



New Food Establishment Plan Review

Briefing for the Board of Health, June 2024



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Food Safety Program

- 26 total people
- 3 teams of 8-9 people
 - Supervisor
 - Lead
 - EHS
 - Permit Techs
 - Health Educator / HDS

Assistant Director - Tony Colinas	Supervisor - Chris Stringer FBI, complaints	Food Safety Lead - Alicia Susinger Food safety EHS - Hasnia Wong Food safety EHS - Randy Teters Food safety EHS - Phebe Wall Food safety EHS - Connor Osterlund Health Educator - Leah Tax Health Delivery Specialist - Teresita Corona
	Supervisor - Michael Johnson Plan Review	Food Safety Lead - Keith Smith Food safety EHS - Elaine Hagedorn Food safety EHS - Retta Taffesse Food safety EHS - Carina Kirby Food safety EHS - Ramon Rocha Food safety EHS - Karen Paugh Permit tech - Roxana Falcon Permit Tech - Toshia Phelps
	Supervisor - Brenna Hoppe Temps, DFDO	Food Safety Lead - Stella Strock Food safety EHS - Brent French Food safety EHS - Emily Rhoden Food safety EHS - Faith Maginnis Food safety EHS - Rachel Williams Food safety EHS - Melissa Williams Food safety EHS - Johanna Marsters

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Food Safety Program

- ~3600 food service establishments
- Each EHS = ~550 inspections per year
- + temps, complaints, DFDOs

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	FBI, complaints	Food safety EHS - Hasnia Wong
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Food Safety Program

- 1 Lead + 2 EHS assigned to plan review
- 2 permit techs to process

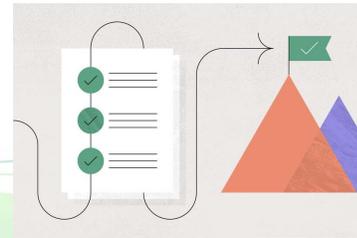
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What is Plan Review

1. Ensures that establishments meet the requirements of the food code
2. Identifies type and risk level for permit and fees
3. Also includes revisions, remodels and changes of ownership



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Plan Review 101



All food service establishments must go through plan review before they are issued a permit



Consultations are encouraged



Applications are accepted online or in person

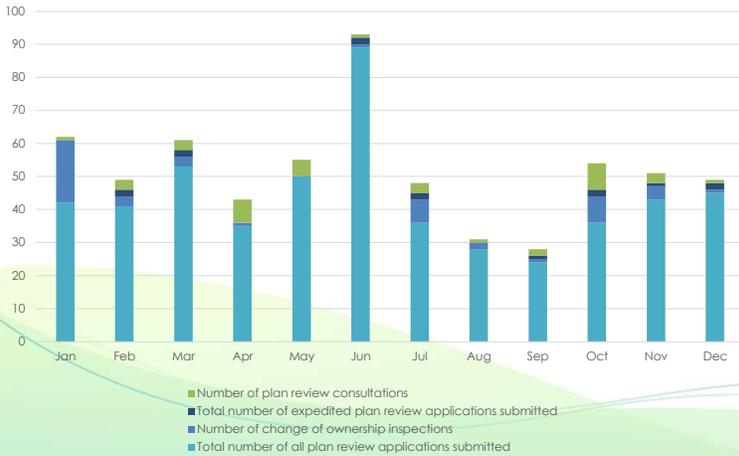


“Estimated time until the first review” is listed on website

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2023 Plan Review Metrics

Plan review activities



- **522**
 - Plan Review applications submitted
 - Average of 44 per month
- **38**
 - Consultations
- **50**
 - Change of Ownership Inspections

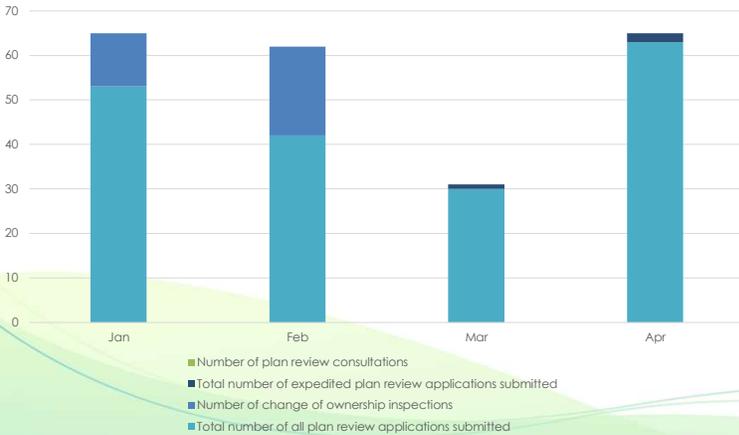
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2024 Jan-Apr Plan Review Metrics

Plan review activities



- **188**
 - Plan Review applications submitted
 - Average of 47 per month

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Plan Review Website



Account - Manage notification subscriptions, save form progress and more.

