

# **Starting A Food Business - Where To Begin**

This guide is designed to assist you and to answer many of the questions you may have for opening a food business in Greene County, Ohio. The process of planning, designing and opening a new food business can be challenging and seem overwhelming. This guide is designed to help you through that process. Having a suitable facility design and understanding the plan review submission process in the beginning can help you to start off on the right foot. Our mission is to assist you in achieving your goal of creating and opening a successful food business.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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**Greene County**



## GREETINGS!

Our goal is to help you have a successful business! This guide has been developed by Greene County Public Health (GCPH) to assist you in achieving that goal. The food safety program in Greene County is responsible for licensing and inspecting all facilities that sell food. Examples are: restaurants, grocery stores, school cafeterias, daycares, nursing homes, festivals, fairs, mobile food operations, bakeries, vending machines selling perishable foods, and temporary events. These types of operations are inspected on a frequent basis throughout the year.

## WHAT WE DO

- Review plans for all food service, retail food establishments and mobile food operations.
- License all food service, retail food establishments and mobile food operations.
- Inspect all licensed food restaurants, grocery stores, mobile food operations and temporary events.
- Respond to / investigate food-related consumer complaints and foodborne illnesses/outbreaks.
- Provide PIC Certification and ServSafe® Manager Certification food safety training to the food industry and the public, focusing on food safety.
- Inspect carnivals, fairs, festivals, chili cook-offs, farms and farmers markets.
- Provide technical guidance and assistance to the public interested in opening a food operation.

The food safety program's primary goal is to protect the community against foodborne illnesses caused by poor food handling practices and unsafe food products. Trained Sanitarians help identify issues up front during the plan review process thereby providing keys to success that will assist you in operating your food business. GCPH can also provide important food safety training for you and your employees to help you identify and prevent those practices that can lead to potential foodborne illnesses. Working integrally as a team, together, we can strive toward the common goal of you owning and operating a thriving and successful food business.

We recognize that the myriad of laws, rules and regulations can be confusing and overwhelming. When do I need a license? What is a cottage food and do I need a license? What must be on my food package labels? What foods are exempt from licensure? What if I have a home bakers license? Where can I find this information on your website? What other governmental agencies do I need to contact? Let our trained Sanitarians assist you with your questions and concerns. We are here to assist you!!

*Greene County Public Health  
provides services throughout Greene County!*



## CONTACT INFORMATION:

During the process of building your business you will likely need to contact several regulatory agencies. We have provided you with key contact information for some of those agencies who may be instrumental in assisting you toward your goal of building your food business. You probably will not need to contact every agency, however some key contact information is provided for you to ensure that all appropriate steps are taken and that the necessary permits are received. *Please note that one of your first contacts should be your local zoning official to ensure you can operate your food business in your desired location.*

Contacting the agencies below will help keep your project on track and on time. Please remember **ALL** necessary permits must be obtained **BEFORE** getting a food license. Check our website at [www.gcph.info](http://www.gcph.info).

### KEY AGENCY CONTACTS

OFFICE	SERVICE	CONTACT INFORMATION
Greene County Public Health 360 Wilson Dr. Xenia, OH 45385	Plan Review and Inspections	(937) 374-5607 / (937) 374-5600 bsigman@greenecophoh.gov
	Plumbing Plan Review and Inspections	(937) 374-5661 / (937) 374-5600 skent@greenecophoh.gov
Greene County Building Department 667 Dayton-Xenia Rd. Xenia, OH 45385	General Information HVAC / REF Inspections Electrical Inspections Structural Inspections	937-562-7420 bldgweb@co.greene.oh.us
City of Fairborn Building Department 414 West Hebble Ave. Fairborn, OH 45324	General Information HVAC / REF Inspections Electrical Inspections Structural Inspections	<i>National Inspection Corp.</i> 937-433-4642 plans@natinspect.com
Village of Yellow Springs Building Dept. 100 Dayton Street Yellow Springs, OH 45387	General Information HVAC / REF Inspections Electrical Inspections Structural Inspections	<i>National Inspection Corp.</i> 937-433-4642 plans@natinspect.com
Department of Development	Liaison w/County Agencies	937-562-5007
Ohio Department of Commerce/ Division of Industrial Compliance and Labor	Ohio Board of Building Standards	P: (614) 644-2223 F: (614) 644-2618 <a href="http://www.com.ohio.gov/dico/bbs/">www.com.ohio.gov/dico/bbs/</a>
Ohio Department of Commerce/ Division of Liquor Control	Liquor License	614-644-2360 <a href="http://com.ohio.gov/liqr/">com.ohio.gov/liqr/</a>
Ohio Department of Taxation	Vendor's License Apply On-Line	1-888-405-4089 <a href="http://tax.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/tax/business">tax.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/tax/business</a>
Ohio Department of Agriculture	Licenses: wholesaling operations, home bakeries	614-728-6250 <a href="http://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/home/">agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/home/</a>



