



Plan Review Guidelines for Retail Food: Existent, Remodeling, and New Establishments

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Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to help architects, engineers, contractors and independent operators understand the plan review process for food establishments under the jurisdiction of the Secaucus Health Department. **THIS GUIDELINE IS NOT INCLUSIVE OF ALL REGULATORY OR CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION THAT IS NECESSARY FOR THE OPERATION OF A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT.** These represent only a summary of the Sanitary Code that may affect the construction or remodel of a retail food establishment.

All retail food establishments must be inspected and applicable fees paid before the Health Department will issue the retail food license. Retail food establishments must comply with the regulations set forth in the New Jersey STATE SANITARY CODE, CHAPTER 24 (N.J.A.C. 8:24), “Sanitation in Retail Food Establishments and Food and Beverage Vending Machines.”

You may access the State Sanitary Code at:
http://www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/documents/chapter24_effective_1207.pdf

Plan Review

- Submit a full set of plans, menu and specification (cut) sheets of all new equipment. Plans must be clear, concise, legible, to scale and be of such size as to enable all information to be clearly shown. Plans will be reviewed and responded to within 30 days of submission. **(NOTE: Any change to plans must be approved by the Health Department prior to construction.)**
- Complete plan review application and submit the applicable fee
- Plans are required for:
 - The **construction** of a retail food establishment.
 - The **conversion** of an existing structure for use as a retail food establishment.
 - The **remodeling** or a change of type of retail food establishment or food operation.

Toilet Facilities

- Adequate and conveniently located toilet facilities shall be accessible to employees at all times.
- The public shall not access toilet facilities through food preparation, food storage and utensil/equipment washing areas.
- Toilet facilities shall be installed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:23, New Jersey Uniform Construction Code.
- All new retail food establishments shall provide toilets for the public in accordance with the requirements of N.J.A.C. 5:23, New Jersey Uniform Construction Code.
- Toilet rooms shall be completely enclosed and shall have tight fitting, self-closing doors and should be vented to the outside if subject to odors.
- Toilet rooms must have a handwashing sink.

Handwashing Facilities

- The number and location of handwashing sinks shall be convenient to employees preparing or dispensing exposed food or handling clean ware.
- In all **new establishments**, and **extensively altered or change of ownership**, employee handwashing facilities shall also be located within the area where food is prepared.
- Handwashing sinks shall be equipped to provide water at a temperature range between 90-110 degrees Fahrenheit through a mixing valve or combination faucet.
- Handwashing sinks shall be provided with a hand cleaning agent and hand drying device or disposable towels. Common towels are prohibited

Physical Facilities

- Adequate space shall be provided for storage of food, utensils, paper products, supplies, cleaning equipment and employee's personal items. Floors, walls and ceilings in preparation areas, walk-in refrigerators, ware washing areas, toilet rooms and areas subject to flushing or spray
 - cleaning methods shall be smooth, nonabsorbent and easily cleanable.
- Floor/wall junctures shall be sealed or provided with a coved base where water flush cleaning methods are used.
- Finishes shall be smooth, durable and easily cleanable for areas where retail food establishment operations are conducted. Show type of construction and finish of floors, walls and ceilings in food preparation, utensil washing, toilet rooms, and wait station areas.
- Openings to the outside shall be effectively protected against the entrance of vermin.
- Lighting shall be shielded against breakage in areas where food is exposed. (ex. prep areas, refrigeration units, deli cases, etc.)
- All rooms shall have sufficient ventilation to keep them free of excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes.
- Cooking ventilation hoods and devices shall be designed and installed to prevent grease or condensation from collecting on walls, ceilings and fire suppression system piping and from dripping into food or onto food contact surfaces.