Home » Healthy Places » Food Safety Program » Starting or Revising a Food Business » Starting a Food Business

Starting a Food Business

Revising a Food Business

Change of Ownership

STARTING A FOOD BUSINESS

Prior to opening a new food service establishment in Snohomish County, the Washington State Retail Food Code requires that plans be reviewed and approved by the Snohomish County Health Department. This review process will help ensure that your plans and equipment meet state and local health requirements.

Click on the links below to go directly to those topics:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Plan Review Process](#)
- [How to Turn in an Application Online](#)
- [Types of Plan Review Applications](#)

ESTIMATED TIME UNTIL THE FIRST REVIEW

The estimated timeline for the first review of a submitted plan is **currently at 12 weeks**. The plans are sent to a queue to be reviewed on a first come-first served basis, regardless of the type of plan review submitted. Exact time until the first review is dependent on the number of applications submitted and may be longer.

CHECK APPLICATION STATUS

CONTACT US

Food Safety

[Email Food Safety](#)

Physical Address [View Map](#)

3020 Rucker Avenue
Suite 104
Everett, WA 98201

Directions

Phone: **425-339-5250**
Fax: 425-339-5254

- Food safety voicemail line:**
425.339.8730
- Report a foodborne illness:**
425.339.8660

Hours

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Plan Review Website



Minimum Equipment and Facility Requirements



General Food Plan

This plan review guide is designed to help you through the plan review process for open establishment in a new or existing building. You will find the following resources in this guide:

1. The 4-Step Plan Review Process
2. Minimum Equipment & Facility Requirements

Before you apply:

- Contact your local building and planning departments for additional requirements. (Common contacts are provided in the Agency Resource List included in this packet.) Inquire about any grease trap requirements.
- Get your Washington State Business License. You can apply online at www.bizfile.wa.gov.
- Obtain water and sewer/septic approval. If the facility will be connected to an on-site septic system, please visit the Snohomish County Health Department [Septic Permits](#) page.
- Review Minimum Requirements
- Make an appointment for a consultation (recommended).

Submit plans. All items listed on the [New Restaurant Plan](#) must be submitted to Snohomish County Health Department. We accept applications in person Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. If you have questions during this time, please call 425-339-5250.

Wait for approval letter. Our goal is to send you a response letter within 10 business days. Once your project is complete, contact the Health Department for approval and meets state and local codes, approval can be given. A copy of the approval letter will be sent to you. To avoid costly mistakes, do not purchase equipment until you have received approval from the Health Department.

Pass inspection. Once your project is complete, contact the Health Department for inspection. Our goal is to send you a response letter within 10 business days. Once your project is complete, contact the Health Department for approval and meets state and local codes, approval can be given. A copy of the approval letter will be sent to you. To avoid costly mistakes, do not purchase equipment until you have received approval from the Health Department.

Review the Pre-operational Checklist to see advance. Charged reinspection may be necessary.

Sinks

Handwashing sinks. Required in all food preparation, food service and warewashing areas.

- Handsinks must remain easily accessible, within the line of sight and 25 feet of all areas where food or beverages are handled, prepared, or served, and in warewashing areas.
- This may require more than one handsink per food service area. Handsinks must be equipped with mixing faucets or combination faucets, hand soap and paper towels.
- The minimum hot water temperature allowed at all handsinks is 100 F at the tap through a mixing valve. Ideally, the hot water should be 100-120 F. Self-closing or metering faucets shall provide a flow of water for at least 15 seconds.

3-compartment sinks. Required in all food service establishments, except for limited grocery stores where all items are pre-packaged. Drainboards should be provided on both sides with raised edges. Each compartment must have rounded corners and must be large enough to accommodate the largest utensil or equipment used in the establishment.

An automatic dishwasher does not replace the requirement for a 3-compartment sink.

Vegetable/fruit preparation sink. Required if there is rinsing, washing, or draining of canned fruit or vegetables. The sink must be stainless steel, have rounded corner basins, raised edges, indirectly plumbed with an air gap, and have at least one integral drainboard.

Meat preparation sink. Required if there is rinsing or thawing under running water of raw meat, poultry, or seafood. The sink must be stainless steel, have rounded corners, raised edges, indirectly plumbed with an air gap, and have at least one integral drainboard. Be aware that a double-basin prep sink cannot be used as both a vegetable and meat prep sink.

Dump sink. Required in bars or taverns near the 3-compartment sink or warewashing machine in the beverage service area. Dump sinks must be indirectly plumbed with an air gap. A handwash sink may not be used as a dump sink.

Mop sink. Required in all food service establishments. A mop sink (or service sink, curbed cleaning facility or janitorial sink) must provide hot and cold water and be equipped with a vacuum breaker if a hose will be attached to the faucet.