# WHERE TO BEGIN

Nearly every new or significantly altered facility serving / selling food or beverages in Greene County must submit plans to GCPH before a license can be issued. This includes restaurants, grocery/convenience stores, pizza establishments, food mobile units, festival booths, micro-markets and vending machines, to mention a few. A Sanitarian from Environmental Health Services can assist you with any questions you may have. Your plans will be reviewed in order to ensure that the equipment, facilities, and design will be adequate for the food items to be served and sold at your facility.

This guide will help you to determine **when** you need to submit plans, **who** you need to get in contact with, and **what** to expect as far as the process and timeline.

## PLANNING AHEAD

### What is required in my facility?

Every business is unique. What will be specifically required in your facility will be based on your menu. You must ensure that you have the space and equipment needed to store, prepare and serve those foods safely. You must take into consideration not only food storage needs, but also all other items necessary for you to operate your food business such as paper goods, multi-use kitchenware items, and dry goods. Many retail stores will not need the extent of facilities and equipment that a restaurant would need, just as small operations may not need as much equipment that a larger operation would need.

### EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED (and other items)

**HAND WASHING SINKS:** All facilities are required to have adequate employee hand washing sinks. These sinks must be conveniently located in each food preparation serving area, bar, and dishwashing areas. Each hand washing sink must be equipped with soap and disposable towels or hand dryers and signs reminding employees to wash their hands. Convenient location means that the sinks are accessible and visible from any food area. The standard that GCPH follows is that no hand sink shall be located greater than **20-feet** from any of these areas.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Each sink described in this section can only be used for its designated purpose (hand washing, dumping, dishwashing, food prep, and mop sink). A hand sink may be used for hand washing purposes **only**. In areas such as bars and wait stations where waste liquids will be required to be dumped, then a dedicated dump sink will likely be required. Dual sinks are **not** permitted.

**COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT:** All equipment used in your food operation must be commercial-grade and must be approved by an accredited testing agency (e.g. - NSF, ETL, CSA, EU, CE or UL sanitation). No household-use only equipment is permitted. Casters will be required on larger equipment if it is not elevated on legs or if it is not permanently affixed to the floor and/or wall (caulked) with space to allow for ease in cleaning. Gas equipment on casters will be required to have safety chains attached to the wall and piece of equipment, as well as quick disconnects for the gas lines.



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Check the label on the equipment or request a specification (cut) sheet from the vendor **before** purchasing. Request casters for larger pieces (coolers, ranges, ovens) to make them easier to move for cleaning purposes. **Check with GCPH before purchase if uncertain.**

**DRY STORAGE SPACE:** Adequate space must be planned for the storage of food, dry goods (plates, to go items, cups, napkins), multi-use kitchenware (pots, pans, utensils) and equipment. Ensure that there are designated locations for bulk foods, cans, and other items. All food must be stored at least 6" off the floor, both in walk-in coolers and freezers and in dry storage areas. Raw wood shelving and bare metal shelving is not acceptable. Look for wire racks and food-grade shelving that is smooth and easily cleanable, durable, and non-absorbent.



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Plan ahead and think about how much space you will need to allow for the proper air drying of all your multi-use items vs. the final storage of those sanitized items. GCPH experience has shown that facilities that do not plan ahead for air drying vs. final storage of such items leads to often cited violations once the food business is open and operating. You will likely need dedicated air drying shelving which is separate from dedicated final storage shelving.
- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Bins for bulk food items (e.g. - flour, rice, sugar) must be made of food-grade material and marked (labeled) with the type of food inside. Trash cans and non-food grade containers cannot be used for the storage of bulk foods.

**CHEMICAL STORAGE:** Chemicals must be stored below and/or away from food, food items, equipment and utensils to prevent contamination of these items. Chemicals cannot be stored above the dish machine, warewashing sink or generally on the floor.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Consider installing designated chemical storage shelving in your mop sink area or at some other location away from all food and food-related items. A dedicated chemical storage cabinet may also provide a solution to your chemical storage dilemma.



**EMPLOYEE AREAS:** There must be lockers, shelving or a specific designated areas provided **only** for employee's belongings. Personal belongings such as coats, purses, cigarettes, cell phones, etc., cannot be kept or stored in food or warewashing areas.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** The designated employee area is also a great location for the storage of employee beverage cups and/or food. Open drinking cups are not permitted in food preparation, cooking, serving or warewashing areas. Plan ahead for the storage of all such employee items.



