



**Public Health & Social Services  
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## **STREET VENDING WITH A MOBILE PERMIT AND A VARIANCE**

This is still a new program for this department so there may be changes along the way as staff and vendors run across and resolve challenges that emerge. The success of this effort will rely heavily on the participating vendors' efforts to provide safe food to the public. We are happy to provide this permitting flexibility to allow vendors to street vend food without truck or trailer but food safety is still the primary goal.

Street vending is allowed in Thurston County by applying for a mobile food unit permit and asking for a variance. The variance allows the use of a temporary-style setup, i.e., using a pop-up shelter, insulated cooler handwash station, and coolers with ice **without** being at a public event.

To be approved, you will need to submit a complete [mobile food unit application](#), along with a [variance request](#). Both can be found on our website.

The completed MFU application must be submitted with an application fee of \$775. The completed variance form has a fee of \$440. Both of these costs are one-time fees. Vendors that were previously enrolled in our pilot program will have the variance fee waived. Both the permit and the variance are required to operate as a street vendor.

Requirements for such a variance shall include, at a minimum:

- A menu with limited scope (for example, **1 or 2 main items, with 1 or 2 sides**), with each item and food preparation process approved, and
- Food preparation processes that reduce risk by limiting food handling processes outside the commissary, and
- The use of an approved commissary, including access to refrigerated storage, ware washing facilities, and approved public water supply and wastewater disposal, and
- Setting up and using a temporary-style hand wash station before food preparation begins. The hand wash station shall include an insulated container of at least five gallons of warm potable water, soap, and paper towels, and
- Providing adequate insulated containers and ice to cold-hold food at 41 degrees F or less for the duration of the event, including transport of food from and back to the commissary refrigerated storage, and
- At all times having a person-in-charge that holds a current food safety manager certificate from an ANSI-approved source, and
- Following the reviewed and approved operational plan.

**Free consultation** – We offer a free thirty-minute consultation with our plan reviewer at the time of application submittal. If you are interested, please contact Thurston County Public Health & Social Services at [foodapplication@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:foodapplication@co.thurston.wa.us), to schedule an appointment. Your application will be reviewed for completeness and you will be able to discuss your application with an Environmental Health Specialist. Submitting a thorough application will also help speed up the review process. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

**Public Events are Always an Option without the variance** – If the requirements for a street vendor are not a good fit for you, you can still participate in our public events by taking out a single temporary food permit application.