Restrooms

Employee restrooms. Employee restrooms are required. Employees may use the same restrooms provided to the public as long as they are located within 200 feet.

Public restrooms. Public restrooms are required with any on-premises consumption of food and beverages. Public restrooms must be conveniently located, available during all hours of operation, and accessible without going through areas of food preparation, food storage, or warewashing.

Environmental Health Division
3020 Rucker Avenue, Suite 104 ■ Everett, WA 98201-3900 ■ fax: 425.339.5254 ■ tel: 425.339.5250

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Plan Review Website

HOW TO TURN IN AN APPLICATION ONLINE

For instructions on how to turn in an application online, click on a language below:

[English](#) / [Chinese](#) / [Korean](#) / [Punjabi](#) / [Spanish](#) / [Thai](#) / [Vietnamese](#)

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General Food Plan Review Checklist

Facility name: _____

This checklist will help you prepare a complete plan review packet. Submit the completed plan review packet and checklist with the required application fee. Incomplete plan review packets will not be accepted. Make a copy of this plan review packet for your records prior to submittal. Plan review fees are non-refundable.

<input type="checkbox"/>	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	Office Use Only <i>Intake</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	General Application Page	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Plan Review Questionnaire	
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Water and Sewer Review	
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Equipment List	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Finish Schedule	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Food Sources	
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Catering Questionnaire and review fee (if applicable)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Floor Plan	
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Menu(s)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Food Preparation Steps	
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Business License	
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Fee	

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Plan Review Process

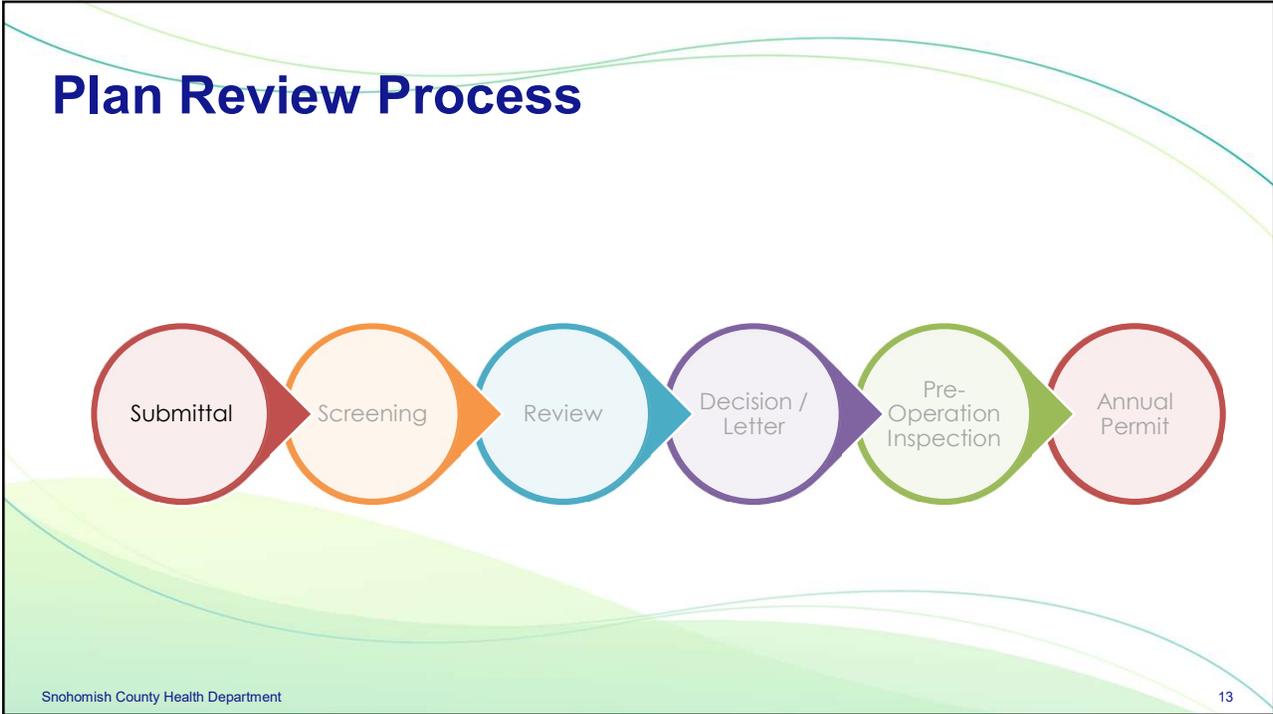
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graph LR
    A((Submittal)) --> B((Screening))
    B --> C((Review))
    C --> D((Decision / Letter))
    D --> E((Pre-Operation Inspection))
    E --> F((Annual Permit))
    