**MOP SINK:** All facilities are required to install a floor-mounted mop sink (also referred to a utility sink or a service sink). Utility sinks on legs or “laundry trays” are not permitted. This sink is dedicated for the cleaning of mops, tools, and disposal of mop water. The mop sink must include a floor drain and a faucet with hot and cold running potable water. The mop sink area should also include hooks or some other means by which to hang your mops to allow them to air dry.



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** A curbed sink provides an easier means to dump mop water and is a good storage location for the mop bucket when not in use. Make sure you seal all gaps with silicone caulk where the mop sink joins the floor and walls. Also make sure you have a non-absorbent wall material around the mop sink to prevent wall damage due to water splash.

**LIGHTING:** Lighting must be sufficient in all food preparation, cooking, serving areas, walk-in units, dry storage areas, warewashing areas, hand washing sinks, and restrooms. This is to allow for safe working conditions, prevent eye fatigue and facilitate cleaning. The requirements for lighting are as follows:

**50 foot-candles:** Cooking / food prep areas, on all surfaces where employee safety is a factor (e.g. - knives, slicers, grinders, saws).

**20 foot-candles:** Customer self-service (e.g. - buffets/salad bars), where fresh produce / packaged foods are sold for consumption, hand washing sinks, dishwashing, utensil storage and toilet rooms (as measured 30-inches off the floor).

**10 foot-candles:** Walk-in coolers / freezers (as measured 30-inches off the floor), dry storage areas and in other areas / rooms during periods of cleaning.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Your submitted plans need to include a lighting plan and it must include: (1) type of fixtures, (2) location of fixtures, and (3) if the fixtures are shielded or contain shatterproof light bulbs to protect food and food contact surfaces.
- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** GCPH highly recommends a minimum of **40 foot-candles** of light in all walk-in coolers / freezers in order to provide sufficient illumination for cleaning after the units are filled with food items. Should this be an issue during your pre-licensing inspection, then you will likely be required to install additional light fixtures. LED fixtures are generally best for cold environments such as walk-ins.

**SMOOTH AND EASILY CLEANABLE SURFACES:** All floors, walls and ceilings in food areas (service, storage, preparation), warewashing areas and restrooms must be smooth and easily cleanable. Carpeting is ***not*** acceptable in food prep. areas, walk-in units, warewashing areas, toilet rooms, refuse storage rooms, or other areas where the floor is subject to moisture.

Acceptable surfaces which are commonly used:

**Floors:** Quarry tile, ceramic tile, vinyl composition tile, sealed concrete, poured epoxy

**Walls:** FRP / melamine board, stainless steel, painted drywall, painted/sealed concrete block

**Ceilings:** Vinyl-faced acoustical tiles (drop ceilings), painted drywall

**Base:** Rubber cove base, tile





- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Every facility must submit a finish schedule with your documents for plan review for each room, including the floors, walls, ceilings, and coved wall/juncture bases. If ceiling tiles are proposed, note that vinyl-faced ceiling tiles must be installed in all food preparation rooms, restrooms, and warewashing areas.

***Based upon your menu and equipment that is used, many facilities will also need:***

**FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM:** If a ventilation hood is required because of the use of grease-producing equipment (e.g.—fryers, grills, charbroiler), a Type I Hood with fire suppression is required. The fire suppression system acts like a fire extinguisher in case of a grease or cooking fire. If a hood is required for heat, condensation, or gas only, a Type II Hood might be acceptable.



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Verify the type of hood you will be required to install through the Building Department (*see contact information located on page 3 of this guide*).

**VENTILATION HOODS:** A ventilation hood is required at a grill line, where other cooking equipment may be installed, and at warewashing areas using a high temperature dish machine. The hoods are designed to prevent the accumulation of grease, heat, condensation, smoke, and vapors.

Installation of a hood requires a permit and inspections. Contact the Building Department (*see contact information located on page 3 of this guide*) with questions about ventilation requirements, hood types, permits for installation, and required inspections.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Ventilation is always required for cooking equipment that produces grease-laden vapors. Also, please note that a minimum of **50 foot-candles** of light will be required on all cooking surfaces.
- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Remember to include a lighting plan for your hoods with your submitted plans. Note that a minimum of **50 foot-candles** of light is required on all cooking surfaces.

