

Guidelines for New Food Establishment Openings & Ownership Changes

These guidelines are provided to answer the most frequently asked questions regarding what is required when opening a new food establishment or for an existing food facility change in ownership. A review of food safety processes and an inspection of the food establishment must be conducted to ensure compliance with all applicable standards and regulations prior to approval of the permit.

A “New” Health Permit is required when:

- Opening a new food establishment.
- An existing food establishment is sold or transferred to another person.
- The City of Reno, City of Sparks, or Washoe County business licensing department requires a new business license.

All permitted food establishments in Washoe County must meet the following requirements:

Menu/Operations:

- Provide final food and beverage menus for review.
- Any facility serving raw/undercooked food items must have a consumer advisory printed on the menu and all items served in that manner must be asterisked.
- If alcohol is served, facility must have an alcohol advisory (in English and Spanish) posted in the facility.
- Apply for a [HACCP plan](#)¹ if doing any special processes (i.e. sushi rice, sous vide, curing, acidification, smoking, sprouting, custom processing of animals, canning, reduced oxygen packaging, packaging juice, molluscan shellfish tanks).
- Apply for an [Operational Plan](#)² if catering, dogs are allowed on a patio, an outdoor barbeque is present, or food operations occur on a pool deck.
- If products will be packaged for grab and go style retail sale, copies of all product labels must be submitted for review.

Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM):

- All food establishments that are risk levels 2 or 3 must meet CFPM requirements within 60 days of permit issuance.
- A list of accredited certification organizations can be found [here](#).³

General Cleaning:

- All surfaces throughout the entire facility must be clean to sight and touch, including, but not limited to walls, floors, ceilings, shelves, cabinets, equipment, walk-in coolers, hoods, etc.

Floors:

- Floors of all food preparation, food storage, warewashing areas, walk-in refrigeration units, server areas, and toilet rooms must be smooth, easily cleanable, durable, non-absorbent, and in good repair. Acceptable materials include sealed concrete, terrazzo, ceramic tile, and durable grades of linoleum or plastic. Carpeting is only allowed in dining rooms.
- Cove base (4 inch minimum, 6 inch maximum) must be installed along floor/wall junctions in the above listed areas.

Walls:

- Walls must be smooth, easily cleanable, durable, non-absorbent and in good repair. All holes and gaps must be filled and sealed.
- Walls in splash zones must have a stainless steel, FRP or tile liner (no fiberboard type products are allowed) that extends at least 24 inches above the highest piece of equipment and 12 inches horizontal distance from the equipment or fixture.

Ceilings:

- Ceilings in food preparation areas, toilet rooms, food service storage areas, and areas subject to splash must be easily cleanable, smooth, durable, non-absorbent and in good repair.
- Absorbent ceiling tiles (i.e. acoustic, perforated, fissured, etc.) and textured ceilings are only allowed in dining rooms.

Equipment:

- All equipment must be NSF or ANSI Sanitation Listed. Home style refrigerators, freezers and equipment are not allowed.
- All equipment must be fully functional and surfaces in good repair (i.e. not worn, chipped, damaged).
- Warming units, steam tables and other hot holding units must be able to maintain food at 135°F or above.
- Thermometers must be provided inside cooler units (exterior digital displays are supplemental to an internal thermometer).
- All refrigeration units must maintain food at 41°F or below and freezers must keep food frozen.
- Low-temperature chemical sanitizing dishwashers must be able to properly sanitize (i.e. 50-100ppm chlorine).
- High temperature dishwashers must be able to register a temperature of 160°F at the dishrack and 180°F at the manifold. Temperature sensitive tape (160°F) or a maximum registering thermometer must be on-site.
- 3-compartment sinks must have chlorine sanitizer at 50-100 ppm, quaternary ammonium 200-400ppm, or another approved sanitizer at the concentration directed by the product manufacturer.
- Sanitizer test kits/strips must be on-site for all sanitizing products anticipated to be used at the facility.

Equipment Installation:

- Fixed equipment that is not easily movable must be spaced to allow access for cleaning along the sides, behind, below and above the equipment, or sealed to adjoining equipment or walls if the equipment is exposed to spillage or seepage.

