

TCRPC

Planning Toolkit Fact Sheet



Food Trucks

INTRODUCTION

Mobile food facilities (Food Truck or kitchen on wheels) is a large motorized vehicle equipped to cook, prepare, serve, and or sell food that breaks the food gap between customers and brick and mortar places. The food truck concept brings restaurant style food to consumers. Whether through catering events or parked along the side of a street in a community in many locations food trucks can operate year round. They vary in equipment and design, depending upon the type of food and service intended to be sold by the operator. The facility must be a vehicle that is self-propelled. Food can be prepared or processed on the vehicle which is used to sell and dispense food to the customer. There is no size limit to food trucks but they must have one of the following and follow basic requirements:

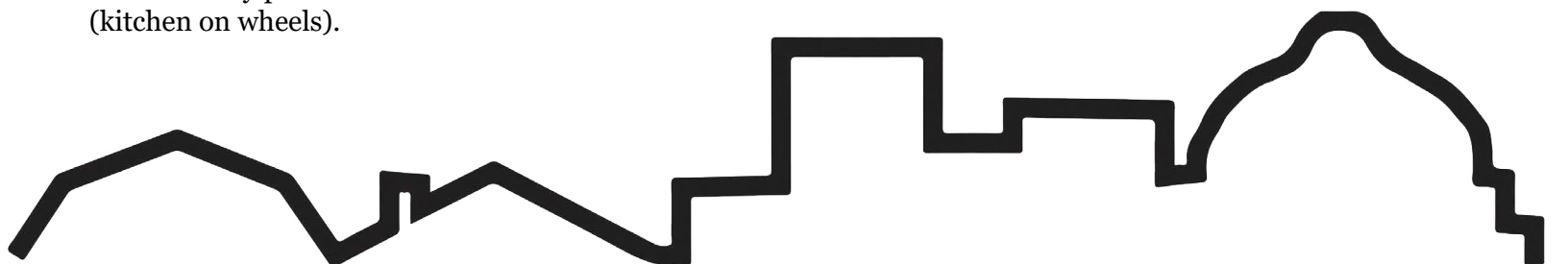
- Electrical system
- A water or drains system
- Propane or gas system
- Intent is to be mobile and not a permanent fix.

There are 4 different types of food trucks that someone can own and operate.

- Type 1: No preparation or assembly required, only bottled or canned drinks, no fountains or other dispensers, Ex. Chips, canned soda, cookies, candy
- Type 2: commercially processed packaged food in its original package (receive-store-hold). Ex. Packaged ice cream, single serving packaged snacks, frozen packaged meat, packaged milk.
- Type 3: unpackaged food, food prep with no cook step prep for same day services. Ex. Hot dogs, grilled sandwiches, salads, shaved ice, kettle corn, nut roasting
- Type 4: unpackaged food, food preparation with no cook step (store-prepare-serve). Reheating of a commercially processed food item. Ex. Full menu (kitchen on wheels).

All mobile food facilities must submit an application and plan review 4-6 weeks prior to operation to PA Department of Agriculture. Either a permanent or temporary retail food license is required for food truck types 2, 3, and 4. Type 1 is exempt from the license fee but must still fill out an application and be inspected by local health departments. Not all food licenses are issued by the PA Department of Agriculture. In some cases a local health department will issue licenses as well. Food trucks operate under very similar rules and regulations that restaurants do. This goes for the food sanitation requirements which include food source, water source, and wastewater. A person in charge (PIC) must be present at all times at the food truck, one food employee certified manager is required for food truck types 3 and 4. Also just like restaurants, mobile food facilities are able to be inspected at any reasonable time to ensure compliance within the laws and regulations of the local municipality or PA state Department of Agriculture.

Mobile food facilities must operate from a commissary, which is a facility to which it returns daily for cleaning, discharging liquid or solid waste, and refilling water tanks. This is also where food is kept, handled, prepared, packaged and stored. This may not be a private residence and if located on a residential property it must be completely separated from personal use area. A self-contained mobile food facility may have the ability to operate without a commissary.



BENEFITS

- Location Flexibility
- Food trucks can attract more customers, especially in rural areas or at outdoor events
- Quick and convenient food options

DRAWBACKS

- Licensing and permit issues must be addressed
- Safe locations for parking can be limited
- Heavy competition: many food trucks gathering in same area to serve customers

PRACTICAL TIPS

- Municipal regulations should be consistent with Pennsylvania requirements while also addressing local concerns.
- Food truck operators should be required to provide proof that they are up to date with the latest Pennsylvania rules and regulations.



RESOURCES

- [City of Lock Haven Food Truck Ordinance](#)
- [Mobile food facility operation guide](#)
- [Borough of Paxtang Mobile Food Vending](#)
- [Borough of Carlisle Mobile Food Vending](#)

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