**WAREWASHING SINKS:** A 3-compartment sink designated for warewashing is required in any operation using multi-use kitchenware items. The sink must be approved by an accredited testing agency (e.g. - NSF, ETL, CSA, EU, CE or commercial UL), should have curved interior edges and 3 compartments for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing. The sink should have 2 drainboards — one for the collection of dirty dishes and utensils and the other to allow for air drying of these multi-use items. See the example on page 16. ***Contact GCPH for any proposed deviations.***



Dishwashers are **optional** but a 3-compartment sink is **required** in a facility using multi-use kitchenware items. Each compartment of this sink must be large enough to submerge at least half of the largest piece of equipment you have (e.g. - a small bar sink would be not acceptable for washing large pots, pans, and sheet trays).



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Note that when warewashing sinks are installed adjacent to walls, any gaps less than 1/4-inches in width must be sealed using silicone caulk. Any gaps greater than 1/4-inches in width must be sealed using stainless steel trim pieces and then the remaining gaps must be sealed using silicone caulk.
- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Try a 4-compartment sink to allow for pre-soaking of your kitchenware items.

**FOOD PROCESSING SINK (Vegetable Sink):** The Ohio Food Code does not permit food processing / vegetable washing to be performed in a hand washing sink. A separate, dedicated sink is required for the processing of produce and other foods. Processing can include: washing, soaking, thawing and using ice baths for cooling hot foods. If a food processing sink is not available, then your food business will likely be limited to using only pre-washed produce.

A food processing sink must be indirectly connected to the sanitary waste system (e.g. an indirect connection to a floor drain with an **air gap**). This is to prevent backflow conditions which could cause sewage to backup into the food processing sink. If a disposer will be needed, consult with the Health District's Plumbing Inspectors to ensure you will be in compliance with all plumbing regulations.

- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Installing a food processing sink equipped with a drainboard will provide you with a food preparation surface for items that are washed in the sink.

**GREASE INTERCEPTOR (Grease Trap):** A grease trap is a device that is attached to sinks and/or drains to collect fats, oils and grease in order to prevent the accumulation of these items in our sanitary sewer system. Grease traps are connected to warewashing sinks, dish machines and some floor drains (e.g. - at wok lines). Contact the Health District's Plumbing Inspectors for specific questions regarding the size and installation requirements for your grease interceptor (*see contact information located on page 3 of this guide*).



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** A grease trap can be a costly installation expense and is a requirement for nearly all food businesses operating in Greene County. Make sure you research and budget this item into your business plan. Your plumber and the Health District's Plumbing Inspector can assist you with this part of your project.
- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Grease traps must be routinely and regularly cleaned to keep them working properly. An indoor grease trap may need to be cleaned monthly/quarterly, whereas a larger outdoor unit may only need cleaning once or twice per year. A certification form must be completed quarterly by the food operation or a representative of the grease trap cleaning company. The public works agencies operating within the various municipalities of Greene County are a valuable resource to answer questions regarding grease trap cleaning / reporting requirements, permissible discharges, and so on. You are strongly encouraged to contact the public works office (Sanitary Engineering) for the municipality within which you are planning to open your business to ensure you will be in compliance with their rules and regulations.





## Submitting your plans

A Food Service & Retail Food Establishment Plan Review Application Packet must be completed and returned to Greene County Public Health with your plans. A checklist is provided for you in that packet to help remind you of everything that must be included in your submittal package to help ensure a smoother review of your plans. You can find the plan review application packet, this document, and a food license application at: <https://www.greenecophoh.gov/environmental-health/food-safety/proposed-food-operations-review>.



- ✓ **HELPFUL TIP:** Please take the time to double check that your plan submittal package is complete and contains all of the required information. Incomplete plan submittal packages may result in the disapproval of your plans.

## Running your business with food safety in mind

Here are some important questions/information about how you will safely prepare food for your business. These will likely be asked during your pre-licensing and future Health District inspections:

### Employee Training...

- Do you have all of your key management/supervisor employees properly trained?
- What is your employee health policy? What do you do about a sick worker? How will you share this policy with your employees? Do you know when you must contact the Health District?
- Can you verify that every employee is aware of the foodborne illness reporting policy? (e.g. - verification sign-off sheets, HR computer records, back of name tags, etc.)
- Do you have a body fluid clean up “kit” and required written instructions? (*must be effective against Norovirus*)

### Services...

- Who will provide your waste pickup and how frequently will they pick up your waste?
- How will you handle grease waste and cleaning your grease interceptor?
- Do you have a certified pest control operator?
- Who will clean your hood system and/or fire suppression system? How often?
- Who will provide support and maintenance for your dishwasher and/or 3-compartment sink with a proper supply of soap and chemicals? Do you have the appropriate chemical test strips?
- Is your facility secure and is your food supply safe? Do you make sure to use only approved suppliers / vendors? Does your food come from approved sources?

