

MEMORANDUM



DATE: November 30, 2018

TO: Food Trucks/Traveling Merchants

FROM: Suzi Merriam, Community Development Director
Justin Meek, AICP, Principal Planner

RE: Permit Requirements for Food Trucks in the City of Watsonville

The City requires permits for operating food trucks in the City of Watsonville. Please be aware of the following permits that you must obtain in order to operate in the City.

TRAVELING MERCHANT PERMIT (WMC § 5-14.01)

All catering trucks, ice cream trucks, and push carts that sell food in the City of Watsonville are required to obtain a Traveling Merchant Permit from the Watsonville Police Department. Fingerprinting is required as part of the permit application. If you have questions regarding the Traveling Merchant Permit, please contact the Police Department at (831) 768-3300.

HEALTH PERMIT (COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT)

All food trucks require a Health Permit and inspection by the County of Santa Cruz. For more information on obtaining a Health Permit, please contact the County of Santa Cruz at (831) 454-2022.

BUSINESS LICENSE (WMC § 3-4.05)

Any person doing business in the City of Watsonville requires a Business License, including any food truck that is based within the City. This is an annual tax payable to the City of Watsonville. If you have questions regarding the business license application, please contact the Finance Department at (831) 768-3455.

Table 1. What Permits Are You Required to Have?

Your Situation		Requirements			
Truck stored within City Limits	Conduct business within City limits	Health Permit	Traveling Merchant	Business License	Fire Inspection
Yes	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
Yes	No	✓		✓	✓
No	Yes	✓	✓	✓	✓
No	No	✓			

In addition to the above referenced licenses, you must contract a commissary for waste disposal service and storage of the food truck. Food trucks are not allowed to be parked overnight or stored on public streets or in residential zones. No Business License application will be accepted without proof of contract with a licensed commissary.

For more information about operating restrictions for a mobile vending business in the City of Watsonville, please see WMC section 5-14.10 of the Traveling Merchant Ordinance ([click here](#)). If you have questions, you may contact the Community Development Department at (831) 768-3050.

The following applications are available online:

- Traveling Merchant Permit ([click here to download](#))
- Business License ([click here to download](#))