

Flathead City-County Health Department
Food Establishment Pre-opening Checklist

- All plumbing, fire and electrical inspections must be completed by the appropriate building authority.
- All refrigeration and freezer units must be on and at temperature (41°F or lower for refrigerators, 0°F for freezers). All units must have visible working thermometers.
- All steam tables, warmers, or other temperature regulating units must be on, at temperature, and setup as if they were ready to serve food. Have all inserts or hot pans in the units and water in at least one insert per unit. Hot hold units must be able to hold 135°F or higher.
- Have hot and cold running water at all sinks.
- Have soap and paper towel dispensers installed at each hand sink and stocked, as well as handwashing signage.
- Have a sanitizer bucket set up at the correct concentration. If you are using an automatic system, have it dispensing at the proper concentration.
- Have the appropriate test strips for the sanitizer you choose to use.
- Have your dishwasher ready and able to sanitize. If you have a chemical system, have the correct test strips available. If you have a 3 compartment sink, have it set up properly.
- Have all surfaces finished. This means floors, walls, ceilings, insides of walk-in units, cupboards, etcetera. There cannot be any raw wood or unfinished surface. Any sections of the walls, floors, ceilings or cupboards which have been cut away to accommodate plumbing, wiring, etcetera, must be tightly sealed to prevent pest entry and to aid cleanability.
- All floors, walls and ceilings in food prep areas or areas subject to high moisture must be non-absorbent.
- All lighting must be shielded or have shatter resistant bulbs.
- All hoods must be properly installed, inspected and serviced.
- Proper air gaps and backflow prevention must be in place where required.
- All equipment must be onsite and in place as per the approved floor plans.
- Restrooms must be fully equipped (self closing door).
- All construction activities must be completed, and all construction related equipment and debris removed from the premises.
- Have the employee illness policy and bodily fluid clean up procedures posted or available.
- Have a probe stem thermometer available.
- Have the certified food safety manager certificate available (if applicable)
- Have a check or money order made out to DPHHS for the license fee
- All conditions cited in the approval letter must be addressed.

You should set up as though you intend to serve your first customer at the end of the preopening inspection. You do not need food onsite, but all of the equipment must be working and ready, and all of your facility cleaned and sanitized for service.