uniform Construction Code. In addition, the plans must include:

- a) All hand washing sinks
- b) Three compartment sinks (where applicable)
- c) Cross-connection controls
- d) At least one utility sink or curbed cleaning facility with floor drain shall be provided and used for cleaning mops and similar wet floor cleaning tools.
- e) Plumbing riser diagram

Toilet and Hand Washing Facilities: Hand washing sinks must be available in food prep area and counter area. In addition, please submit the following on the plans to this Department:

- a) Provide restroom locations. Patrons must have access to rest rooms in "eat-in" facilities. Patron access may not be through food areas.
- b) Indicate dressing and / or locker rooms for employees. (Some type of storage facilities for personal items are required.)
- c) Restroom doors must be self closing. If there are no windows, ventilation system must be installed.
- d) Garbage can with lid shall be provided in restrooms.
- e) Employee "hand wash sign" must be posted in all restrooms and at hand wash sinks

Dishwashing:

- a) Method for sanitization must be provided. This includes type of sink or dishwasher

Food Storage Areas:

- a) Indicate construction of floors, walls and ceilings.
- b) Indicate ventilation of storage rooms.
- c) Indicate location and construction of storage shelves

Food Displays:

- a) Indicate counter sneeze guards or other protective devices.

Equipment: A list of all equipment must be provided as an addendum to the plans showing the manufacturer and the model for all equipment.



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Equipment and Utensil Storage:

- a) Adequate storage facilities for all equipment such as tableware, kitchenware, utensils, etc., must be clearly shown.
- b) Complete details must be included for running water dipper wells for frozen dippers, including water inlet, waste connection, etc.
- c) Equipment must be located either far apart for easy cleaning or 1/32" space between. If exposed to seepage, equipment to be sealed to adjoining equipment or to walls.

Ventilation: Stoves, ovens, grills, fryers, etc., must have a ventilation system exhausting to the outside. This system must also meet fire code regulations. Hoods must have filters. The complete plan for the ventilation system must be provided to the Construction Official. Compliance with the NJ Uniform Construction Code is required.

Refuse:

- a) Describe method of refuse storage. List type of container and number of containers.
- b) Describe facilities to be provided for storage of refuse containers, garbage room, storage rack or platform, etc.
- c) Indicate facilities provided for cleaning of refuse containers. Waste generated in the cleaning of refuse containers must be disposed of in an approved manner.

Grease Trap:

- a) Provide the size and specification of the grease trap.
- b) The Township or Borough where the restaurant is located may have specific requirements regarding grease traps. If so, compliance with local regulations is necessary.
- c) Number of seats and hours of operation must be provided.

Sewage Disposal System:

- a) Provide the type of sewage disposal system serving the restaurant. (Septic system or public sewer)
- b) If the restaurant is served by an individual septic system, you must provide proof of compliance with N.J.A.C. 7:9A, Standards for Individual Subsurface Sewage Systems.

Certified Food Manager / Handler: Provide name(s) of individuals that are certified and will be responsible to perform Active Managerial Control (AMC) to prevent food borne illness. Food Establishments that are considered risk type III will be required to have at least one person become a Certified Food Protection Manager by successfully passing an examination given by one of the following Conference for Food Protection approved organizations:

- National Registry of Food Safety Professionals – www.nrfsp.com
- National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (ServSafe) – www.servsafe.com
- Thompson Prometric – www.prometric.com/foodsafety
- My Food Service License - <https://myfoodservicelicense.com/>

The Township or Borough where the restaurant is located may also have specific requirements requiring a Certified Food Handler onsite during operating hours. If so, compliance with local regulations is necessary.

NOTE: The above is only an overview. Comments specific to your establishment will be furnished subsequent to submission and review of plans.