



If you prepare and sell food from a push cart or a mobile unit like a food truck or trailer, you are required to have a **commercial caterer license** from the Health Department. This guide is a summary of the general requirements. You are required to follow the [Health Regulations for Food Service Establishments](#).

What's a Mobile Unit?

Mobile units include food trucks, vans, or enclosed trailers pulled by a vehicle. Mobile units:

- Are operated from the interior.
- Are self-contained and have minimal equipment outside the mobile unit, such as a single grill or smoker unit.
- Have no exterior refrigeration or storage.

What's a Push Cart?

Push carts include carts that are pushed by hand or moved by a trailer.

Push carts:

- Are operated from the exterior.
- Have limited supporting equipment next to the push cart. All food prep happens on the push cart.
- Are used for food items with little preparation, such as hot dogs.

General Requirements and Information

License	You must keep a commercial caterer annual license current even if you only operate seasonally.
Prep Kitchen	A separate commercial caterer license or home caterer license is required for space that is used as a prep kitchen.
Mobility	Mobile food establishments must be capable of being moved at any time. There can be no porches, steps, or other structures attached to the unit.
Registration	Mobile units must have a current DMV registration. Push carts may need a current DMV registration, depending on how they are transported.
Seating	Seasonal operations can have up to 16 outdoor seats.
Alcohol	The Vermont Department of Liquor & Lottery has separate requirements for selling alcohol.

Food Safety and Sanitation Requirements

Water and Wastewater

- **Mobile units** require 30 gallons of fresh water and 35 gallons of wastewater capacity.
- **Push carts** require 6 gallons of fresh water and 7 gallons of wastewater capacity.
- The onboard water supply must keep hot water between 110°F and 120°F.
- Connecting to an existing water or wastewater system may require a permit from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).
- If you fill your water tanks with water from a well, you must provide recent water test results showing an absence of Total Coliform and *E. coli* bacteria.

Sewage Disposal

- Greywater must be disposed of in a public sewage treatment plant or in an individual system operated according to local and/or state law.

Handwashing Facilities

- A dedicated handwash sink with hand soap, paper towels or hand-drying device, and a handwashing sign.

Dishwashing Facilities

- A three-bay sink for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment. For chemical sanitizing (use litmus paper test kit to check concentration):
 - Chlorine: 50 to 100 ppm
 - Quaternary ammonium: 200 to 400 ppm
 - Iodine: 12.5 to 25 ppm

Hot and Cold Holding

- Adequate storage and display facilities for foods that require temperature control, including:
 - Refrigerators at 41°F or colder, and hot holding units at 135°F or hotter.
 - Accurate thermometers for food storage units and food temperatures.

Food-Contact Equipment

- Made of proper materials with smooth, easily cleanable surfaces, and in good condition.
- Installed to allow access for cleaning or fitted with castors.

Non-Food Contact Equipment

- Made of proper materials with smooth, easily cleanable surfaces, and in good condition.
- Designed and installed to allow access for cleaning, fitted with castors, or sealed in place.

Floors, Walls, and Ceilings

- Made of proper materials with smooth, easily cleanable surfaces, in good condition and free of cracks, crevices, and other openings.

Lighting

- Adequate intensity in all areas.
- Protect with covers or sleeves with end caps, or use shatter-resistant bulbs.

Ventilation

- Must be adequate to control excessive heat, steam, condensation, vapors, obnoxious odors, smoke, and fumes.
- Must be cleaned and maintained to prevent contamination.

Concession Window

- Screening at the concession window is encouraged.

Toxic and Poisonous Materials and First Aid Supplies

- Must have proper labels and storage locations.

Other Resources

[Department of Health Commercial Caterer License Application](#)

[Food Truck Safety Checklist from the National Fire Protection Association](#)

Find this information sheet online:

