

Choosing A Commissary

The information in this document is intended to be used solely as guidance and to provide a general idea of the menu requirements, processes and procedures taken into consideration during the review process. The actual findings will differ greatly from business to business and are based on the information provided. This is not an all-inclusive list.

What is a commissary?

A commissary or a base of operation is a fully equipped licensed commercial kitchen that supports the day-to-day operations of a mobile unit. The requirements may vary depending on the type of menu presented at the time of application. Some examples of acceptable commissaries are:

- Restaurants
- Shared Kitchens, and;
- Catering Kitchens

Commissary Operational Requirements

The required use of the commissary depends on the menu's complexity (**Type 1, 2 or 3**). Below are some examples of daily tasks that must take place at the commissary by all mobile units during days of operation.

- Disposal of wastewater and wastewater tank maintenance (**Type 2 & 3**)
- Disposal of food waste at the end of the shift (**Type 1, 2 & 3**)
- Extensive and/or complex food preparation (**Type 3**)
- Overnight storage of food (**Type 2 & 3**)
- Refilling of the water tank, restock supplies (**Type 2 & 3**)
- Conduct cleaning and servicing of the unit (**Type 1, 2 & 3**)

Menu & Commissary- Review and Evaluation

The menu will be compared to both the equipment in the mobile unit and the equipment available in your proposed commissary. Changes may be requested during this process.

- The following are some examples of food processes considered extensive &/or complex. These processes are classified as **Type 3**.
 - Thawing
 - Washing and cutting fruits and vegetables
 - Trimming meat
 - Marinating food
 - Foods requiring a cooling step after cooking and;
 - Specialty processes that require a HACCP (to name a few)

During a commissary evaluation, some of the areas of interest include but are not limited to:

- Hours of operation
- Storage capacity (cold & dry storage etc.)
- Accessibility (inside and out)
- Kitchen availability
- Inspection performance, etc.

Choosing A Commissary Continued...

To improve the chances for kitchen access approval, consider the following:

- Offer a simpler menu of foods that do not require the food preparation steps mentioned above.
- Use food suppliers that offer commercially prepared, pre-washed, pre-cut, meats and vegetables
- Include food items that have been commercially pre-cooked that only require reheating on the truck.
- Foods that do not require extensive preparation prior to cooking or serving are classified as **Type 2**.

Are there any types of mobile units that do not require a commissary?

By code, all mobile food units are required to operate from a base of operation/commissary. However, special consideration is given to ice cream carts or trucks selling only single-service commercially prepared/prepackaged product such as single serving, commercially prepared, prepackaged ice cream, ice cream bars, popsicles only. These mobile units are classified as **Type 1** and are considered self-regulating. They still do require a license.

Mobile units are limited to cooking and serving only.

Mobile Unit Types and Description

Mobile Unit Type	Description (not an all-inclusive list)
Type 1	Single portion, prepackaged, commercially prepared ice cream, prepackaged frozen meat etc.
Type 2	Items with no cooking step; cooked to serve; little to no preparation required prior to cooking or reheating. (items such as produce and meats are commercially prepared, pre-cut, pre-washed, pre-cooked etc.)
Type 3	Includes menu items that are cooked from scratch and require kitchen time to prepare. Items such as vegetables must be washed and prepared at the commissary. Meat that needs marinated, trimmed, thawed must also take place at the commissary. This type of preparation is considered extensive and must take place at the commissary, including foods that are cooked and cooled for a later use. This also includes items that take a long time to cook such as smoking and other specialty processes.