



## The Plan Review Process in Harford County

All owners or builders of proposed food service facilities are required to go through the plan review process prior to beginning construction. In addition, any existing food service facilities where renovations or additions are proposed, the facility must go through the same plan review process. Listed below are the appropriate steps to take from beginning to end for construction of new or remodeled facilities. Plans must be submitted to the State Health Department, as well as this office, for any facility that is a prototype in the State of Maryland. Their offices may be reached at 410-767-8400.

1. The client inquires at the Health Department about the requirements for a particular type of food service facility, and pertinent information is provided. This information may include all or some of the following documents: Code of Maryland Regulations 10.15.03 for Food Service Facilities, Harford County Food Service Facility Plan Review Procedures, Procedure for Submitting Plans for Food Service Facilities, Maryland Food Establishment Ventilation Criteria, Hazard Analysis Critical Control packet (HACCP), Compliance Guidelines for Smoking in the Hospitality Industry, Fee Schedule for Plan Review, and Application for Plan Review.
2. The client should check the zoning of the proposed property by contacting the appropriate County, Town or City Zoning Department. If the property is located within the Town of Bel Air, the Town of Bel Air officials will handle all zoning issues and will issue all necessary Building Permits and Use and Occupancy Permits. If the property is located within the City of Aberdeen, the City of Aberdeen officials will handle all zoning issues and will issue all necessary Building Permits and Use and Occupancy Permits. If the property is located with the City of Havre de Grace, the City of Havre de Grace officials will handle all zoning issues and will issue all Building Permits and Use and Occupancy Permits. If the property is not located within one of the above municipalities, all zoning issues, Building Permits and Use and Occupancy Permits will be handled by Harford County officials.
3. If public water and/or sewerage are not available, the client should contact the Resource Protection Division within the Health Department for information relating to private wells and septic systems. In addition, the Health Department will determine if a grease interceptor will be required at facilities serviced by private septic systems.
4. If the facility is serviced by public sewerage, the client should contact the Harford County Plumbing Department to determine if a grease interceptor is required. Grease interceptors are required for any food service facility that generates grease and are installed below ground, outside of the building. The Harford County Plumbing Department determines the size of the grease interceptor and also which fixtures are connected to the grease interceptor. The Health Department requires any facility that has a grease interceptor to maintain a contract with a licensed scavenger for routine pumping, cleaning and maintenance.

5. Upon request of the client, Health Department personnel will be available to discuss plan review requirements, to review preliminary plans and to act as a resource at all stages of the plan review process. When necessary, personnel will conduct on-site inspections of buildings to give consultation as to the feasibility of locating a food establishment on site.
6. When applying for a Building Permit, the client shall submit site plans, blueprints and any other required information to the Town, City, or County officials responsible for the review. Keep in mind that these agencies DO NOT send any information to the Health Department. Submittals for Health Department review must be sent directly to this office. The following information is required in order for the Health Department to complete a review. If any part of this information is missing, there may be a delay in review of the plans.
  - Site plans that indicate location of all buildings, dumpster/trash areas, public utilities, well(s), septic system(s), and grease interceptor.
  - Complete building plans that indicate layout of all rooms (drawn to scale).
  - Detailed drawings of all food service areas drawn to quarter inch scale. Each piece of equipment in food service areas must be drawn in its exact location and numbered.
  - An equipment list whose numbers correspond to the food service equipment plan. The equipment list must contain the name of the equipment, manufacturer's name and model number. Custom made and used equipment should also be noted on the equipment list.
  - Catalog cut sheets that are numbered according to the equipment list and placed in order. Shop drawings and sectional views of custom-built equipment shall be submitted along with cut sheets, and shall be numbered accordingly and placed in order.
  - Complete drawings, specifications, calculations and manufacturer for all hoods. Placards from hoods that are approved under the UL 710 listing are required.
  - A plumbing diagram that shows the exact location of all drains, water lines and gas lines. Connections to the grease interceptor shall also be indicated.
  - Complete mechanical and electrical plans.
  - Finish schedule for each area (floors, walls, ceilings).
  - Menu and HACCP plans (for moderate and high priority facilities).
7. When all required information is received, the Health Department begins reviewing the plans. Telephone and/or in-person conferences may be required, as well as revisions, during this review process. The plan review process usually takes up to four weeks for completion once all of the required information is received.
8. When the Health Department approves the plans, a written response is sent to the client, other Town/City/County agencies, and other persons listed on the Plan Review Application. Written responses from the client are sometimes requested in the plan review letter, and should be forwarded to the Health Department as quickly as possible.

It is at this point that the Health Department signs off on the Building Permit, when one is required.

9. After the Health Department has approved plans and the client has obtained a Building Permit, construction may begin. The Health Department is available for consultation at any time during construction.
10. When construction is completed and all equipment has been installed, the Health Department should be contacted to arrange for a pre-opening inspection. Advanced notice of at least ten days is recommended when scheduling appointments. The pre-opening inspection is made prior to stocking the facility with food or other products.
11. A written list of deficiencies is given to the client at the pre-opening inspection. When all items on the list have been corrected, the Health Department should be contacted for a final inspection.
12. If the final inspection reveals that all items are satisfactorily completed, the Health Department signs off on the Use and Occupancy Permit (when required) and the client can make application for a Food Service Facility License. The facility may open only after the Use and Occupancy Permit has been issued.