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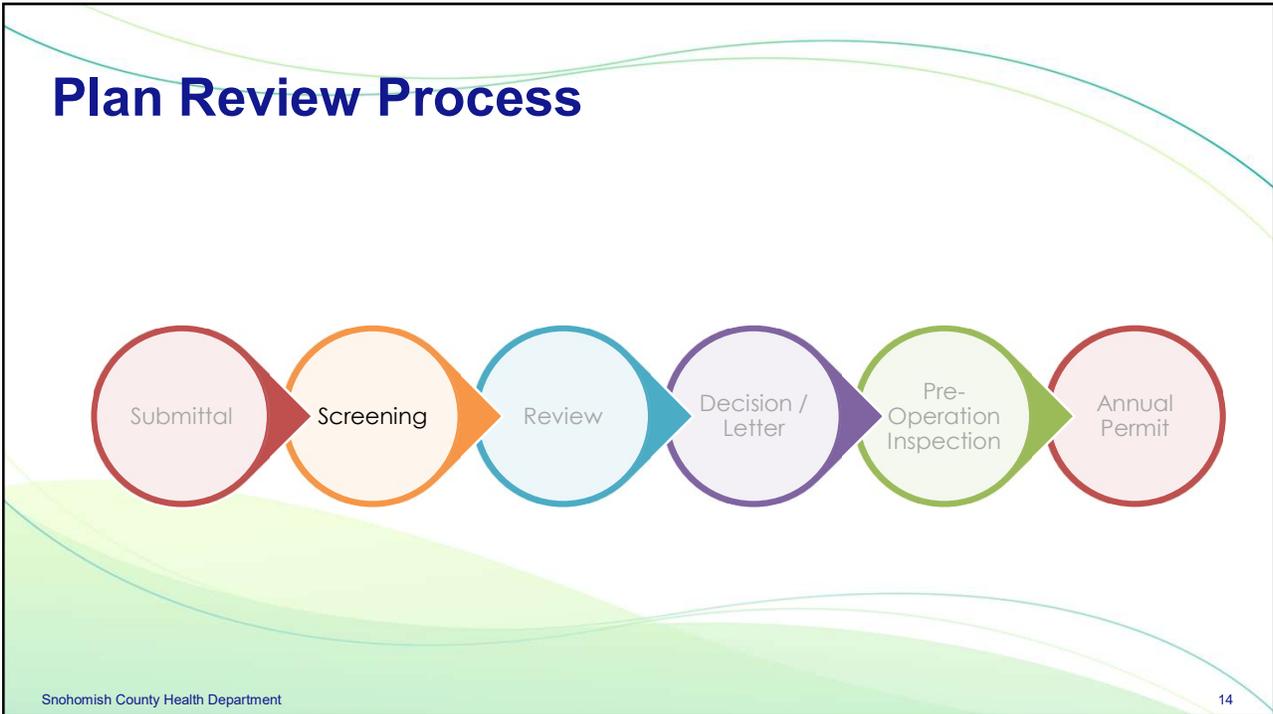
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