

Background: House Bill 2878 was passed by the 88th Texas State Legislature, shifting permitting and inspection authority for mobile food vendors to county health departments. As a result, effective September 1, 2023, the City of Arlington will no longer issue annual permits for mobile food vendors. Mobile food vendors operating in Arlington or other areas of Tarrant County will need to obtain a Tarrant County Public Health Mobile Food Unit Annual Permit.

Types of Itinerant Food Vendors

- **Mobile food unit** *--A vehicle-mounted mobile food establishment designed to be readily moveable.
 - Example: Food Truck, Food Trailer, Lunch Truck

***PERMITTED BY TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH**



- **Pushcart** *--A non-self-propelled mobile food unit limited to serving non-potentially hazardous food or limited preparation food or beverage items.
 - Example: Elotes Cart, Ice cream pushcart, hot dog pushcart

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- **Temporary Food Establishment** *- A food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration.
 - Example: Food trailer, unit, or tent at a festival

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Types of Permits:

Scenario 1: A mobile food vendor who works in multiple cities in Tarrant County or works in one location in Arlington for more than 14 consecutive days must obtain a mobile vendor permit through Tarrant County.

- Visit [Tarrant County Inspections \(webpage\)](#) to schedule your annual permitting inspection.

Annual Mobile Food Units Permitted by Tarrant County Public Health

1. Prepackaged Foods (\$400)
2. Open Food Preparation (\$600)
3. Open Food Pushcart (\$600)

For more information about requirements for obtaining a MOBILE FOOD UNIT permit, visit Tarrant County Inspections.

To verify a mobile vendor's permit status or file a complaint against a mobile food vendor please visit [Tarrant County Public Health](#) or call Tarrant County Public Health at 817-248-6299.

Scenario 2: A food stand, stall, or food truck operator who works at City of Arlington events, ranging in 1 to 14 days in duration *and* does not hold a current annual mobile vendor permit through Tarrant County.

- Submit your application for the temporary food permit 10 days prior to event on www.ArlingtonPermits.com

Temporary Food Establishments Permitted by City of Arlington Health Division

1. Food tents/stalls/units/booths vending at an event for no more than 14 days. (\$140/day one, \$5/day thereafter)
2. Food trailers/trucks vending at an event for no more than 14 days. (Initial event permit \$140/day one, \$5/day thereafter, Temporary Renewals \$25/day one, \$5/day thereafter. Yearly Maximum of \$600)

For more information about obtaining a TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENT permit, visit City of Arlington Health Services.

To verify a temporary food vendor's permit status call City of Arlington Health Services at 817-459-6656 or 817-459-6693. To file a complaint against a temporary food vendor please call City of Arlington Action Center at 817-459-6777 or [visit AskArlington](#).

Food Safety Inspections:

Operational/Field Health inspections will be conducted during the routine food service activities of the food vendor. Tarrant County Public Health will conduct Annual Mobile Food Unit inspections. City of Arlington Health Services will conduct all Temporary Food Establishment inspections.

Operational Minimums:

All Food Vendors must meet all applicable requirements of the Texas Food Establishment Rules and City of Arlington Code of Ordinances, including zoning and building code restrictions.

- All food must be prepared or cooked at the Central Preparation Facility or on the mobile unit at the time of operation. Home preparation or storage of food is prohibited.
- All time/temperature-controlled food products must always be maintained at the proper temperature. Cold foods must be maintained at 41°F or below; hot foods must be maintained at 135°F or above at the Central Preparation Facility and on the mobile unit.
- Eating, drinking and the use of tobacco is prohibited in the food preparation and service areas.
- Bare hand contact with ready to eat foods is prohibited. Food service workers must wash hands frequently and wear disposable gloves, use deli tissues or utensils when handling food. A sufficient quantity of potable water for handwashing is required during all operating hours.
- Ice used for human consumption must be stored separately from the ice used for cooling. Ice storage units must be self-draining.
- Covered trash containers must be provided.
- Food and food contact surfaces must be protected from pests and dirt or other contamination.
- Storage unit and probe thermometers must be provided.
- All wastewater from handwashing, utensil washing, ice chests, steam tables, etc. must be collected and disposed of into the sanitary sewer. Discharging wastewater onto the ground or into the storm drain is prohibited.

City of Arlington Codes Applicable to all Mobile and Temporary Food Establishments:

- Unified Development Code (UDC) restricts mobile food establishment operations to specific use districts. [See Section 3.3.6 \(page 103\) for details.](#)
- UDC provides standards for open-air vending, to include food vending. [See Section 3.2.3 \(page 77\) for details.](#)
- All food vendors, including Mobile Food Unit operators, must comply with [Sections 4.14.5 and 13.12 \(pages 146 & 182\) of the City of Arlington Construction Chapter.](#)
- All food vendors, including Mobile Food Unit operators, must comply with [Section 609.2 \(page 32\) of the City of Arlington Fire Prevention Chapter.](#)

Please contact Planning and Development Services for additional information:
Health Services
101 W. Abram Street, 2nd floor
Arlington, Texas 76010
(817) 459-6693 or (817) 459-6518