

## SERVING THE PUBLIC

### Food Service Establishments

Whether you are an outside hot dog vendor, a family diner, a fine-dining restaurant, a catering business, or a group that wants to have a spaghetti dinner open to the public to raise community funds, you are responsible for the food that you serve. Food safety procedures must be put in place to protect the public from contaminated food.

When deciding to open a food service establishment or serve food to the public, you can count on the Clinton County Health Department to assist you in understanding the NY State Health Department regulations, laws, and procedures that you must know, in order to be in compliance prior, and after the opening of your establishment, and when serving the public.

There are certain permits that you must obtain in order to open your food service establishment, or serve food to the public. Read below for more information or contact the Clinton County Health Department.

What is the Purpose of the NY State Food Service Code (14-1)?

The purpose of the code is to protect the public health. Owners and operators of food service establishments are to operate their premises in such a way as to avoid imminent health hazards.

What are Some of the Steps Needed to Obtain a Food Service Permit?

First, determining what your classification would be. The Clinton County Health Department will help you determine this. Are you considered to be a(n):

- a) Restaurant
- b) Outside or mobile vendor
- c) Catering facility
- d) Non-profit facility
- e) One time (event) provider

All the above classifications will need to read and fill out the "A Guide to Obtaining A Food Service Permit" packet. This packet has all the necessary documents and instructions to get you started in applying for your operating permit.

Second, are you using a "community" water supply or a non-public water supply. If you are using a non-public water supply, then you will be required to submit an additional document packet called "water supply system plan" for approval.

Third, if you want to open a catering service, or if you are an established food service wanting to offer off-site catering to the public, you will need to submit the additional document packet called "off-site catering plan requirements".

Fourth, you will then be required to make an appointment with the Clinton County Health Department to review all your documentation and plans. You may have to fill out additional documentation if your service has special circumstances.

At the meeting, a public health sanitarian from the Clinton County Health Department will discuss in great detail what you need to do to comply with the regulations of NY State Health Codes. Following all the instructions given to you by the public health sanitarian, will help create a smoother transition in obtaining your operating permit.

*NOTE: All plans should be submitted thirty days (30) or more BEFORE the planned construction date. Plans are reviewed by a confirmed appointment ONLY.*

What are Some of the Topics that Will be Discussed at My Appointment?

Below are examples of some of the items that a sanitarian will discuss with you at your meeting:

Food safety: storage, contamination, vendors, preparation, gloves, cooking, refrigeration, thawing, transportation, supplies, hazardous foods, proper temperatures, etc.

Water and sewage: water supply, bottled water, steam, plumbing, toilet facilities, hand-washing, facilities, etc.

Sanitation and hygiene: garbage and refuse storage and disposal, equipment and utensil cleaning and sanitation, insect and rodent control, employee hygiene, cleaning tools, wiping cloths, drying, physical food handling, etc.

Physical facilities: floors, walls and ceilings, lighting, ventilation, dressing rooms and areas, locker area, supplies and equipment locations, equipment installation, working spaces, etc.

Topics for discussion may be based on the type of food service you will be providing to the public.

### Do I Need an Operating Permit for Selling Pre-packaged Food?

Not, if you are selling items like pre-packaged snacks, candies, and canned or bottled beverages, or not if the food doesn't need to be temperature controlled. Once you have to heat or either handle something out of its package to serve to the public, then you will need to come in, and apply for an operating permit.

### Are There Educational Material and Brochures Available?

Yes, the Clinton County Health Department has a wealth of knowledge for you to read and understand, regarding food safety, preparation, handling, sanitation, and more.

### Contact Us

To receive more information or assistance on applying for your permit, call or visit us at:

Clinton County Health Department  
Environmental Unit  
135 Margaret Street  
Plattsburgh, NY 12901  
Tel: (518) 565-4870