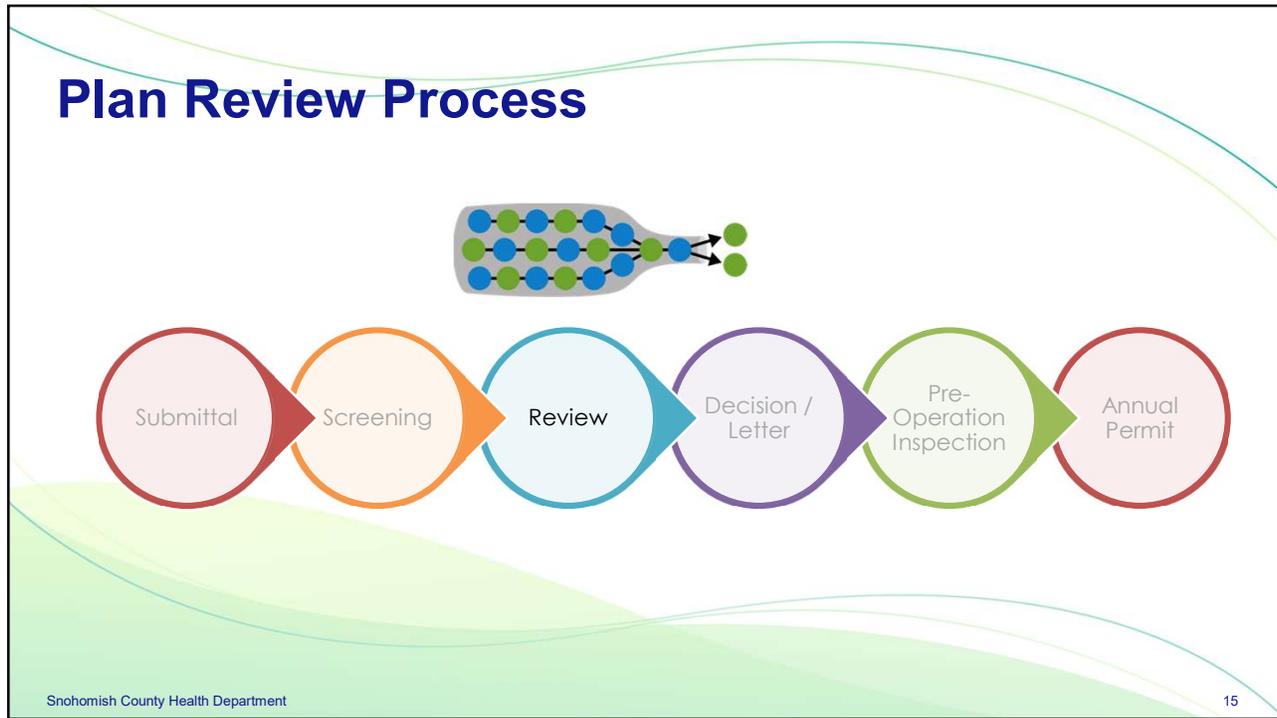
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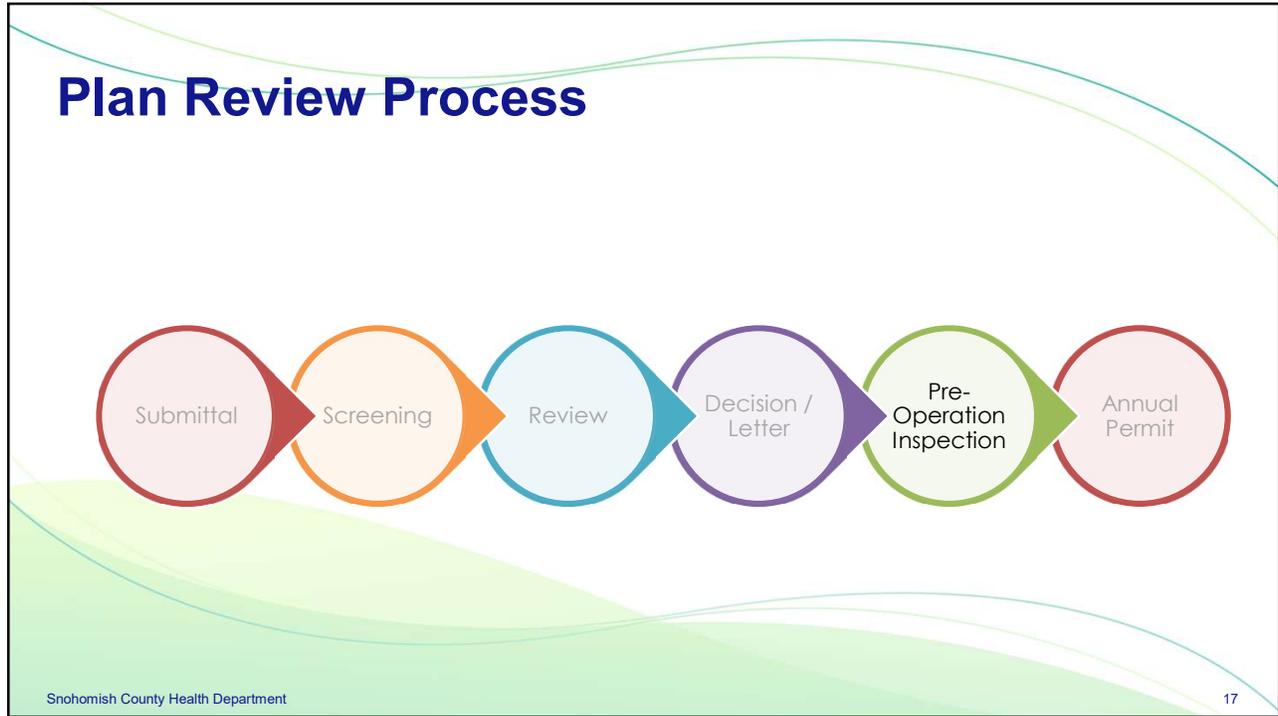
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