### Facilities...

- Do you have enough hot water capacity for the busiest time of day?
- Do you have the storage space needed for dry goods (e.g. - food, paper goods)?
- Do you plan to expand the operation in the future and will you have sufficient space?



- Are the floors, walls and ceilings constructed with smooth and easily cleanable materials? Are these materials durable to withstand the daily “abuse” they will receive in a food business setting?
- Are your restrooms equipped with self-closing doors? Do you have closed receptacles in the ladies restroom stalls for the disposal of female sanitary products?

### Equipment...

- Do you have enough space in your coolers and freezers? Can you prevent overstocking and make certain to allow for proper air circulation?



- How will you keep all of your hot foods hot?
- How will you keep all of your cold foods cold?
- Do you have a food probe-stem thermometer to check food temperatures?
- Have you thought about how you will sanitize your thermometer prior to and during your checking of food temperatures?
- Have you purchased thermometers for all your coolers if the equipment does not have one already built into it?

### Plan for Easy Cleaning...

There are several things you should consider and can do to prevent the amount of future maintenance necessary for your facility and to provide ease in cleaning:

- Have you considered installing stainless steel on walls at the grill line, and behind / around all grease-producing equipment?
- Have you placed heavy equipment on casters so they can be moved easily? Is your gas-operated equipment equipped with quick disconnects and safety chains that are secured to the wall and to the equipment?
- Did you know that all cabinetry must be fully enclosed and sealed so there are no openings where they adjoin each other or the wall? All cuts must be fully sealed using trim pieces for gaps greater than 1/4-inches in width; gaps less than 1/4-inches in width may be silicone caulked. Did you know that escutcheons, rubber grommets, etc. are required at all penetration points throughout your food business and they must be sealed against the wall / ceiling / floor?

### Fixed Equipment...

- Is all your “fixed equipment” (means is not easily moveable) installed to allow for easy cleaning? Have you thought about **how** you are going to clean that equipment and all required surfaces?
- Is table-mounted equipment that is not easily moveable on legs or sealed to a table?
- Is all floor-mounted equipment (in kitchen areas) that is not easily moveable sealed to the floor or elevated on legs a minimum of 6-inches high?



### Processes...

- What will be your process for date marking ready-to-eat food products?
- How will you ensure that a “first in, first out” system is used for your food products?
- Do you have sufficient space to prevent cross-contamination between raw animal products (e.g. - beef, fish, chicken) and your ready-to-eat foods and leftover food products?
- How will your frozen foods be properly thawed? Do you have enough cooler space to allow for overnight thawing? Do you have a food processing sink to allow for food thawing?
- Can large amounts of leftover food be properly cooled with the equipment you have available? Do you have shallow pans, ice wands, or other methods to accomplish proper cooling?
- Do you have the proper equipment to allow for the reheating large amounts of previously cooled food products?
- How will you avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods? Will you use gloves, tongs, utensils, deli paper or some other means?
- Do you have sufficient space to allow for proper air drying of your multi-use kitchenware items? Do you have enough space to allow for the final storage of these sanitized items separate from where you are air drying them?

### **FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION**

Food facilities are licensed as a Risk Level I, II, III, or IV. Risk levels reflect the potential risk that a facility poses to public health and are based on the highest risk level activity the FSO/RFE performs. You may visit the following link to assess your potential risk level: <https://www.greenecophoh.gov/environmental-health/food-safety/food-services-inspection>.

Additionally, Rule 3717-1-02.4 requires that at least one employee that has supervisory and management responsibility and the authority to direct and control food preparation and service shall obtain the Manager Certification in Food Protection, for any Risk Level III and IV food operation.

**NOTE:** The Manager Certification in Food Protection course must be an Ohio-approved course as determined by the Ohio Department of Health. All Risk Class I – IV facilities must still have a Person-in-Charge (PIC) at all times of operation that has at least the PIC Manager Certification in food protection training (except at micro-markets).

GCPH teaches both the PIC and ServSafe Manager Certification classes. GCPH can serve all of your food training needs and is an ODH-approved provider for the required food training courses. Each course is designed to promote proper food handling procedures to prevent foodborne illness. Please visit the following link regarding class availability, class schedule, associated costs, course materials, etc.: <https://www.greenecophoh.gov/environmental-health/food-safety/education-and-training>.