Lights:

- All lightbulbs must either completely shielded, coated, or shatter-resistant (i.e. LED), except those placed in a dining room.
- Adequate lighting must be provided in all areas of the facility to allow for visibility during food preparation and cleaning.

Plumbing:

- Backflow devices are to be provided at mop sinks, dishwashers, chemical dispensers, soda fountains, hose bibs, etc.
- A reduced pressure principle assembly (RPPA) backflow device is required on the domestic water line entering the facility before the first connection or 'T'. Review the following [document](#)⁴ for more information.
- All drain lines from foodservice equipment, except handwashing sinks and mop sinks, must indirectly drain to a floor sink with a minimum 1 inch air gap between the end of the drain line and the rim of the floor sink.
- Foodservice equipment with drain lines must have separate, independent drain lines from other equipment, including but not limited to hand sinks, dump sinks, prep sinks, dishwashers, espresso machines, keg coolers, etc.
- Plumbing and electrical conduit must be at least 1 inch away from walls using copper bells or clear acrylic block and at least 6 inches above any floors or counters to allow for cleaning.
- All sinks must have hot and cold running water.
- All equipment must be free of leaks.

Sinks:

- Handwashing sinks must be conveniently located in all food preparation, food dispensing, and warewashing areas.
- Hand sinks must have soap, disposable paper towels, hot and cold running water, and be labeled for hand washing only.
- A 3-compartment sink is required at minimum for warewashing. A dishwasher is only supplemental to a 3-compartment sink.
- A mop sink or utility sink is required.
- A prep sink may be required if washing produce, thawing food, and/or cooling food.
- A dump sink may be required in a facility where drinks are prepared, or dishware is emptied or staged for washing.

Refuse:

- All food establishments must subscribe to an approved garbage collection service.
- All refuse and grease containers must be on a smooth non-absorbent surface.

Shelving, Racks, Counters:

- All shelves, racks, and countertops must be metal or a material which is sealed, easily cleanable, smooth and durable.
- Wood is allowed in dry storage locations only if the surface is painted or sealed with a semi-gloss or gloss sheen coating. Failure to maintain a wooden or painted surface will require that it be changed out for NSF or ANSI Sanitation Listed equipment.
- All food and single service item storage must be at least 6 inches above the floor.

Restrooms:

- Restrooms shall have self-closing doors, soap for the hand sink, an approved method for drying hands, and a waste receptacle. Note: A covered waste receptacle is required in the women's restroom.

Miscellaneous Items:

- Exterior door openings must be rodent-proof, free of gaps/visible daylight and have a screen door if open during operations.
- Dipper wells may be required for storage of ice cream or butter scoops.
- Broken and unused equipment must be removed from the facility.
- Splash guards may be required between sinks and food preparation and storage areas.
- Sneeze guards may be required between open food preparation/storage areas and customer observation and/or self-serve areas.

Disclaimer: The above list is not all inclusive and other corrections may be required prior to the issuance of the permit. If there are plans to remodel, facility must contact City of Reno, City of Sparks, or Washoe County building department to determine if plans and a building permit will be required.

NNPH offers a Limited Advisory Inspection for a fee prior to submission of a Health Permit application. Contact the EHS Front Desk at 775-328-2434 option 8 for more information.

Additional requirements can be found in the Regulations of the Washoe County District Board of Health Governing Food Establishments. These regulations are available online at https://www.nnph.org/files/ehs/regulations/Food_Regs_12-08-2021.pdf. Additional resources can be found at <https://www.nnph.org/programs-and-services/environmental-health/food-protection-services/Resource-Library.php>.

1. <https://nnph.org/programs-and-services/environmental-health/food-protection-services/haccp-information.php>

2. <https://nnph.org/programs-and-services/environmental-health/food-protection-services/operational-plan-requirement.php>

3. <https://anabpd.ansi.org/Accreditation/credentialing/personnel-certification/food-protection-manager/ALLdirectoryListing?menuID=8&prgID=8&statusID=4>

4. <https://www.nnph.org/files/ehs/food-protection-services/Backflow-Guidance-Document.pdf>