Plumbing

- All plumbing systems shall be designed, constructed, installed and maintained in accordance with **N.J.A.C. 5:23, New Jersey Uniform Construction Code**.
 - Hot and cold running water must be provided to all sinks.
 - Metered faucets shall remain on for at least 20 seconds without the need to reactivate the faucet.
 - Food preparation sinks must be indirectly connected to the sanitary sewer through a drain line that has an air-gap.
 - A service sink (mop sink) equipped with a floor drain shall be provided and conveniently located for the cleaning of mop and the disposal of mop water.
 - No less than a three compartment sink shall be provided for the washing and sanitizing of food contact equipment. Sink compartments shall be large enough to accommodate immersion of the largest equipment and utensils. Drain boards, utensil racks or tables shall be provided for necessary ware holding before cleaning and after sanitizing. A commercial ware washing machine may be substituted for the three-compartment sink if:
 - The ware washing machine is large enough for all food utensils,
 - dishware, equipment, etc. that are placed in it;
 - It is equipped with a pre-wash/pre-scrape area.
- ***Note: Establishments are strongly advised to have a three-compartment sink also in case of a malfunction with the ware washing machine.***

Food Equipment

- o All food equipment shall comply with the standards of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
- o Equipment for cooling and heating food and cold and hot holding food shall be sufficient in number and capacity to maintain proper food holding temperatures.
- o Refrigeration units must be able to maintain a 41 degree Fahrenheit food temperature in all newly constructed food establishment and any refrigeration equipment that is replaced. All new cold holding units for potentially hazardous foods shall be provided with an integral or permanently affixed temperature-measuring device that is in clear view.
- o Sneeze guards shall be provided where applicable and shall conform to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or NSF standards for construction, installation and use.
- o Food, equipment, utensils and laundered linens shall not be stored in locker rooms, toilet rooms, and mechanical rooms or under sewer lines that are not shielded to intercept potential drips.
- o Equipment that is fixed and not easily movable (hand washing sinks, 3 compartment sinks, prep-sinks, etc.) shall be installed so that it is sealed to adjoining equipment or walls if equipment is exposed to spillage or seepage.
- o Counter top food equipment shall be easily movable or sealed to the counter or be mounted on 4 inch legs.
- o Floor mounted food equipment shall be easily movable, or seated and sealed to the floor or mounted on 6 inch legs or casters.

Waste Disposal

- o Outdoor storage surfaces for refuse, recyclables and oil collection containers shall be constructed of nonabsorbent material and shall be smooth, durable and sloped to drain.

Certification Requirements

- o By **January 2, 2010**, one *person in charge (PIC)* in a **Risk Type 3*** Food Establishment shall be a certified food protection manager who has shown proficiency of the required information through an accredited certification program approved by the *Conference for Food Protection (CFP)*.
 - CFP approved Program Examinations:
 - *ServSafe* (www.servsafe.com)
 - *National Registry of Food Safety Professionals* (www.nrfsp.com)
 - *Thompson Prometric* (www.prometric.com/foodsafety)
 - *360 Training* (www.360training.com)
 - *Statefoodsafety.com*
- o By **September 2024**, one or all employees in a Risk Type 2* Food Establishment may be required to be certified in food handling or food protection who has shown

proficiency of the required information through an accredited certification program as noted above. It will be at the discretion of the Secaucus Health Department and its representatives if your Risk Type 2 Establishment requires a Food Handler Certificate.

Pre-operational Inspection

- o A pre-operational inspection by the Health Department is required prior to the start of operations to determine compliance with NJ State Sanitary code Chapter 24 (N.J.A.C. 8:24). Approval from all other departments **MUST** be completed **PRIOR** to the pre-operational inspection. (**See pre-operational checklist.**)
- o Once you pass the pre-operational inspection your retail food license will be issued. **THIS DOES NOT PERMIT YOU TO OPERATE!** You must obtain a Certificate of Occupancy or Temporary C/O from the appropriate Construction Department **prior** to operation.
- o Please be able to provide the name, address, and phone number for the following contractors: exterminator, garbage removal company, grease recycling company, and grease trap cleaning company (when applicable).

Smoke Free Retail Food Establishments

Smoking is **not permitted** in any retail food establishment and every retail food establishment in the Town of Secaucus shall comply with the New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act (N.J.S.A. 26:3D-55 through 3D-64)