**NOTE:** *A food business cannot operate without trained PICs present in the facility meeting these requirements. Certificates verifying and providing proof of training will be requested to be provided to the Health District during your inspection.*

The PICs must understand basic food concepts. This knowledge must be demonstrated by answering food-related questions posed during GCPH inspections correctly **and** by operating your food business in compliance with the Ohio Food Code.



## STEPS TO OPENING YOUR FOOD BUSINESS

GCPH reviews food business plans to make sure that the design and equipment you propose for your facility are adequate for the storage, preparation and service of various food items on your proposed menu or food list. As part of your plan submission to GCPH, you must complete the [Food Service & Retail Food Establishment Plan Review Application Packet](https://www.greenecophoh.gov/platform/cms/EH%20Gen%20Svcs/FSO-RFEs/Plan%20Review%20Application%202022.pdf), which is available at GCPH offices or you may obtain this document from our website at <https://www.greenecophoh.gov/platform/cms/EH%20Gen%20Svcs/FSO-RFEs/Plan%20Review%20Application%202022.pdf>. Plans are preferred to be submitted digitally and may be submitted to: [ehpermits@greenecophoh.gov](mailto:ehpermits@greenecophoh.gov).

### Step 1: PLAN REVIEW

#### Who must submit plans?

- ♦ **New Facilities:** New construction and food businesses that have never been license as a food operation in the past.
- ♦ **Remodeled or Altered Facilities:** Significant changes or alterations such as: installation of a walk-in cooler/freezer, remodeling the kitchen that alters the flow of food through the facility, installation of a new dishwasher, expanding your kitchen, or significant menu changes that requires installation of new equipment/alters food flow.
- ♦ **Change of Business:** Changes in layout of equipment (example: a new owner converts a bakery into a full service restaurant and grills/ovens are added to the kitchen); a food business that has been closed for more than 1-year, the business is purchased and is being placed back into operation as a food business.

*\*If you are unsure about whether a plan review is required, please contact GCPH.*

#### What is the fee?

Please contact GCPH or visit our website at <https://www.greenecophoh.gov> for the plan review fees for both commercial and non-commercial food businesses. *The proper plan review fee must be submitted with your application. (See page 17 of this document for the fee schedule).*

#### What is the process?

Upon receipt of your plans, application, all necessary drawings/documentation and payment, GCPH will review your plans. GCPH strives to complete your plans in a timely manner., however GCPH is permitted 30-days to review your plans.

Once your plan review has been completed, you will be notified in writing as to whether your plans have been approved / disapproved. If your plans have been disapproved, you must resubmit your plans and/or other required documentation addressing each of the items noted on your disapproval letter. If there are any questions about your plans or other changes that must be discussed, we will contact you in order to help keep the plan review process moving along as quickly as possible.

**NOTE:** *Any work completed prior to you receiving an approval letter from GCPH for your project is at your own risk.*

When your plans have been approved, you will receive a formal letter stating that your plans have been approved. We will mail this letter to the Plan Review Contact as provided in the submitted Plan Review Application Packet.



## Step 2: LICENSING

It is VERY important to remember that all building, plumbing and/or electrical permits must be secured **before** any construction work is started. Failure to do so could lead to significant delays in your project preventing you from opening your food business in a timely fashion.

After your plans have been approved and construction/remodel work has been completed, you will need to move to the next step of opening your food business: opening inspection and licensure. **Prior to** scheduling your opening inspection with GCPH, you must complete and receive all approval inspections from the Building Department, Fire Department and/or Plumbing Inspectors, as needed. Additionally, the Building Department must have issued either a final occupancy permit or at least a temporary occupancy permit that will allow the general public to occupy the business. *If the Building Department has not released the business to be occupied by the general public, then GCPH cannot perform your opening inspection and issue your food license.*

About **2 weeks** before requesting your final opening inspection, you must make application for a food service operation or retail food establishment license. The license fee for your food business is based on the Risk Class and size (square footage) of your business—this is established during your plan review (*see page 11 for a weblink that provides more information on Risk Levels*). Since license fees for each Risk Class typically change yearly, it is recommended you contact GCPH for the current fee schedule (*see page 17 of this document*). The food license will be brought with the Sanitarian that performs your pre-licensing inspection.

Prior to scheduling your opening inspection, you need to make sure your business is “ready” for this inspection. To assist you, please refer to the reference guide “**How do I know when I am ready for a FINAL INSPECTION?**” (*located on page 14*). Please note that no equipment, dry storage areas, or coolers, are permitted to be stocked with food until granted permission by the inspecting Sanitarian. All refrigerators and freezers must be operational and holding at proper temperatures at the time of your opening inspection.

