

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

The following is intended as basic guidance and does not replace all the applicable laws and regulations concerning construction and food establishment requirements. These standards apply to all food establishments regulated by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) for preparing, processing, storing or selling food for human consumption. All food establishments are required to have an initial inspection for permitting prior to beginning operation.

Plan Review: Food establishments regulated by FDACS are encouraged to take advantage of the Voluntary Plan Review service. This optional service is designed to review plans to evaluate conformance with current FDACS requirements. If you would like more information about this service, please email us at FoodInsp@FDACS.gov or complete the [plan review application](#). See Rule 5K-4.004 (8), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

Other agencies may also require approval before construction, renovation or conversion of a building can occur. Contact the Occupational License, Zoning and Building/Plumbing authorities for your location for their requirements. Other agencies may also require approval, including:

- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), for drinking (potable) water supply, sewage disposal systems, and storm water runoff.
- The Department of Health (DOH), County Health Departments for well water systems and onsite sewage disposal systems.
- Local Fire Department.

PART 1:

FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS THAT HAVE FOOD OR BEVERAGE SERVICE, FOOD PREPARATION OR FOOD PROCESSING. THE MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS FOR THESE TYPES OF ESTABLISHMENTS BEGIN ON PAGE 2.

PART 2:

FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS THAT ONLY HAVE PREPACKAGED FOOD FOR SALE OR STORAGE/DISTRIBUTION. THERE IS NO FOOD OR BEVERAGE SERVICE, FOOD PREPARATION OR PROCESSING. THE MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS FOR THESE TYPES OF ESTABLISHMENTS BEGIN ON PAGE 7.



PART 1

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS FOOD/BEVERAGE SERVICE/PREPARATION OR PROCESSING

1. Water Supply:

The water supply must be adequate, clean, safe and sourced from an approved public water system or, if your establishment is served by an onsite well water system, then approval is needed from either your local County Health Department or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

2. Sewage and Waste Water Disposal:

Sewage and other liquid wastes must be disposed through an approved sanitary sewage system or other system that is constructed, maintained and operated according to local or state laws. The following are examples of how sewage and waste water must be disposed of:

- Through a public/municipal sewage system regulated by a licensed provider or an onsite sewage disposal system regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or
- In an onsite sewage disposal system (e.g., a septic tank) regulated by your local County Health Department.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), does not regulate grease traps or grease interceptors. Contact local building authorities to find out if your establishment will need a grease trap/interceptor.

NOTE: It is required to provide documentation demonstrating that the establishment has an approved water and sewage system. A copy of a bill or application for service is required if on a public (municipal) water or sewage disposal system. A written approval from the Department of Health is required for food establishments using a water and or sewage system that is under the regulatory requirements of the Department of Health before permitting for operation by this Department. More information regarding water and sewer requirements can be found at: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Food-Establishments>

3. Plumbing:

All plumbing must be sized, installed, and maintained according to current regulations. The drinking (potable) water supply must be protected from contamination. Installing and maintaining devices to prevent backflow and back siphonage into water supply systems is required. If hoses are used, the faucets must have a backflow prevention device.

4. Toilet Facilities: Toilet facilities and fixtures must be installed according to current regulations.

- Toilet fixtures must be designed to be easily cleaned and in good repair.
- Toilet rooms must be well lighted and adequately ventilated, and free of offensive odors.
- Toilet rooms must be completely enclosed and have tight fitting, self-closing doors.
- Access to toilet rooms is not permitted by customers through food service preparation, processing, food storage, or warewashing areas. Compliance may be achieved by physical separation such as a wall to prevent contamination.
- Toilet rooms cannot open directly into food preparation, food processing, or warewash areas where food is or may be exposed.

5. Construction Materials and Finishes:

- Floor surfaces must be smooth, nonabsorbent and easy to clean.
- Floor drains are necessary in all rooms receiving flush or flood type cleaning and where normal operations release water or other liquid waste on the floor. These floors must be graded to drain effectively, and the wall and floor junctures must be coved.
- Carpeting is allowed only in customer accessed non-processing areas and is never allowed in toilet rooms.
- Installing utility lines and pipes on the floor is not allowed.
- Walls must be constructed of easily cleanable surfaces, smooth and nonabsorbent in areas such as: food preparation/processing, utensil/equipment washing, walk-in refrigeration/freezers, garbage and rubbish storage areas, dressing rooms, mop sink, locker rooms and toilet rooms.
- Ceilings must be smooth, easily cleanable and nonabsorbent in all food preparation/processing areas including the warewashing sink area.
- Unnecessarily exposed utility service lines and pipes on walls or ceilings are not allowed. Where there are exposed utility service lines and/or pipes; they must not obstruct or prevent cleaning of the walls and ceilings.
- The building must be constructed to prevent the entrance of vermin by using methods like: sealing walls, floors, ceilings; tight fitting doors and windows; proper screening (at least 16 mesh to an inch), protecting air vents, and other similar preventive techniques. Insect control devices must not be installed over food preparation or processing areas.

