

Caution: Before start reading this section, make sure that you have already gone through the main sections of EASY READING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TOOL FOR WOMEN. By reading the tool, you will have clearer understanding on processes and requirements to start and manage the business

Starting a Food Business in Calgary and Surrounding Areas

This guide will help you start a food business in Calgary and surrounding areas. The food business is a big sector, it is important to be clear as to the type, scope, and scale of the business start-up.



Defining Your Food Business

Answer the questions in the given table below

Questions	Guide
1. What type of food business is planned? Be exact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Licenses and permits for the business vary based on the type, scale, and place of the food business Kinds of food businesses such as catering, take away, off-site sales, restaurants, food stores, food trucks, packed & labeled food and home-based businesses have different kinds of licenses
2. What type of food will be prepared and sold?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation and sales of food need to comply with Environmental Public Health Regulations
3. Where you will prepare food items?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoning by-laws and building, fire, electrical, plumbing, ventilation, and licensing codes apply The location needs to comply with the Environmental Public Health Regulations: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Alberta Food Regulation Alberta Food Retail and Food Services Code Alberta Dishwashing Standards
4. Where you will sell food?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoning by-laws and building, fire, electrical, plumbing, ventilation, and licensing codes apply Food trucks need parking permits and other specialized permits
5. Will you package food?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All packed foods must be properly labeled according to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) guidelines. See the Links to Important Website section.
6. Will you be selling alcohol?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alcohol sales need a license from Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
7. Will you operate in Calgary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A permit application from the City of Calgary requires a detailed floor plan including seats, sink, water tanks, ceiling, and floor materials, drains, mops

Steps to Start a Food Business

Contact the City of Calgary to find out about:

- requirements linked to the business location, including preparation and selling
- permits required for the type of business
- licenses required for the business

The City of Calgary may direct you to any of the following departments for licensing and permits depending upon your business type:

- Planning and Development Department 403-268-5311
- Fire Department, Fire Prevention Bureau 311
- Alberta Health Services, Environmental Public Health 403- 943- 2288
- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission 403-292-73000

Develop a detailed map of the location of the business for the City of Calgary permit. This is also applicable for home-based businesses. Details must include the information on:

- Floor size including waiting area
- Number of seats for the customers in the dining area
- Hot water tank and capacity, fume/ exhaust hoods
- Ceiling, wall and floor material
- Floor drains, mop
- Details of hand, preparation area sink(s)
- Dry storage rooms/ shelves
- Washrooms
- Details of equipment

Submit the complete plan, fee, and application in person at the City of Calgary, downtown office between 8.00 am – 4.00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Submit the complete plan to Environmental Public Health Directly to Plan Checker
Environmental Public Health Alberta Health Services 10101 Southport Rd SW Calgary, AB T2W 3N2 403-943-2288

Register in food safety training and get the food safety certificate. For AHS food safety training call 403- 943-2890 or send an email to ehp.education@ahs.ca.

It is compulsory to get the health approval from Alberta Health Service and Fire & HVAC inspection from the City of Calgary at least two weeks before opening the business. Food Handling Permits are valid for one year and need to be placed in a visible place in the business.

Required Approval and Permits for all types of Food Business

1. Municipal zoning and licensing approval
2. Safety code approval (building, electrical)
3. Food Handling Permit
4. Complete the food safety course from Alberta Health Services

Home-Based Food Business

1. All home-based food businesses must be physically separated from the rest of the house.
2. The food business kitchen must meet these requirements:
 - Surface and equipment standards
 - Handwashing and hygiene
 - Temperature controls for food
 - Cleaning and sanitizing
 - Completion of food safety training
3. Home-based businesses must complete the steps to obtain necessary licenses and permits. See the Links to Important Websites section.

Tip: See weblink starting a Food Business in Calgary and Surrounding area and Alberta Health Service – See Links to Important Websites