

# Mobile Food Vendor - Quick Reference Guide

The City of Bloomington allows mobile food vendors to operate within the City after they meet certain standards. This guide is an overview of the permitting process, and operation requirements for mobile food vendors. For more information, and the full version of the City ordinance, please see <https://bloomington.in.gov/business/licenses> or contact the Economic and Sustainable Development Department at [esd@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:esd@bloomington.in.gov) or (812) 349-3418.

## Mobile Food Vendor Definition

- Person who sells, serves, or gives away food or beverages from any self-contained mobile unit.
- Is capable of moving or being moved, is meant to be portable and is not permanently attached to the ground.
- Consists of an enclosed truck, trailer, bus, or similar vehicle that contains equipment used for the sale and/or preparation of food or beverages.
- Is closed up when not in operation.
- An ice cream truck that does not park or locate in any one place for longer than ten minutes is not required to obtain a Mobile Vendor license.

## Required Permits and Licenses

- Indiana Business License.
- Monroe County Health Inspection
- City of Bloomington Mobile Food Vendor License
- Approval from the Board of Public Works if you wish to operate in the public right-of-way
- Proof of independent safety inspection of all vehicles used in the business
- Proof of insurance indemnity

## Hours of Operation

6:30 AM to 4:30 AM when located on public property.

Mobile food vendor vehicles cannot be left unattended and/or parked and not open for business for more than 1 hour before opening or 1 hour after closing.

## General Operations

- Generator decibels cannot exceed 70 dBA.
- Each vendor is allowed one sandwich board sign that does not impede the right-of-way.
- Vendor cannot be attached to any object, (includes buildings, trees, telephone poles, streetlight poles, traffic signal poles or fire hydrants).
- Vendors cannot advertise any product which they are not authorized to sell.
- Vendors may not use public or private electrical outlets while in operation.
- Vendors must use a grease trap or interceptor. These cannot be emptied into City sewers or drains.
- Devices that amplify sound, or draw attention with light or noise cannot be used (i.e. bullhorns or strobe lights).

## Operating on Private Property

Vendors are prohibited from operating on private property without written permission from the property owner. Any vendor wishing to operate from private property must submit a site plan for approval.

## Parking Restrictions

Mobile food vendors can park on city streets as long as they follow all City parking restrictions and ordinances, including payment of parking meters.

They may not park:

- Within 50 feet of any façade or outdoor seating of a ground level establishment that also sells food or beverages. (This only applies from an hour before the establishment opens to an hour after closing.)
- In alleyways.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- More than 1 foot from the curb.
- In an intersection or blocking other drivers' line of sight.

## Special Events

Vendors must gain approval to operate in or near Special Events approved for City property or in the public right-of-way.

Vendors may not operate within a one block radius of a Special Event without prior approval from either the Special Event coordinator or the City's Board of Public Works. Information on the dates and locations of Special Events can be obtained by contacting Jason Carnes.

## Mobile Food Vendor Zones

Vendors are allowed within the following zoning districts: Commercial General; Commercial Arterial; Commercial Downtown; Industrial General; Business Park; and Institutional.

## Prohibited Items

- A drive-through.
- Customer seating without prior approval.
- A generator louder than 70dBA
- A device to amplify sounds.
- A light-producing device.

## Fire Safety Precautions

If you have a grill, or any type of flame, you must:

- Obtain an Open Burn Permit from the Bloomington Fire Department.
- Be 20 feet from any building.
- Have a barrier between flame and public.
- Limit flame to 12 inches in height.
- Have a fire extinguisher within reach.

## Other Safety Precautions

- Equipment must be secured within the unit.
- Store knives and sharp utensils in a safety knife holder.
- Follow appropriate USDA, FDA and Monroe County safety regulations for food handling and storage.
- Vendor must protect food from dirt and dust, and food must be kept at least 18 inches above the road.
- Keep food storage area free of rats, mice, flies and other vermin.
- Animals are not allowed in food storage area.
- Don't keep toxic or hazardous items like detergents, pesticides, or paint in the food storage area.

## Clean Up and Recycling

Before leaving any location, first pick up, remove and dispose of all trash, refuse and/or recyclable materials, including products spilled on the ground within twenty feet of the mobile food vendor unit

Vendors must also:

- Have separate recycling and trash containers.
- Empty containers frequently, so customers can dispose of their trash. Do not empty trash or recycling into City facilities.

## Permit Length and Fees

- 1 Day License: \$25.00
- 3 Day License: \$30.00
- 7 Day License: \$50.00
- 30 Day License: \$75.00
- 3 Month License: \$150.00
- 6 Month License: \$200.00
- 1 Year License: \$350.00

## Important Contacts

Monroe County Health Dept.

- Jessica Brown
- [jgbrown@co.monroe.in.us](mailto:jgbrown@co.monroe.in.us)
- 812-349-2837

City of Bloomington

- Susan Coates
- [susan.coates@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:susan.coates@bloomington.in.gov)
- 812-349-3418

Bloomington Fire Dept.

- 812-332-9763

Indiana Secretary of State

- <http://www.in.gov/sos/>
- 317-232-6531

Parking Services

- 812-349-3436