6. Food Processing Equipment and Utensils:

- Equipment and utensils must be made from safe and durable materials; smooth and easy to clean; corrosion resistant and nonabsorbent.
- Equipment must be installed to allow aisles and enough space, so employees can work without contaminating food or food-contact surfaces by their clothing or personal contact.
- Floor mounted equipment must have a clearance of 6 inches from the floor for cleaning purposes or be sealed to the floor.
- Table or counter mounted equipment must have a 4-inch clearance from the table or counter for easy cleaning. All equipment including movable equipment must be installed with adequate space for cleaning.
- Appliances must be installed to manufacturers' specifications and according to national standards.
- Food protection equipment such as sneeze guards or other similar guards must be installed where applicable.
- Raw wood or pegboard is not allowed in areas where food is prepared, processed, displayed, stored, or in warewashing areas.

7. Sinks:

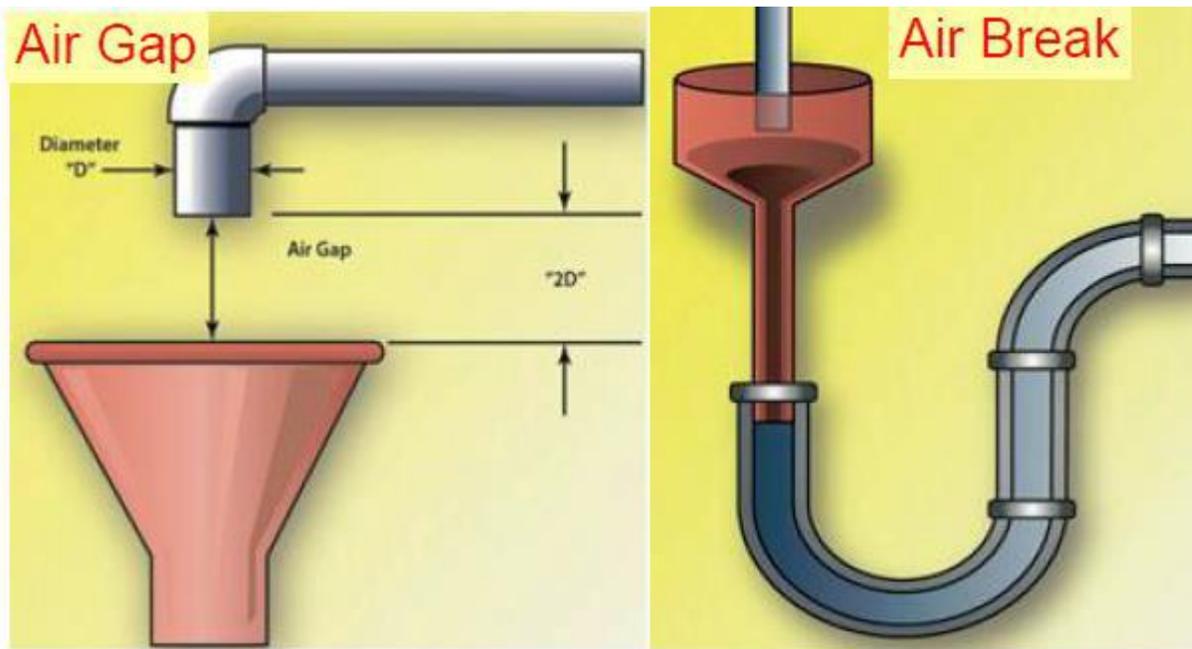
- Handwash, warewash, and food prep sinks in retail food establishments are required to have hot and cold water under pressure and must be dispensed through a mixing valve or combination faucet.
- In wholesale/manufactured food establishments running water at a suitable temperature, and under pressure as needed, must be provided in all areas where required for the processing of food, for the cleaning of equipment, utensils, and food-packaging materials, or for employee sanitary facilities.

8. Handwash Sinks:

- Handwash sinks must be conveniently located and easily accessible for use by employees in all food preparation, food dispensing, processing, warewashing and ice bagging areas, and in or immediately next to toilet rooms.
- Hand soap and sanitary hand drying devices such as single service towels, hot air dryers, etc. are required.
- Hand wash signs must be present at each hand wash sink.

