

## New Food Establishment Checklist

Do you want to open a Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) regulated food establishment? Here is a chronological checklist to help you through the process:

- I. **(Recommended) Develop a business plan.** This generally includes the following:
  - Identify your business entity type. Are you a sole proprietorship, a Limited Liability Company (LLC) or corporation?
  - What is your business concept? Is your food business going to be a packaged food retail convenience store? Will you have a grocery store with a deli and food service (e.g., catering and/or take-out pizza)? Will you operate a food manufacturing plant?
  - Find an ideal location. Will you be constructing a new building or renting/leasing existing building space? Food establishment licenses are not transferable.
  - Create a budget for expenses (e.g., capital costs/equipment, food and beverage inventory, labor costs, rent, utilities, etc.).
  - Identify your food products and price ranges. What food and beverage products will you offer and at what prices will they be profitable?
  - What is your employee staffing plan? How many employees will you hire to start with, including management? What will your hours of operation be?
- II. **Verify your proposed location's zoning requirements.**
  - Contact the local municipality's building code department and obtain all necessary permits (e.g., plumbing, electrical, mechanical, etc.).
- III. **Consider your water and sewer needs.**
  - If on-site water supply and sewage disposal systems are proposed, has written approval from the local health department been obtained for the water supply and on-site sewage disposal? Have you received written approval from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) for the disposal of generated food processing wastewater?
- IV. **Use the resources available to you.**
  - Contact your MDARD Regional Food Inspector at **1-800-292-3939** with any questions. **NOTE:** If food service operations are proposed, a plan review and employing a Certified Food Protection Manager who has successfully passed an ANSI/CFP nationally accredited exam are **REQUIRED**.  
[www.michigan.gov/FoodManagerCertification](http://www.michigan.gov/FoodManagerCertification)
- V. **Apply for your food establishment license.**
  - Properly submit the MDARD Food Establishment License Application at least 30 days before the planned opening date or change of ownership. All licensing fees are non-refundable, per statutory requirement. Applications submitted are valid for the license year in which they are submitted. [Michigan Food Establishment License Applications](#)