



How do I start a new food business in Wauwatosa?

First, contact the Community Development department at 414-479-8957 to determine if your business location is compatible with existing zoning requirements. You will then be directed to contact the Engineering, Building and Safety departments for more information on starting your business. You can apply online using this [self-service portal](#). You can upload any needed documents and process payments for a building permits online.

Do I need a Health Department plan review?

You will need a Health Department plan review if:

- Building from the ground up
- Remodeling/Renovating any existing food business
- Creating a food business in an existing building where there was not a food business before
- Making changes to the menu

What do I include in the plan review?

Plans should be drawn to scale and must include the following:

- Menu of foods to be sold or served
- Food service equipment & shatter resistant lighting specifications
- Labels for plumbing fixtures (all plans must minimally have: hand wash sinks, ware wash sinks, food preparation sinks, mop sinks, dish and ice machines)
- Materials & finishes for floors, walls and ceilings

What happens after the plan review?

- Your inspector may contact you with any deficiencies on the submitted plans and work with you to ensure the minimum requirements of WI Food Code are met
- If plans are complete, the Health department notifies the Building department that code is met
- Building permits will be issued by the appropriate department prior to construction

*According to state statute, plan review may take up to 30 days after submission.

What do I do when construction is complete?

- Contact your inspector to schedule an occupancy inspection
- Apply for the appropriate food license at the City of Wauwatosa Health Department website
- All fees must be paid in full and all approvals from other departments must be obtained
- Contact your inspector to schedule a pre-inspection (5-7 days before target opening date)

What is expected during the Health Department Pre-inspection?

- Establishment should be clean (no construction dust), have running hot water, all coolers and equipment turned on and running at appropriate temperatures, fully supplied hand wash sinks and ware wash sinks, etc
- Establishment must meet all minimum requirements of the WI Food Code and Wauwatosa Food Code

To contact your inspector call: 414-479-8936 ext. 2

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Minimum Requirements for a New or Remodeled Food Establishment

Below is a checklist of requirements that must be fulfilled before opening a new food establishment or remodeling an existing food establishment in Wauwatosa.

Food Establishment Requirements

The Wisconsin Food Code is available for review at: http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/atcp/055/75

(note: this is a 150+ page document)

■ Menu

Provide a list of all foods that will be served - a copy of the proposed menu for the establishment is sufficient

■ Floors, Walls, and Ceilings

The floors, floor coverings, walls, wall coverings, and ceilings shall be designed, constructed, and installed to be smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. No carpet is allowed in food preparation, warewashing, food storage, equipment storage areas, etc.

■ Manual Warewashing

A 3-compartment sink sized to submerge a minimum of 100% of the largest utensils / equipment is required. These sinks shall be provided with back splash to protect the wall surface and facilitate cleaning.

■ Dish Machine / Mechanical Warewashing

An approved commercial warewashing machine must be sized to wash, rinse, and sanitize utensils and equipment.

■ Food Preparation Sink

In new food establishments and at the time of change in operator of an existing food establishment, a separate sink for food preparation, with a minimum 1-inch air-gap to drain, must be provided.

■ Handwashing Sinks

A separate sink used only for handwashing shall be located in each food preparation, warewashing, and food dispensing area. Water to these sinks must be provided at a temperature between 85°(F) and 110°(F) through a mixing valve or combination faucet. The faucet must be of the type which is non-hand operated. If a self-closing or metering faucet is used, that faucet shall provide a flow of water for at least 15 seconds without the need to reactivate the faucet. Soap and single use hand drying towels must be provided.

■ Service Sink / Mop Sink

A utility / custodial type sink or a curbed cleaning facility equipped with a floor drain is required. This sink or curbed cleaning facility must have hot and cold water under pressure and be connected to a sanitary sewer. Do not place this sink or curbed cleaning facility in a location where splash could contaminate nearby surfaces.

■ Toilets

Toilet facilities shall be accessible to employees at all times. Toilet facilities must be located within the establishment and have inside access. Toilet rooms shall be completely enclosed and have solid, tight fitting, self-closing doors and from the floor up shall have a smooth, hard, nonabsorbent surfaces that is not adversely affected by moisture.

■ Equipment / Food Storage Equipment

- Food equipment and utensils for use in food establishments shall meet the published standards for sanitation of an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and/or accredited equipment certification program by NSF.
- Adequate facilities to store dishware, food, paper goods, maintenance and cleaning equipment need to be provided. Specify location, design, size of dry storage facilities, and refrigeration.
- Clean equipment, food and paper goods must be stored at least 6 inches above the floor.
- Equipment that is not easy to move shall be installed either with enough space around it to allow cleaning or sealed to adjacent surfaces.
- Tabletop equipment that is not sealed to the table's top and is not easily movable must be provided with legs at least 4 inches high to facilitate cleaning under the equipment. Floor mounted equipment that is not easily movable and not sealed shall be on legs at least 6 inches high. Equipment is to be durable and constructed to facilitate cleaning.
- Displayed food, such as on salad bars, must be protected by food shields or other protective devices.
- Beverage tubing and cold-plate beverage cooling devices may not be installed in contact with stored ice. Drainage tubes shall not pass through the ice.

■ Lighting

Lights shall be shielded, coated or otherwise shatter-resistant in areas where there is exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single- service or single-use articles.

■ Insect and Rodent Control

Openings to the outside shall be protected against the entrance of pest by closing holes and other gaps along floors, walls, and ceilings. Exterior openings shall have tight-fitting, self-closing doors, which are kept closed, closed windows or screening or mesh, or properly designed and installed air curtains to control flying insects.

■ Ventilation

All rooms shall have sufficient ventilation to keep them free of excessive heat, odors, smoke, and fumes. In all new or remodeled establishments, all rooms from which obnoxious odors, vapors, or fumes originate shall be mechanically vented to the outside. When such ventilation may result in the deposition of particulate matter or liquids within the ventilation system, ventilation hoods and ventilation equipment shall be equipped with effective, easily removable, easily cleanable filters.

■ Utility Facilities

In new or remodeled establishments, at least one utility sink or curbed cleaning facility with a floor drain shall be provided and used for the cleaning of mops or similar wet floor cleaning tools.

■ Garbage

Garbage and refuse containers, dumpsters, and compactor systems shall be stored on or above a smooth surface of nonabsorbent material such as concrete or machine laid asphalt. Outdoor enclosures and receptacles for garbage shall be constructed of durable, cleanable, insect and rodent resistant, leakproof, and nonabsorbent material. Receptacles shall have tight-fitting lids, doors, or covers. Receptacles shall be removed from the premises at a frequency that will minimize the development of objectionable odors and other conditions that attract or harbor insects and rodents.

■ Laundry Facilities

Laundry facilities, if provided, shall be restricted to washing and drying of items necessary to the operation.