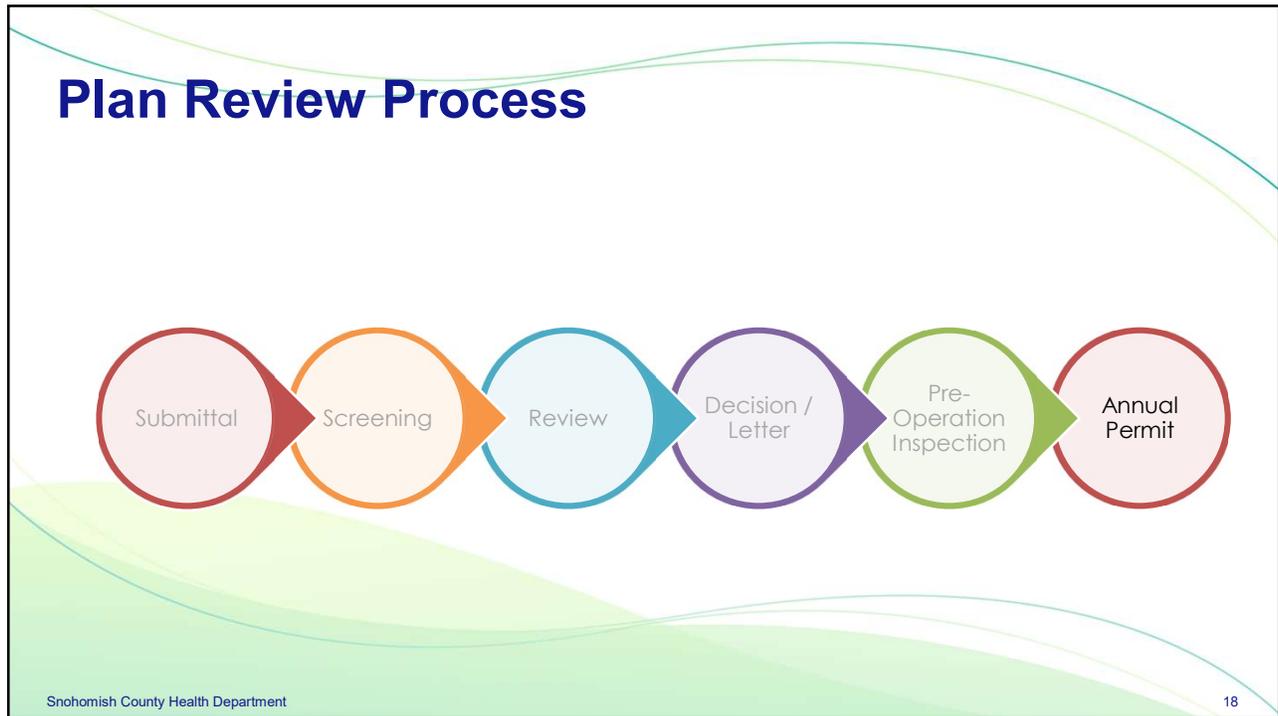
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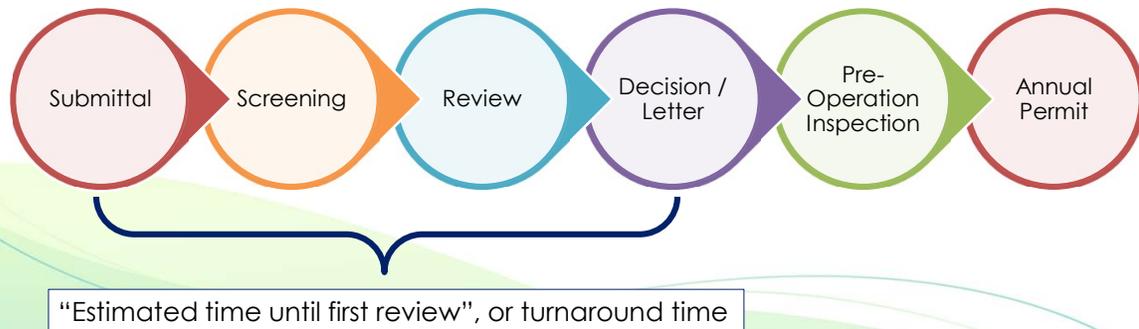


