



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Serving Crowley & Otero Counties

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OPENING A RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT IN OTERO/CROWLEY COUNTY

Opening a New Retail Food Establishment:

A retail food establishment license is required before operating any business that sells food to the public, including restaurants, catering operations, grocery stores, convenience stores, concession stands or food trucks. In order to obtain a license and before beginning construction, plans for your establishment must be submitted and approved by the Otero County Health Department.

Remodeling an Existing Retail Food Establishment:

If you are planning a remodel of your existing retail food establishment, or are planning on changing the menu or equipment, please contact the Health Department. A plan review for your facility may be required to ensure compliance with the Colorado Retail Food Regulations.

Licensing/Change in Ownership of a Retail Food Establishment:

If you are planning on purchasing an existing retail food establishment, please contact the Health Department to determine if a plan review is required. In order to open, you must first meet all of the requirements under the Colorado Retail Food Regulations. Additionally, retail food licenses are non-transferable. Please contact the Health Department if there is a change in ownership (i.e. different taxpayer or employer ID number than originally listed on the license).

The Health Department is here to help you from the beginning. Since compliance with all applicable regulations is necessary, it is much more cost effective for you to clearly understand what must be done and do it right the first time. The following information is provided to help you get started.

PLAN APPROVAL PROCESS

1. All of the following must be completed and received by the Health Department before your plans will be reviewed.
 - State of Colorado Retail Food Establishment Plan Review Application
 - Affidavit
 - Plan Review Application Fee- \$75.00
 - Commissary Agreement (Mobile Units Only)

Colorado Retail Food Regulations and other plan review documents may be picked up at the Health Department, or accessed online at <http://www.oterogov.com/index.php/health-department/environmental-services>

2. The review and approval of plans typically takes 2-3 weeks. Delays may occur with incomplete plans, or at seasonally busy times of the year. Only plans that show compliance with the Colorado Retail Food Regulations will be approved.
3. Notify the Health Department for a final pre-opening inspection at least two weeks prior to your planned opening. All construction and cleaning must be completed prior to the opening inspection. In addition, all equipment must be in place and functioning at the time of the opening inspection.

4. **The Colorado Retail Food Establishment License application and fee must be collected at or before the pre-opening inspection.** Fees vary based on seating or square footage. This license is renewed every year, and is good from January 1 through December 31. It is neither prorated nor transferable, and is paid to the Otero County Health Department. A separate license is required for each retail food establishment. **Please be advised that if the fee is paid using a check, you will not receive your license until the fee has been processed, which takes approximately 10-14 days. If paid in cash or money order, the processing time is much shorter. You may not open your establishment until the fee has been processed.**
5. An invoice for the actual time spent on review activities will be sent to you at a later date and won't exceed \$200. The Health Department charges \$22.00/hour for time spent reviewing and approving plans, which also includes the pre-opening inspection and real estate review.

LICENSING, FEES, AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- The Health Department may complete an initial on-site review of your facility before you submit plans, which is known as a real estate review. The cost of this service is \$75.00, and will be collected at the time of the review. If you submit a plan review application, the cost of the real estate review will be applied to the plan review application fee.
- Check with the Engineering Department, the Zoning Department, Plumbing Inspector, Electrical Inspector, and the Fire Department in your jurisdiction for additional regulations and fire codes. If you are remodeling or building a new facility and are in a zoned area within Otero County, contact the Otero County Engineering Department- (719) 383-3035. If the facility is in the town of La Junta, contact the City of La Junta- (719) 384-5991, Ext. 235. If the facility is in Crowley County, contact the Crowley County Engineering Department- (719) 267-5555, Ext. 2. Typically, the building department will require two copies of your plans.
- Some basic pieces of equipment you may be required to have are:
 - Three-compartment sink
 - Hand washing sink
 - Vegetable sink
 - Mop sink
 - Commercial stove/oven
 - Commercial refrigerator
 - Dry storage space
 - Ventilation Hoods
 - Grease traps
 - Indirect wastes
 - Other (as your business dictates)
- The number of toilet fixtures will limit the number of seats in your restaurant. If you serve alcohol, more fixtures are required. Restrooms must meet ADA handicap accessibility requirements.
- All equipment must be commercial, NSF approved or of comparable design. **NO HOME STYLE EQUIPMENT WILL BE APPROVED.**
- Cost of equipment varies widely and can be very expensive, new or used. You may want to start comparing equipment at restaurant and hotel supply businesses. (Check for good conditioned, NSF approved equipment)
- All public buildings are required to be ADA Handicapped Accessible. Pamphlets are available upon request at this department.
- You will be required to obtain a Colorado Department of Revenue tax number from the State of Colorado Department of Revenue You must have the tax number at the time of your pre-opening inspection. The application form can be accessed online at <http://www.oterogov.com/index.php/health-department/environmental-services>.
- Liquor licenses can be obtained from the Otero County Courthouse- (719) 384-7675. This license is needed only if alcohol is being sold in your establishment.
- Check with each town involved in your business for any necessary city sales tax licenses or other permits.