

Start Smart: Guide to Opening a Food Premises



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**Health and
Social Services**
Haldimand and Norfolk

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Introduction

This package is designed to help individuals that want to start a food business and lists the steps you must follow to receive approval from the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (HNHU) to operate a food premise. This document will help you understand what is required of you, as an operator, and assist you in complying with Ontario Regulation 493/17: Food Premises (O. Reg. 493/17). You may reference O. Reg. 493/17 [here](#).

Please read all the information included in this document and complete the required business application form to make sure your business opening is on schedule and runs smoothly.

All important information should be forwarded to HNHU before construction begins to ensure all requirements are met. This information can be emailed to ehthotline@hnhss.ca.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your proposal, please call HNHU at 519-426-6170 ext. 3477 and ask to speak to a Public Health Inspector (PHI).

It is important that you also contact your local municipal office and building department for additional requirements, such as zoning and business licensing.



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Important Contacts

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit

Telephone: 519-426-6170

Email: ehthotline@hnhss.ca

Norfolk County

Norfolk County Building Department

Telephone: 519-426-5870 ext. 6016

Email: permits@norfolkcounty.ca

Fire Prevention Services

519-426-5870 ext. 2401

Email: norfolk.fire@norfolkcounty.ca

Haldimand County

Haldimand County Building Department

Telephone: 905-318-5932 ext. 8300

Fire Prevention Services

905-318-5932

Email: emergencyservices@haldimandcounty.on.ca

Province of Ontario

Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario

Telephone: 416-326-8700

Toll free: 1-800-522-2876

Online portal: <https://www.iagco.agco.ca/prod/pub/en/Login.aspx>

ServiceOntario Business Registration

Telephone: 416-314-9151

Toll free: 1-800-565-1921

Smart Serve Ontario Responsible Alcohol Beverage Service Training

Telephone: 416-695-8737

Toll free: 1-877-620-6082

Email: info@smartserve.ca



Steps to Opening

Step 1: Authorities to contact

- ☐ Contact municipality to determine if premises complies with zoning and other municipal by-laws.
- ☐ Contact municipality for licensing.
- ☐ Contact fire department for fire prevention services.
- ☐ Contact municipality if a septic tank system is proposed as this will need approval by the building department.

Step 2: Notice of intent to operate a food premises

The Health Protection and Promotion Act of Ontario (HPPA), states that anyone who intends to operate a food premises **MUST** notify their local Health Unit in writing of their intention to operate.

Notice of intention to commence operation

Every person who intends to commence to operate a food premise shall give notice of the person's intention to the medical officer of health of the health unit in which the food premise will be located. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, s. 16 (2).

The Health Unit can be notified of your intention to open a food premises through the submission of the "Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit Business Application Form." This form is available on the Health Unit's website, www.hnhu.org, under 'Forms'. A sample of the Business Application Form can be found [here](#) or at the end of this document.

Failure to do so may result in the premises being closed and the owner being ticketed, and/or fined. As stated in the Health Protection and Promotion Act;

101. (1) Penalty

Every person who is guilty of an offence under this Act is liable on conviction to a fine of not more than \$5,000 for every day or part of a day on which the offence occurs or continues. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, s. 101 (1).

Step 3: Ensure basic food premises requirements are met

Ensure the following building and construction requirements are met in order to comply with the requirements outlined in O. Reg. 493/17: (refer to page 9 for more detailed information)

Building:

- ☐ Walls and ceilings are smooth, non-absorbent and easy to clean.
- ☐ Floors are tight, smooth, non-absorbent and easy to clean.
- ☐ Ensure pipes, electrical wires, and electrical panels are enclosed to permit easy cleaning.
- ☐ All non-food contact surfaces are properly finished and are non-absorbent and easy to clean (i.e. no unfinished wood/drywall and/or unfinished ends in particle board or laminate counters/shelving).
- ☐ Contact the building department for any construction inquiries as this is regulated under the Ontario Building Code.

Lighting:

- ☐ Adequate lighting must be provided in all areas of the food premises during all hours of operation as prescribed in the Ontario Building Code.
- ☐ Ensure light bulbs are shatterproof or protected by a covering in all food preparation and storage areas.