During the opening inspection, the Sanitarian will evaluate your food business against the approved plans and any conditions noted in the approval letter. Items found to not be in compliance with the Ohio Food Code will be documented on an inspection report that will be left with you at the conclusion of the inspection. Should the list of deficiencies be determined to be too significant in their nature or too many in number to prevent issuance of your license, then all of those items must be corrected prior to your next inspection. A second opening inspection will then be required and those outstanding issues corrected before you can receive your food license.

Once all outstanding issues have been addressed, you will then be issued your food license. At this point, you are approved to operate your food business. Please note that the law requires that GCPH perform a 30-day inspection once you have opened for business. Typically this inspection is performed about 3-weeks after you have begun operation of your food business.

***License renewal is once a year and payment for license fees must be received by March 1st of every year. A 25% late fee is assessed for any application received or postmarked after March 1st.***



## How do I know when I am ready for a FINAL INSPECTION?

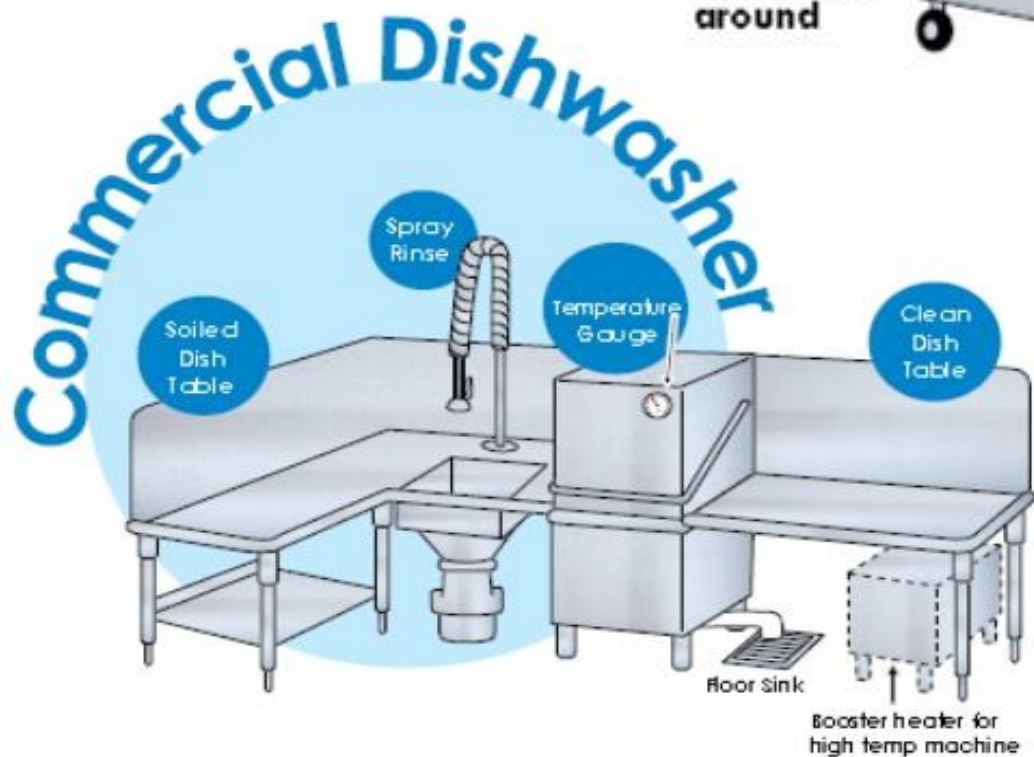
Have you completed all items on this checklist? If YES, then you are ready!! PLEASE use this checklist prior to contacting GCPH to schedule your final inspection. **NOTE:** Some items may be permitted to be addressed at the time of your first 30-day inspection after opening for business:

