

HOW TO OPEN A FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

(RFPHOW 08/2002)

1. Complete the plan review questionnaire.
2. Submit the questionnaire along with a **detailed, scale-drawn, floor plan** of your establishment and a site plan to the sanitarian in your parish (see **Contacts for Plan Submission**). While preferred, the floor and site plan do not have to be drawn by a professional, but they should be **neat** and **legible**. **All equipment is to be labeled**. A separate schedule is needed for the equipment listing and for the plumbing. An interior finish schedule is also required. Example: The floor is commercial grade tile. The walls are finished with white fiberglass wallboard, etc.
3. It is our goal to review your plan as quickly as possible, but several factors can lengthen the process:
 - The questionnaire is not completed or improperly completed;
 - The drawing is not detailed, neat and legible;
 - Incorrect phone numbers of owners, responsible agents or other contacts;
 - Work loads/priorities within the office.
4. The plan will be reviewed for compliance with the applicable parts of Title 51, Public Health Sanitary Code. The Code can be viewed at www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices?ID=206
 - If approved, you will receive a plan approval letter, which can be provided to other agencies as required. This letter will indicate that you have consulted with your local sanitarian and your written plan has been approved. This is **not a permit to operate**.
 - If your plan is not approved, the indicated agent will be notified in writing and the plans must be corrected before a plan approval will be issued.
5. If there are **any** changes in the written plan that was submitted to this office, you are required to notify the plan reviewer **PRIOR** to implementing these changes. Changes made without approval may cost you time and money, which can delay the opening of your establishment.
6. After the plans have been approved, if you would like to schedule a preliminary inspection, please contact the sanitarian in your parish (See **Contacts for Plan Submission**). This can be requested any time before the final permitting inspection is conducted.
7. A final permitting inspection will be conducted when construction is complete and all equipment is in place and functioning. (This includes refrigeration, freezers, dishmachines, chemicals used in cleaning and sanitizing, hot water, etc.) It is not necessary for the food products to be present at the time of the final permitting inspection. You may be required to show final inspections by the plumbing, fire, and building departments as required in your parish.
8. To schedule a final permitting inspection, you should call at least 5 working days before your anticipated opening date.
9. If, after the final permitting inspection, all requirements have been met, a State Health Department Permit to Operate will be issued. Permit fees, payable by check or money order only, will be collected at this time, except for grocery establishments, whose fees are based on a sliding scale according to revenue. Fee information may be obtained from the plan reviewer at the local sanitarian services office or see **Retail Food Permit Fee Schedule** on our web site.

10. As of July 1st, 2002, all affected restaurant/deli/kitchen type establishments will be required to have the owner or a designated employee obtain a state food safety certificate within 60 days of permitting. A list of course providers and an application for the state certificate may be obtained when submitting plans or at our web site.

11. The following plans should also be submitted to the **OPH State Engineering Department** for review:

- State Projects
- Jails
- Schools
- Institutions
- Hospitals
- Public Swimming Pools
- Public Water Systems greater than 3,000 gallons per day
- Sewage Facilities greater than 3,000 gallons per day

OPH Engineering, after reviewing the plans, shall notify the builder, owner or developer in writing that the plans are approved and then forward them to the Parish Health Unit.

12. Submitted plans will be kept at the local Parish Health Unit for three (3) years and destroyed after this time if not claimed by an agent of the establishment.