Sinks:

- ☐ Dedicated hand wash sink(s) must be provided in each food preparation/handling area.
- ☐ Hand wash sink(s) must be easily accessible.
- ☐ Hand wash sink(s) must only be used for handwashing.
- ☐ There must be an adequate number of handwash sinks provided for operation of the premise.
- ☐ All handwash sink(s) must have hot and cold running water under pressure.
- ☐ Paper towels and liquid soap must be in dispensers at each handwash sink.
- ☐ A 3-compartment sink is required for cleaning and sanitizing multi-service articles, such as cutlery and glasses, using the 3-sink dishwashing method.
- ☐ A 2-compartment sink may be used in a food premises **only** where single-use eating utensils/containers are provided.
- ☐ Sinks should be of sufficient size to submerge large utensils and multi-service articles used in the food premises.
- ☐ Additional sinks should be considered for food preparation and/or janitorial needs based on specific food premises needs.

Equipment:

- ☐ Stainless steel or prefinished shelves are recommended for food storage. Properly sealed, wood shelves are also satisfactory. Surfaces should be smooth, non-absorbent and easy to clean.
- ☐ Racks, shelves or pallets that are used to store food in a food premise must be designed to protect the food from contamination and must be readily cleanable.
- ☐ It is recommended that food storage shelves are at least 15 cm (6") off the floor.
- ☐ All food contact surfaces (including counter tops) must be free of cracks, crevices and open seams.
- ☐ Plastic is the recommended material for cutting boards, blocks and platters.
- ☐ Any article or piece of food-grade equipment that is used in the food premises must be of sound, tight construction, kept in good repair and made from material that can be easily cleaned and sanitized.
- ☐ All cold-holding units should be equipped with accurate, visible indicating thermometers so staff can monitor temperatures. Refrigerator must maintain food at 4°C or below. Freezers must be able to maintain all food in a frozen solid state.
- ☐ All hot-holding units should be equipped with accurate, visible indicating thermometers to be able to verify the internal temperature of food at 60°C or higher.

- ☐ Residential dishwashers are not permitted. Dishwashers must be commercial machines and have thermometers to show wash and rinse temperatures. Dishwashers must use an approved sanitization method such as a low temperature chemical or high temperature method.
- ☐ Ventilation system must be designed to ensure the elimination of odours, fumes, vapours, smoke and excessive heat.
- ☐ Acceptable material for canopies and hoods is stainless steel in accordance with Fire Department specifications.
- ☐ Garbage and waste are collected and removed to ensure the sanitary condition of the premises.
- ☐ Garbage containers are recommended to be constructed of metal, treated wood, concrete or similar material that can be easily cleaned and prevent entry of insects and rodents. Lids should be provided for garbage containers.

Food Storage:

- ☐ Sufficient dry storage space and cold-holding units should be provided for all food and beverages.
- ☐ Commercial grade refrigeration units are strongly recommended.
- ☐ Food and beverages should be stored in a manner to prevent potential contamination and cannot be stored directly on the floor.

Water:

- ☐ Additional requirements will apply to food premises that are serviced by a private well or cistern. (see small drinking water systems).
- ☐ Sufficient supply of potable hot and cold running water.

Pest Control:

The food premises must be protected against the entry of pests and kept free of conditions that may lead to the harbouring or breeding of pests.

Records of all pest control measures must be kept at the premises by the operator for at least one year.

Note: This is **not** a complete list of all requirements under the food premises regulation. All materials and equipment must be assessed on their own merit. See additional information recommend materials and other suggestions. Certain exemptions may apply, contact the Health Unit for more information.

Step 4: Contact Your Area PHI

- ☐ Contact your Area PHI at least 14 days prior to opening to arrange a pre-opening inspection. Any changes to the plans after approval must be submitted to your PHI prior to opening.

Additional Information

Renovations

If you are planning structural renovations to your establishment, you must contact your PHI before the work begins. Your PHI will advise you on how to proceed with your plans to renovate so that you are still following the requirements of the regulations. Contacting your PHI ahead of time may help you avoid future fines, and loss of time and money. Planning to renovate? Contact your PHI.

