

Texas Food Establishment Regulations Summary

The document is a summary of the Texas Food Establishment Rules, outlining regulations and standards for food service establishments in Texas.

Texas Food Establishment Rules Overview

The Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) provide regulations for food service establishments in Texas to ensure public health and safety.

Purpose and Regulations of TFER

The TFER aims to implement the Texas Health and Safety Code regarding food service establishments.

- Implements Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 437.
- Adopts the FDA Food Code 2017 with specific exclusions.
- Texas law prevails in case of conflicts with the Food Code.

Definitions of Key Terms

The TFER defines various terms relevant to food establishments and safety.

- Defines terms like "food establishment," "adulterated food," and "mobile food unit."
- Clarifies distinctions between different types of food establishments, such as bed and breakfasts and cottage food operations.
- Includes definitions for regulatory authority and safe materials.

Management and Personnel Requirements

Establishments must adhere to specific management and personnel training standards.

- Certified food protection manager must be present during all hours of operation, except for low-risk establishments.
- All food employees must complete an accredited food handler training course within 30 days of employment.
- Signage must be posted to inform employees about reporting health symptoms.

Approved Sources for Exotic Game Animals

Exotic animals must meet specific sourcing and cooking standards.

- Exotic animals must be commercially raised and inspected under USDA or equivalent state programs.
- Cooking must comply with specific temperature and time requirements to ensure safety.

Specifications for Receiving Food Products

Food products must be received under strict temperature and quality standards.

- Grade A pasteurized milk and molluscan shellfish must be received at 7°C (45°F) or lower.
- Chicken eggs must meet U.S. Consumer Grade B standards.
- Shell stock must have legible source identification tags.

Buffet Notification Requirements

Establishments must inform consumers about self-service food areas.

- A card or sign must notify consumers to use clean tableware at self-service areas like buffets.

Donation of Foods Guidelines

Specific rules govern the donation of previously served foods.

- Previously served foods generally cannot be donated, with exceptions for packaged TCS foods and whole fruits.
- Unpackaged TCS foods can be donated if they meet temperature and contamination protection standards.
- Donated foods must be labeled with essential information and cannot exceed shelf life limits.

Water Quality Standards and Requirements

Water sources must comply with strict quality and safety standards.

- Public water systems must meet federal and state drinking water regulations.
- Nonpublic water systems must be sampled and tested according to specific guidelines.

Mobile Food Units Regulations

Mobile food units (MFUs) must adhere to specific operational and health standards.

- MFUs must operate from a central preparation facility and report daily for supplies and cleaning.
- Must provide single-service articles and have adequate equipment for food safety.
- Waste disposal systems must meet specific requirements to prevent contamination.

Temporary Food Establishments Guidelines

Temporary food establishments are subject to additional health and safety requirements.

- Regulatory authority may impose extra requirements based on health risks.
- Foods not prepared on-site must be prepared at a licensed food establishment.

Requirements for Temporary Food Establishments

Temporary food establishments must adhere to specific regulations to ensure food safety and hygiene.

- At least one person on-site must have accredited food handler certification.
- Food temperature requirements must comply with Food Code, Subparts 3-202, 3-401-403, and 3-501.
- Ice for consumption must be made under safe conditions and stored properly.
- Equipment must be durable, cleanable, and designed to prevent contamination.
- Single-service articles are required for consumer use.
- Water must come from approved sources for food preparation and handwashing.
- Wastewater must be disposed of through an approved sanitary sewage system.
- Handwashing facilities must include potable warm water, soap, and disposable towels.
- Floors and walls must be constructed to prevent contamination and protect against pests.

Regulations for Bed and Breakfast Establishments

Bed and breakfast establishments must comply with specific food safety regulations based on their services.

- Must comply with minimum requirements if having more than seven rooms or serving food beyond breakfast.
- A certified food protection manager is required for establishments serving food.
- Food must be obtained from approved sources and be safe for consumption.
- Food preparation must meet temperature requirements as per Food Code.
- Cleaning and sanitizing must be done using a three-compartment sink or approved mechanical methods.
- Handwashing sinks must be conveniently located and used solely for handwashing.

Guidelines for Outfitter Operations

Outfitter operations have specific food safety requirements to ensure safe food handling during excursions.

- Food supplies must come from approved sources, and home-prepared products are not allowed.
- Food temperature requirements must comply with Food Code.
- Most food must be prepared in a central facility, with exceptions for certain ready-to-eat foods.
- Ice used for cooling food cannot be used for human consumption.
- Potable water must be used for all food-related activities and stored properly.

- Handwashing facilities must be provided, and all equipment must be approved for food use.

Standards for Self-Service Food Markets

Self-service food markets must meet specific operational and safety standards to protect consumer health.

- Must have 24/7 video surveillance of consumer interactions for safety.
- Pre-packaged food must meet labeling requirements and be tamper-evident.
- TCS foods must be discarded if they exceed specified temperature or time limits.
- Display units for TCS foods must have automatic shut-off controls to maintain safety.
- Signs must be visible with business contact information for consumer complaints.

Facility and Operating Plans Requirements

Food establishments must submit plans for construction or remodeling to ensure compliance with health regulations.

- Plans may be required for new constructions, conversions, or remodeling of food establishments.
- Regulatory authority may conduct preoperational inspections to verify compliance with approved plans.

Confidentiality and Trade Secrets in Inspections

Inspection reports and plans containing trade secrets are treated confidentially by the regulatory authority.

- Information that meets trade secret criteria is protected under the Public Information Act.

Inspection Procedures and Competency Standards

Food establishments are inspected based on compliance history and potential health risks.

- Inspections assess past performance, complaints, and hazards associated with food preparation.
- Inspectors must be qualified professionals to ensure fair enforcement of health regulations.

Investigation and Control of Food Employee Restrictions

The regulatory authority manages the exclusion of food employees based on health conditions.

- Employees can be released from restrictions according to specific health codes and regulations.