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Plan Review Process



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Types of New Establishment Plan Review

- General Food Service Establishment
- Mobile Food Unit
- Mobile Food Unit Reciprocity
- Tap Room and Tasting Room



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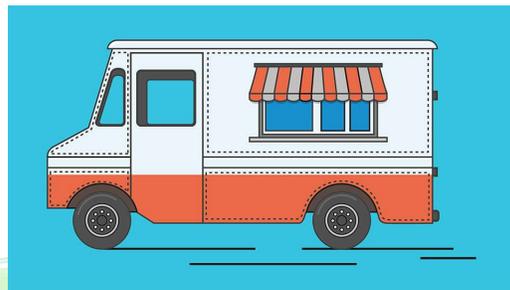
Mobile Food Units

- Two legal pathways to obtaining a permit to operate
 - Temporary event permits
 - Annual operating permits



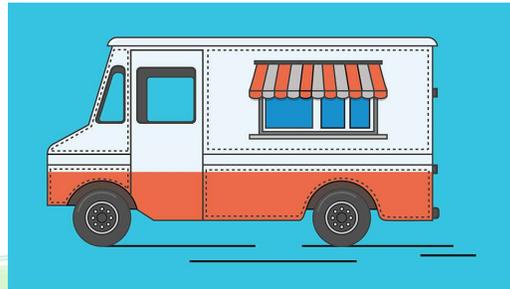
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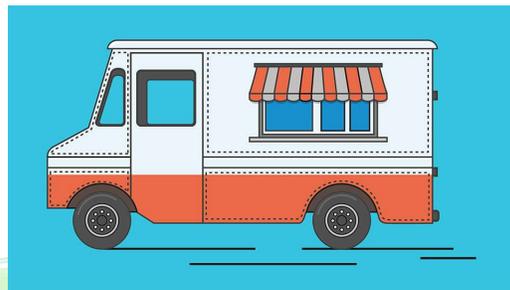
Mobile Food Units

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Mobile Food Units

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 - Temporary event permits
 - Annual operating permits



Mobile Food Units - Commissaries

- MFUs are required to have a commissary
- MFUs with reciprocity can have commissaries in other counties
- Any brick and mortar food service establishment can choose to be a commissary
 - ~3500 in Snohomish County



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Plan Review by the numbers

- Applications added and removed from plan review queue every day
- Turnaround times



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Why are we taking so long?

- Staffing changes
- Lack of expertise
- Resources to train

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Supervisor - Chris Stringer
FBI, complaints

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What about the Permit Techs?

- Customer service
- Ensure complete and accurate information



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Why is plan review so hard?

- Food code is complex
 - WAC 246-215
 - SCBOH code Title 3

Title 3 FOOD SAFETY	
Chapters:	
3.05	Food Services.
Chapter 3.05 FOOD SERVICES	
3.05.010	Chapter 246-215 WAC.
This section adopts chapter 246-215 WAC, Food Service, by reference.	



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Why is plan review so hard?

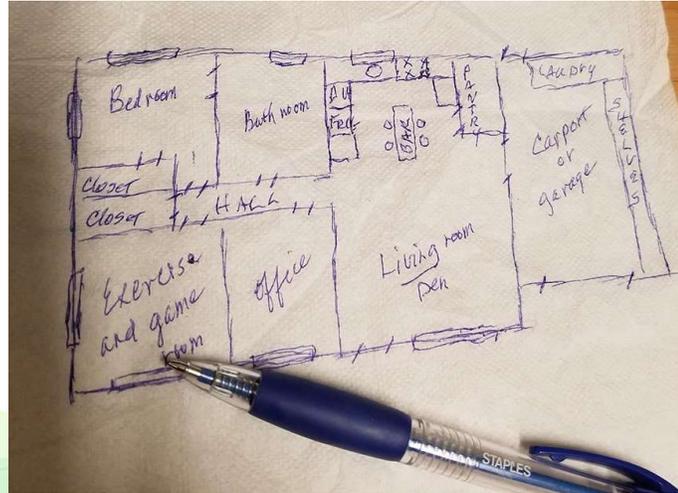
- No certified contractors
- Have to educate applicants



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Why is plan review so hard?

- Quality of materials varies widely



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Why is plan review so hard?

- Disapprovals keep circling in the queue



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Why is plan review so hard?

- Highly political
- High pressure
- Thankless



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Achieving our GOAL: Short Term

- Currently in crisis management
- Hired 2 Permit Technicians
- Bringing staff in from other programs
- Reassigning changes of ownership and pre-operational inspections



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Achieving our GOAL: Short Term

- Currently in crisis management
- **Hired 2 Permit Technicians**
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Achieving our GOAL: Short Term

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Achieving our GOAL: Short Term

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- Hired 2 Permit Technicians
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Achieving our GOAL: Short Term

- Quick changes are not expected
- Are already seeing some decline in wait times
- HOPE to be at 4-6 weeks by fall



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Achieving our GOAL: Long Term

- Reassigning an additional FTE away from routine inspections
- Training additional staff for surge capacity
- Ensure reasonable work loads and political insulation



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Everett Herald Article – Some points of clarification

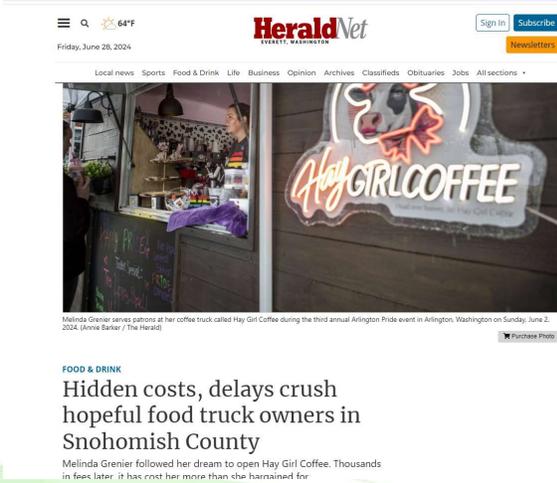
- Commissary kitchens
- # of applicants in queue
- Resubmittals
- Turnaround times