Food Handler Certification

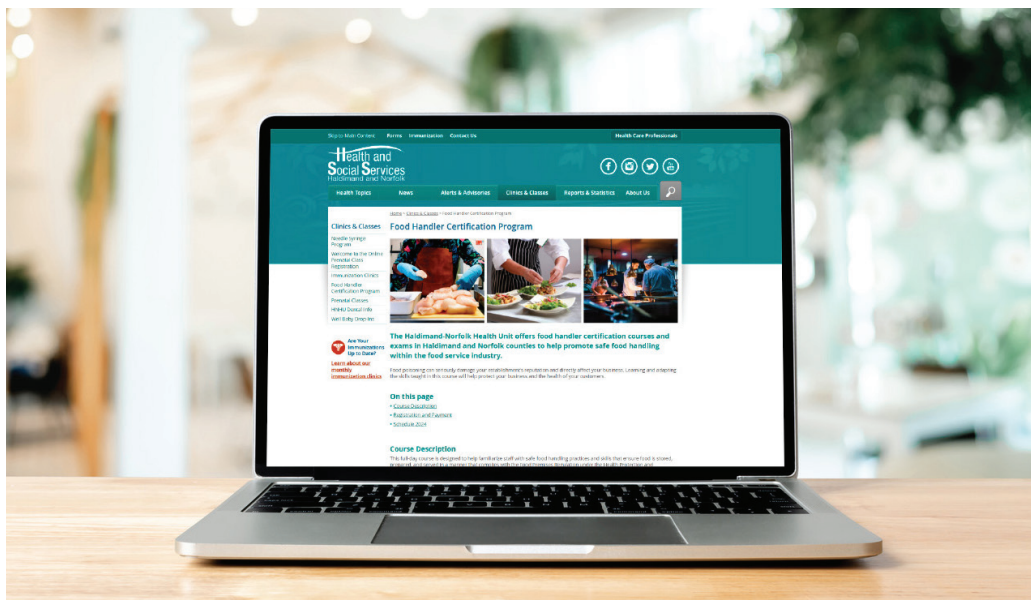
O. Reg. 493/17 requires there be one certified food handler or supervisor on-site in a food service premises during every hour the premises is operating.

Information about the food handler certification program may be found [here](#). We encourage you to become a certified food handler to help make sure your new kitchen is a safe kitchen.

Small Drinking Water Systems

It is important to consider that under the O.Reg. 493/17 potable water is required at food premises. Food premises that are on a private water supply (ie. well, cistern, or surface water source), will also be subject to the Small Drinking Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 319/08). Depending on the water quality, as determined by a risk assessment process carried out by a PHI, water treatment and/or disinfection equipment may be required. Operators of O. Reg. 319/08 water systems are required to complete regular water sampling to ensure water supply is safe.

The Small Drinking Water Systems Regulation (O. Reg. 319/08) can be found [here](#).



Home-Based Food Premises

In some limited situations, food premises may be able to operate in a home-based setting. Home-based operations are required to be inspected and follow all applicable requirements in O. Reg. 493/17.

Low Risk Foods

Premises that prepare only low volume and low risk foods may not be required to have a separate kitchen, however it is still strongly recommended.

Low risk foods are non-hazardous foods and do not require time and temperature control. Examples include: breads and buns (without meat, cream filling etc.), most baked goods (with no custard), chocolate, hard candies and brittles, fudge and toffee, coffee beans and tea leaves, granola, trail mix, nuts and seeds, cakes (icing that doesn't require refrigeration), brownies, muffins and cookies.

Ensure that all of the following requirements are being met:

- A hand wash sink must be available at all times equipped with paper towels and liquid soap in dispensers. The sink must be located in the food preparation area, easily accessible and cannot be located in a washroom.
- Two sinks of sufficient size must be available for dishwashing (one of the compartments may be used for handwashing).
- A certified food handler is required to be onsite during business hours.
- Business hours must be provided. During business hours other household members and pets are not permitted where food is prepared.
- The operator is required to have designated supplies and equipment that are used only for the business. (i.e., utensils, food storage, refrigerator, freezer).
- All other requirements of O. Reg. 493/17 regulation apply.