9. Warewash Sinks:

- At least one warewashing (three-compartment) sink is required in food preparation and processing areas for retail food establishments.
- Warewashing sink compartments must be large enough to hold the largest piece of equipment or utensil.
- Wholesale/manufactured food establishments may have alternative equipment, including but not limited to, high-pressure detergent sprayers, low or line pressure spray detergent foamers, and specialized Clean-in-Place (CIP) equipment.
- Warewashing sinks may be used for food processing activities such as washing produce or thawing frozen foods if the sinks are cleaned and sanitized before use. However, a separate prep sink may be more suitable to use for food processing activities.
- Required drain boards, utensils racks, or dish tables must be large enough to hold all soiled and cleaned items that may accumulate during hours of operation. Clean and soiled utensils and equipment must be adequately separated. All equipment and utensils must be air dried. Drain boards must drain properly.
- Mechanical warewashing machines must be equipped with temperature gauges and a data plate that is easy to read and attached by the manufacturer that shows the machine's design and operating instructions.
- A mechanical warewashing machine does not substitute for sinks if the equipment or utensils used by the establishment are larger than the warewashing machine is designed to handle.
- Unless approved by the local plumbing authority, all warewashing sinks, culinary (prep) sinks, ice machines, and commercial dish machines must be indirectly plumbed to a sewage outlet pipe by either an air gap or air break.



10. Mop Sinks:

- At least one mop sink, utility sink, or curbed can wash facility must be provided.
- FDACS **does not** require hot water at the mop sink.
- Check with local plumbing authorities for any additional requirements.

11. Storage Facilities:

- Containers of food must be stored a minimum of 6 inches above the floor to protect from Splash and contamination, and to allow for easy cleaning of the storage area.
- Pallets in good repair are allowed for food storage if there is equipment on the premises to move them for cleaning.
- Metal pressurized beverage containers, cased food packaged in cans, glass, or other waterproof containers need not be elevated when the floor is clean, and the food container is not exposed to moisture.
- Food must not be stored under exposed water or sewer lines.
- Poisonous or toxic materials must be stored so they will not contaminate food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-service or single-use articles by spacing or partitioning.
- Toilet rooms and rooms specifically designed to house electrical panels must not be used for storage

12. Lighting:

- Adequate lighting must be provided to handwashing areas, dressing and locker rooms, and toilet rooms and to all areas where food or food ingredients are examined, processed or stored and where equipment and utensils are cleaned.
- Light bulbs, fixtures, skylights, or other glass suspended over exposed food in any step of preparation or display shall be of the safety type or otherwise protected to prevent food contamination in case of breakage.
- Heat Lamps must have a shield surrounding and extending beyond the bulb so only the face of the bulb is exposed.

13. Ventilation:

- Adequate ventilation is required throughout the establishment. Equipment that produces steam, smoke, or grease laden vapors must be properly vented.
- Contact local building authorities to determine what type of ventilation system may be required for your operation.

14. Garbage and Refuse Disposal:

- All garbage and refuse are required to be disposed of in a sanitary manner.
- Leak proof trash containers with tight fitting lids are required.
- Dumpsters must be in good repair with proper drain plugs installed and lids and doors kept closed.
- Dumpsters, compactors, and grease containers must be placed on non-absorbent surfaces such as a concrete pad or machine laid asphalt.
- Liquid waste from cleaning or garbage must be disposed of as sewage into a drain connected to the proper sewage disposal system.

15. Premises:

- Outside walking areas and driving surfaces must be adequately graded to prevent pooling of water. Dust must be minimized.
- Grass and other vegetation must be kept mowed and maintained to prevent the harborage of rodents.
- Doors that open to the exterior must be self-closing. Roll type doors must be kept in good repair and be kept closed at all times except during brief periods where deliveries are being received.

PART 2

FOOD ESTABLISHMENT MINIMUM CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS PREPACKAGED FOODS ONLY

1. Water Supply:

The water supply must be adequate, clean, safe and sourced from an approved public water system, or if your establishment is served by an onsite well water system, then approval is needed from either your local County Health Department or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

2. Sewage and Waste Water Disposal:

Sewage and other liquid waste must be disposed through an approved sanitary sewage system or other system that is constructed, maintained and operated according to local or state laws.

The following are examples on how sewage and waste water must be disposed of:

- Through a public/municipal sewage system regulated by a licensed provider or
- In an onsite sewage disposal system regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or the Florida Department of Health.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) does not regulate grease traps or grease interceptors. Contact local building authorities to find out if your establishment will need a grease trap/interceptor.

NOTE: It is required to provide documentation demonstrating that the establishment has an approved water and sewage system. A copy of a bill or a confirmation of service letter from the municipal provider are examples of acceptable documentation. Written approval from the Department of Health is required for food establishments using well water and/or sewage disposal system (such as a septic tank) that is under the regulatory requirements of the Department of Health before being permitted for operation by this Department. More information regarding water and sewer requirements can be found at: <https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Food-Establishments>

3. Plumbing:

A backflow or back-siphonage prevention device must be properly installed and maintained on water supply systems. If hoses are used, the faucets must have a backflow prevention device.