A screenshot of a news article from HeraldNet. The page header includes the date "Friday, June 28, 2024", the temperature "64°F", and navigation links for "Sign in", "Subscribe", and "Newsletters". Below the header is a menu with categories like "Local news", "Sports", "Food & Drink", "Life", "Business", "Opinion", "Archives", "Classifieds", "Obituaries", "Jobs", and "All sections". The main image shows a food truck with a neon sign that says "Hay GIRL COFFEE". Below the image is a caption: "Melinda Grenier serves patrons at her coffee truck called Hay Girl Coffee during the third annual Arlington Pride event in Arlington, Washington on Sunday, June 2, 2024. (Annie Barker / The Herald)". The article title is "Hidden costs, delays crush hopeful food truck owners in Snohomish County" under the "FOOD & DRINK" category. The first line of the article text reads: "Melinda Grenier followed her dream to open Hay Girl Coffee. Thousands in fees later, it has cost her more than she bargained for."

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Everett Herald Article – Some points of clarification

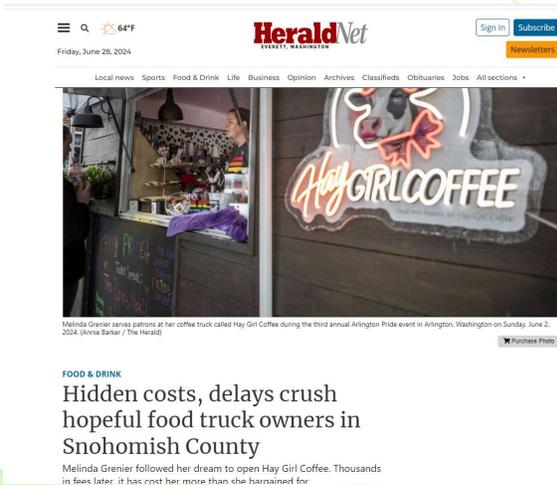
- Commissary kitchens
 - In county are required for in county plan review, not for reciprocity
 - Required by state WAC to ensure safe food / water / waste disposal
 - ~3500 establishments eligible to be a commissary



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Everett Herald Article – Some points of clarification

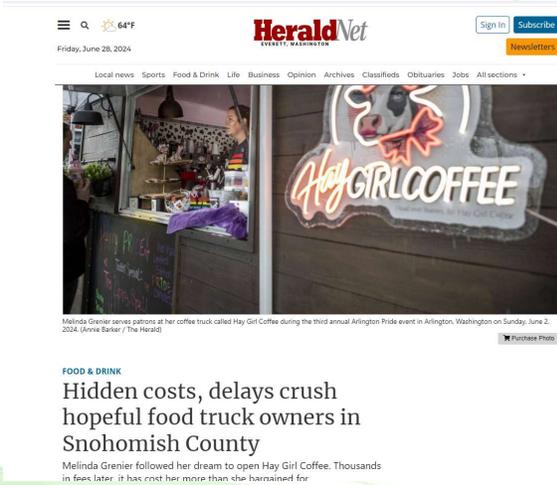
- # of applicants in queue
 - 80 **total** applications in queue
 - Have 121 permitted MFUs out of nearly 3600 FSEs



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Everett Herald Article – Some points of clarification

- Mistakes or disapprovals
 - Get assigned to the original plan reviewer immediately
 - Do not have to have to wait in line for another review

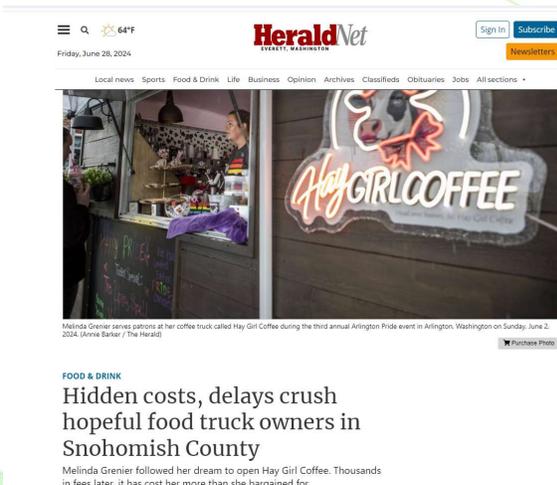


Everett Herald Article – Some points of clarification

- Turnaround times
 - 12 weeks for all
 - No mobile specific advertised turnaround time

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Permit Application Status

STARTING A FOOD BUSINESS

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Ragina Gray
 Environmental Health Division Director
 425-339-8769
 ragina.gray@co.snohomish.wa.us



Questions?



Tony Colinas
 Environmental Health Assistant Director
 425-339-8645
 anthony.colinas@co.snohomish.wa.us

PUBLIC HEALTH
 always working for a safer & healthier
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