High Risk Foods

Premises that prepare high risk foods are required to have a separate kitchen that is of a sufficient size and designed for the operation of the business and meet all requirements of O.Reg. 493/17.

High risk foods are potentially hazardous foods that require time and temperature control.

- In most situations, a separate entrance is strongly recommended, and may be required by PHI.
- The operator is required to have designated supplies and equipment that are used only for the business (i.e., utensils, food storage, refrigerator, freezer).
- Business hours must be provided.

Suggested Construction Materials

Prior to the construction of new food premises, or the renovation of an existing food premise, please contact your PHI and local building department.

Floors

- Troweled cement – a mechanical, steel-troweled process with an applied hardener and sealer is necessary to provide a tight, smooth and non-absorbent finish.
- Dry vinyl floor coverings – high grade industrial strength which cover the floor wall to wall.
- Non-slip ceramic tiles – grouted to create a smooth surface at the same level as the tiles. A non-slip sealant is suggested when quarry tiles are installed.
- Floors should be coved in the corners and extended up to the wall a minimum of 15 cm (6”).
- Carpet and rugs are permitted in dining areas only, if maintained in a clean and sanitary state.
- When choosing flooring material, remember staff will need to stand on it all day.

Walls

- Materials that may be used: drywall, plaster, cement block (sealed and painted), ceramic wall tile, and pre-finished PVC or aluminum wall coverings.
- For walls to be easily cleaned and maintained in a sanitary condition, a good quality paint such as a high gloss, semi-gloss latex or enamel paints should be used.
- Paints used in food preparation areas and walk-in refrigerators or freezers should be light in color, stand up to scrubbing, and have mold inhibitors.
- Stainless steel, arborite or ceramic tiles should be installed to protect the wall surfaces behind cooking areas, heavy wear areas, or wet dishwashing areas.
- Where movable equipment could damage walls, properly finished bumpers should be installed to protect the walls.

Ceilings

- Painted drywall is **recommended**.
- If you use a suspended ceiling, the tiles must be smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleaned.
- Ceiling tiles must be kept clean and replaced when broken.
- Open ceilings with exposed vents and piping are not recommended in the kitchen and food preparation areas. If an open ceiling is part of the dining décor, all pipes and vents must be painted, and a maintenance plan must be in place for routine cleaning.



Business Application Form



Business Application Form

Please complete form and return to a Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit office listed below.

Simcoe

12 Gilbertson Dr.,
P.O. Box 570, Simcoe ON N3Y 4N5
T: 519.426.6170 or 905.318.6623
F: 519.426.9974

Caledonia

100 Haddington St.,
Caledonia ON N3W 2N4
T: 905.318.6623
F: 905.765.8905

Dunnville

117 Forest St. E.,
Dunnville, ON N1A 1B9
T: 905.318.6623
F: 905.774.1538

Owner Name:

Owner Address:

City/Town: Province: Postal Code:

Phone:

Type of Establishment(s) Applying for (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Day Care
 ☐ Food Premise - Mobile
 ☐ Public Pool
 ☐ Trailer Park
- ☐ Group Home
 ☐ Food Premise - Home based
 ☐ Public Spa/Hot Tub
 ☐ Public Wading Pool
- ☐ Food Premise - General
 ☐ Personal Service Setting
 ☐ Recreational Campground
 ☐ Potable water haulage vehicle

Please note that all premises providing drinking water to the public and are not serviced by a municipal supply must register with the health unit. Premises serving hauled municipal water to the public must register also.

Name of Establishment:

Address of Establishment:

City/Town: Province: Postal Code:

Phone: Proposed Date of Opening:

Months of Operation (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Year-round
 ☐ February
 ☐ April
 ☐ June
 ☐ August
 ☐ October
 ☐ December
- ☐ January
 ☐ March
 ☐ May
 ☐ July
 ☐ September
 ☐ November

Days and Hours of Operation:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Hours							

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Notes: