

Instructions for New Food Operators in Lancaster County



**Environmental Public Health Division
Food Safety Program
3140 N Street
Lincoln, NE 68510
402-441-6280**

Instructions for New Food Operators

The following information is provided to you to help ensure a better understanding of the law and standards as they apply to food service establishments. This list is intended to be a summary, it is **not** the complete ordinance or standards.

A building permit from the City of Lincoln Building and Safety Department (441-7521) is required for new establishments and in some cases for remodeling. Even if no permit for remodeling is needed, plans should be reviewed and approved by a LLCHD Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) prior to construction to assure that requirements are adequately met. If you have any questions, please call our office at 441-6280.

Permits and Inspections

1. Any person that operates a food establishment within Lincoln or its 3-mile limit must have a valid Food Establishment Operating Permit, Lincoln Municipal Code 8.20 *Lincoln Food Code*.
2. Please notify the Health Department at least two working days before the planned opening to allow for ample time for processing and scheduling the initial inspection.
3. In most cases, both City and State applications and initial fees are required. The EHS will provide the application(s) to the owner/operators or a designated representative at the time of the initial inspection. The permit fee(s), must be paid, preferably by check, at the time of the initial inspection.
4. Foodhandler permits are required for all employees, food preparers, dishwashers and bus people who work in food service establishments in Lincoln and within three miles of the City limits. Every food establishment must have at least one employee who has a current Level IV Food Manager Permit. The permitted Food Manager does not have to be on-site at all times; however, at least one employee on duty must have a current Level III or Level IV Food Manager Permit. For information or a class schedule, contact the Food Safety Program Secretary at 441-6280.
5. For questions regarding occupancy, permits, building permits and zoning requirements, contact the Building and Safety Department at 441-7521.
6. For fire suppression requirements and fire safety questions, contact the Bureau of Fire Prevention at 441-7791.

Other important phone numbers:

Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Dairies and Foods	471-2536
Nebraska Liquor Control Commission	471-2571
Nebraska Department of Revenue	471-2971

Personnel

1. No person while infected with a disease in communicable form that can be transmitted by food or who is a carrier of organisms that cause such a disease or while afflicted with a boil, an infected wound, shall work in a food service establishment in any capacity in which there is a likelihood of such person with pathogenic organisms transmitting disease to other persons.

2. The outer clothing of all employees shall be clean and foodhandlers shall use effective hair restraints to prevent the contamination of food or food contact surfaces. Hair shall be restrained through the use of a hair net, cap, scarf and by tying shoulder length or longer hair behind the shoulders.
3. Employees may consume food or drink only in designated areas to prevent the contamination of food or equipment.
4. Employees shall not use tobacco while engaged in food preparation or service, nor while in areas used for equipment or utensil-washing or for food preparation.
5. Employees shall thoroughly wash their hands and the exposed portions of their arms with soap and warm water before starting work, during work as often as is necessary to keep them clean, and after smoking, eating, drinking, using the toilet or anytime foodhandling activities are interrupted. Employees shall keep fingernails clean and trimmed. Gloves or hand sanitizer may be used, but shall not substitute for hand washing. Employees wearing false fingernails or nail polish must wear gloves when handling exposed food.

Food Protection

1. Food shall be obtained from approved sources and bear essential labeling information.
2. Food shall be protected from contamination while being stored, prepared, displayed, served or transported. Potentially hazardous foods held at a temperature of 41°F or below shall be consumed within seven calendar days. Such foods held at 41°F - 45°F shall be consumed within four calendar days. Potentially hazardous held hot shall be at a temperature of 135°F or higher. (Potentially hazardous foods shall include any food that consists in whole or in part, of milk, or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, edible Crustacea, raw seed sprouts, cooked vegetables or other ingredients and which is in a form capable of supporting rapid and progressive growth of infectious and toxigenic microorganisms.)
3. Some minimum cooking temperatures:

Poultry and stuffed meats	165°F
Ground beef, ground pork and eggs to be held	155°F
Pork roast	145°F
Beef, fish, lamb and cooked to order eggs	145°F
Rare roast beef	130°F

*165°F if cooked in a microwave, let stand 2 minutes
4. Potentially hazardous foods that have been cooked and then refrigerated shall be reheated within two hours to at least 165°F before serving.
5. A metal-stemmed product thermometer, accurate within ±2°F, and with a temperature range appropriate for the food being measured, shall be provided and used to check product temperature during the cooking, holding, cooling and reheating processes.
6. Potentially hazardous food shall be thawed by one of the following means:
 - ❖ In a refrigerated unit not to exceed 45°F and consumed within four calendar days.
 - ❖ Under potable running water of a temperature of 70°F or below.
 - ❖ In a microwave even as part of the continuous cooking process.
 - ❖ As part of the conventional cooking process.

Potentially hazardous foods shall not be thawed at room temperature.

7. Food at risk of contamination shall be stored at least six inches off the floor.
8. All refrigerated and hot food holding facilities storing potentially hazardous food shall be provided with numerically scaled indicating thermometers, accurate at $\pm 3^{\circ}\text{F}$, and located to be easily viewed.

Food Equipment and Utensils

1. Equipment and utensils used for preparation shall be smooth, easily cleanable, corrosion resistant, non-absorbent and in good repair.
2. All equipment, and the installation of such, must meet NSF standards or equivalent.
3. Floor mounted equipment such as stoves, grill and fryers shall be raised at least six inches off the floor for easy cleaning. LLCHD recommends that cooking equipment that utilizes natural gas be equipped with flexible lines that allow the equipment to be pulled away from the walls for easy cleaning.
4. Equipment shall not be located under exposed or unprotected sewer lines or water lines, open stairwells or other sources of contamination.

Warewashing

1. Tableware and kitchenware shall be washed, rinsed, sanitized and air-dried after each use.
2. Manual dish washing utilizing a three compartment sink with drain boards shall be conducted as follows:
 - ❖ Sinks shall be cleaned prior to use.
 - ❖ Equipment and utensils shall be flushed or scraped to remove gross food particles prior to being washed.
 - ❖ Equipment and utensils shall be thoroughly washed in the first compartment with a hot detergent solution at a temperature of 110°F or higher.
 - ❖ Equipment and utensils shall be rinsed free of detergent and abrasives with clean water in the second compartment.
 - ❖ Equipment and utensils shall be sanitized in the third compartment.
 - ❖ Equipment and utensils shall be placed on the drain board and thoroughly air dried. The use of towels for drying equipment or utensils is prohibited.
 - ❖ A temperature measuring device shall be readily available to frequently measure the washing and sanitizing temperatures.
3. Equipment and utensils shall be sanitized in the third sink by one of the following methods:
 - ❖ Immersion for at least 30 seconds in hot water of at least 171°F .
 - ❖ Immersion for at least 10 seconds in a solution containing 50 parts per million (ppm), and not more than 200 ppm of chlorine at a temperature between 75°F and 120°F .
 - ❖ Immersion for at least 30 seconds in a solution containing 200 ppm of quaternary ammonium compound at a temperature of at least 75°F .
 - ❖ Immersion for at least 30 seconds in a solution containing 12.5 ppm to 25 ppm of available iodine at a minimum temperature of 75°F .
 - ❖ Immersions for at least 30 seconds in any other approved chemical sanitizing agent.
4. Mechanical dish washing shall be conducted according to the manufacturer's specifications.
5. A sanitizer test kit shall be available at all times, and shall be used frequently to check the strength of the sanitizer.
6. Wiping cloths shall be stored in a sanitizing solution between uses. The bucket shall be clearly labeled **sanitizer**. For food contact surfaces, it is recommended that a red bucket be used and the word **sanitizer** be written in black letters. Detergents, cleaners and other chemicals shall not be added to the wiping cloth sanitizing solution.

Plumbing

1. Water must come from an approved source.
2. Devices shall be installed to protect against backflow and back siphonage at all fixtures and equipment where an air gap at least twice the diameter of the water supply inlet is not provided between the water supply inlet and the fixture's flood level rim. A hose shall not be attached to a faucet unless a backflow prevention device is installed.
3. At least one utility sink or curbed cleaning facility with a floor drain shall be provided and used for the cleaning of mops or similar wet floor cleaning tools and for the disposal of mop water or similar liquid wastes. The use of lavatories, utensil-washing or equipment-washing or food preparation sinks for this purpose is prohibited.
4. Floor drains/floor sinks must be installed whenever equipment, such as ice bins and drink machines, discharge liquid condensate. This equipment shall be drained to the sanitary sewer system.
5. All plumbing fixtures must be in good repair with no leaks and all water lines must meet the specification of the Plumbing Code.
6. Ice bins and equipment in which food is held may not be connected directly to the sewer lines. An air gap is required.

Lavatories

1. Hand washing facilities shall be conveniently located to allow use by employees in food preparation, warewashing and service areas. Hand washing facilities shall also be located in or immediately adjacent to toilet rooms or vestibules. Water temperature must be at least 100°F.
2. Hand-cleansing soap, dispensed sanitary towels or heated air hand-drying devices, and a waste receptacle shall be conveniently located near each hand washing facility.
3. Sink compartments used for food preparation or for warewashing shall not be used for hand washing.

Toilet Facilities

1. Restroom doors must be equipped with self closing devices.
2. A covered waste container must be supplied in all women's restrooms.
3. Contact the Building and Safety Department, Plumbing Inspector at 441-7525 for information regarding the number of restrooms required in your facility.

Floors

1. Floors must be constructed of a smooth, durable material that is impervious to water and grease. Acceptable examples are ceramic tile, durable grades of linoleum, terrazzo or sealed concrete.
2. The junctures between walls and floors shall be covered and sealed.
3. Carpeting is prohibited in food preparation, equipment-washing and utensil-washing areas where it would be exposed to large amounts of grease and water; in food storage areas; and in toilet rooms where urinals and toilet fixtures are located.

Walls and Ceilings

1. Walls and ceilings must be kept clean and in good repair.
2. The walls, wall coverings and ceilings of walk-in refrigerating units, food preparation areas, equipment washing and utensil washing areas, toilet rooms and vestibules shall be light colored, smooth, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable.
3. Walls that are exposed to sink splash must be covered with ceramic tile or FRP panel.
4. Stainless steel walls are recommended behind grills and equipment that generate grease and high temperatures.
5. The ceiling tile above coolers, food prep areas, warewashing areas and toilet rooms must be washable.

General Information

1. Light fixtures must be properly shielded
2. All rooms shall have sufficient ventilation to keep them free of excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke and fumes.
3. A self-extinguishing fire system may be required. For more information, contact the Bureau of Fire Prevention at 441-7791.
4. Openings to the outside shall be effectively protected against the entrance of insects and rodents.
5. Pesticides and cleaners shall be stored away from food preparation, food storage and utensil storage areas. Only pesticides which are approved for use in food service establishments can be used. Be sure to check the label and use according to instructions.

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