- ☐ I have read the “Starting a Food Business” guide to help design my facility based on my proposed menu items and food processes.
- ☐ The facility is constructed according to the submitted plans and conditions noted on the plan approval letter.
- ☐ I submitted plans, obtained permits and received final approval from the Plumbing Department.
- ☐ I have received final approval from the Fire Department.
- ☐ I submitted plans and received final approval from the Health District.
- ☐ Received final approval from the Building Department (Certificate of Occupancy / Temporary Certificate of Occupancy – ***must be permitted to allow the public to enter the structure***).
- ☐ All surfaces are clean and ready to use; facility is totally clean and free of construction debris/materials.
- ☐ All equipment is commercial-grade and installed according to the submitted plans.
- ☐ All refrigeration equip. is operating, holding at proper temperatures and supplied with thermometers.
- ☐ All hand sinks have soap, disposable towels (hand dryer, if using) and hand washing signs are posted.
- ☐ Hot and cold water is available at all sinks. Must have a minimum of 100° F hot water at all hand sinks.
- ☐ Sanitizer, test strips, thermometers readily available; an irreversible registering temperature indicator (e.g. – maximum registering thermometer, Thermolabels) at hot water mechanical warewashing areas.
- ☐ A probe stem food thermometer is available (must also provide thin-probe thermometer, as required).
- ☐ All restrooms are stocked with necessary supplies. A covered receptacle is in each stall of the women’s restroom for disposal of feminine hygiene products
- ☐ Dishmachine is functioning properly (if applicable). (Reference above re: irreversible temp. indicator).
- ☐ All cabinetry is fully enclosed and sealed.
- ☐ All gaps are fully sealed using caulking and/or trim pieces.
- ☐ All final finishes are smooth and easily cleanable. All bare wood is rendered non-absorbent.
- ☐ Escutcheons, rubber grommets, etc. are installed around pipes where they penetrate the wall and/or ceiling. The escutcheons must be flush against the wall/ceiling/floor and silicone caulked around them.
- ☐ A body fluid clean-up “kit” with written instructions is provided and available.
- ☐ Person-in-Charge (PIC) Certification in Food Protection Training for Risk Level I-IV facilities for all shifts; at least **one** Manager Certification in Food Protection Training with management responsibility for Risk Level III & IV facilities – make certificates available during inspection. ***These requirements may be permitted to be presented to the GCPH at your 30-day inspection after opening for business.***



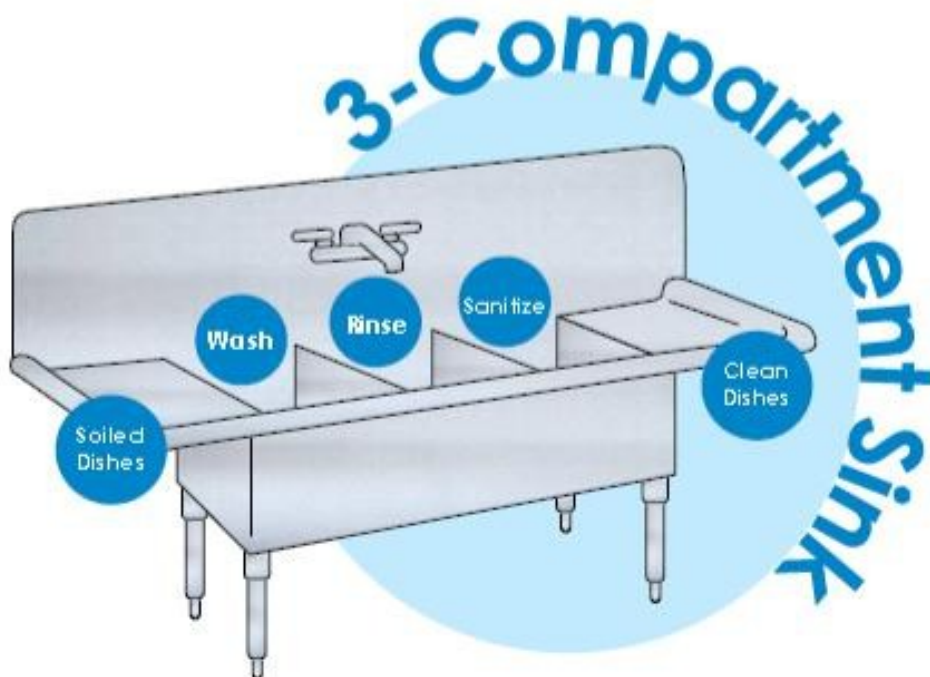


## Equipment Examples





## Equipment Examples (cont'd)...





## Fee Schedule (effective 01/01/26):

Please make all checks payable to the Greene County Public Health. Call 937-374-5607 to pay with a credit card over the phone (NOTE: there is a 4% convenience fee).

The **plan review fee** must be submitted with your application.

### PLAN REVIEW FEES

TYPE	FEE
Commercial	\$400.00

The **license fee** must be paid ~2 weeks prior to scheduling your pre-licensing inspection.

### LICENSE FEES

	FSO / RFE	
	<25,000 Square Feet	>25,000 Square Feet
<i>Risk Class I</i>	\$298.00	\$422.00
<i>Risk Class II</i>	\$333.00	\$442.00
<i>Risk Class III</i>	\$616.00	\$1508.00
<i>Risk Class IV</i>	\$775.00	\$1598.00

Rev. 1/26