4. Toilet Facilities: Toilet facilities and fixtures must be installed according to current regulations.

- Toilet fixtures must be designed to be easily cleaned and in good repair.
- Toilet rooms must be well lighted, adequately ventilated and free of offensive odors.
- Toilet rooms must be completely enclosed and have tight fitting, self-closing doors.
- Access to toilet rooms is not permitted by customers through food storage areas. Compliance may be achieved by physical separation such as a wall to prevent contamination.

5. Construction Materials and Finishes:

- Floor surfaces must be smooth, nonabsorbent and easy to clean.
- Carpeting is allowed only in customer accessed non-processing areas and is never allowed in toilet rooms.
- Installing utility lines and pipes on the floor is not allowed.
- Unnecessarily exposed utility service lines and pipes on walls or ceilings are not allowed. Where there are exposed utility service lines and/or pipes; they must not obstruct or prevent cleaning of the walls and ceilings.
- The building must be constructed to prevent the entrance of vermin by using methods such as: sealing walls, floors, ceilings; tight fitting doors and windows; proper screening, (at least 16 mesh to an inch); protecting air vents; and other similar preventive techniques.

6. Handwash sinks:

- Handwash sinks must be in or immediately next to toilet rooms.
- Hand soap and sanitary hand drying devices like single service towels, hot air dryers, etc. are required.
- Hand wash signs must be present at each of the hand wash sinks.
- For retail food establishments with prepackaged TCS foods (see special notes below), handwash sinks in employee restrooms are required to have hot and cold water under pressure and must be dispensed through a mixing valve or combination faucet.
- For retail food establishments that only sell prepackaged, shelf-stable (not time/temperature controlled for safety) food, FDACS does not require hot water at the hand wash sink.
- For wholesale/manufactured food establishments, water at a suitable temperature Is required for all hand sinks.
- Check with local building authorities for additional requirements.

7. Mop Sinks:

- At least one mop sink, utility sink, or curbed can wash facility **is required** for establishments with TCS foods (see special notes below).
- Hot water is **not** required at the mop sink.
- A mop sink is **not** required at establishments that sell or store only prepackaged, shelf-stable (non-TCS) foods.
- Check with local building authorities for additional requirements.

8. Storage Facilities:

- Containers of food must be stored a minimum of 6 inches above the floor to protect from splash and contamination, and to allow for easy cleaning of the storage area.
- Pallets in good repair are allowed for food storage if there is equipment on the premises to move them for cleaning.
- Metal pressurized beverage containers, cased food packaged in cans, glass, or other waterproof containers need not be elevated when the floor is clean, and the food container is not exposed to moisture.
- Food must not be stored under exposed water or sewer lines.
- Poisonous or toxic materials must be stored so they will not contaminate food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-service or single-use articles by spacing or partitioning.
- Toilet rooms and rooms specifically designed to house electrical panels must not be used for food or food equipment storage.

9. Lighting:

Adequate lighting must be provided in food establishments.

10. Garbage and Refuse Disposal:

- All garbage and refuse are required to be disposed of in a sanitary manner.
- Leak-proof trash containers with tight fitting lids are required.
- Dumpsters must be in good repair with proper drain plugs installed and lids and doors kept closed.
- Dumpsters, compactors, and grease containers must be placed on non-absorbent surfaces such as a concrete pad or machine laid asphalt.
- Liquid waste from cleaning or garbage must be disposed of in a manner as to not create a sanitary nuisance.

11. Premises:

- Outside walking areas and driving surfaces must be adequately graded to prevent pooling of water. Dust must be minimized.
- Grass and other vegetation must be kept mowed and maintained to prevent the harborage of rodents.
- Doors that open to the exterior must be self-closing. Roll type doors must be kept in good repair and be kept closed except when deliveries are being received.

SPECIAL NOTES FOR PREPACKAGED FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS:

- The establishment can sell only prepackaged foods.
- There cannot be any type of fountain drink machines or coffee/tea service in these establishments.
- The establishment cannot bag ice onsite.
- The establishment cannot have any type of food/beverage service or preparation.
- "TCS" means Time/Temperature Controlled for Safety. This includes cold-held food such as milk, butter, sliced deli meats, and most frozen foods as well as hot-held food such as hot dogs, pizza, and breakfast sandwiches.
- "Shelf-stable" food (sometimes called ambient food) is food that can be safely stored at room temperature. Foods refrigerated for quality such as whole fresh produce or bottled water are considered shelf-stable/non-TCS.