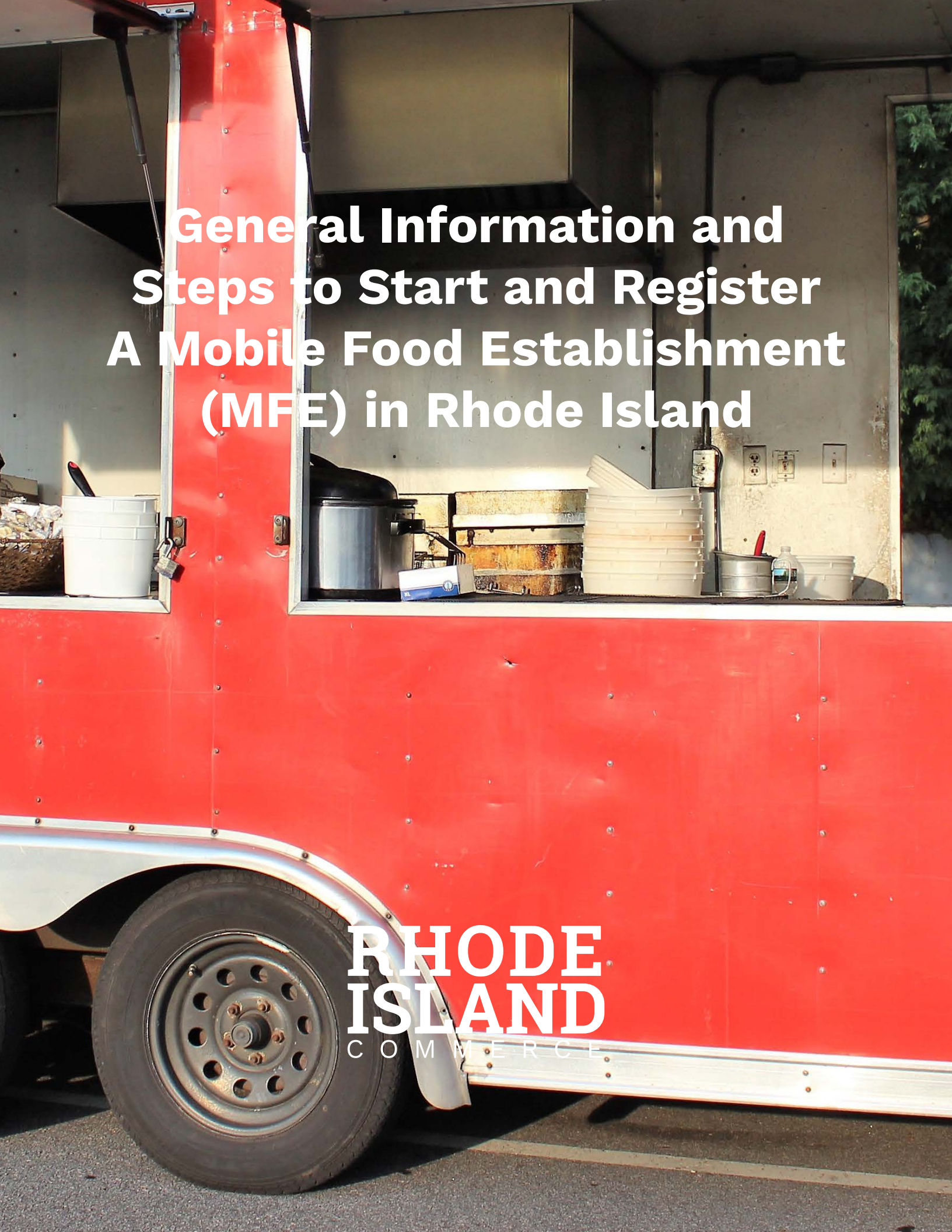


General Information and Steps to Start and Register A Mobile Food Establishment (MFE) in Rhode Island

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General Information and Steps to Start and Register A Mobile Food Establishment (MFE) in Rhode Island

Please note: The RI Department of Business Regulation (DBR) has received multiple requests and questions regarding the sale of alcoholic beverages with an MFE Registration. Regulation 230-RICR-30-35-1 subsection 1.4(C) **prohibits the sale and/or service of alcoholic beverages.**

Business Structure

- If you wish to operate your business through a formal, incorporated business structure such as a **Limited Liability Company (LLC), Corporation, Limited Partnership (LP), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), or Non-Profit Corporation**, you will need to register your business with the RI Department of State. Find out more at: https://www.sos.ri.gov/divisions/business-services/ri-business/start-your-rhode-island-business
- If you do **not** wish to incorporate a business but plan to use a business name that is different from your legal name (a Sole Proprietorship or General Partnership), you will need to register a **Trade Name** with the RI Department of State for each RI city or town in which you will operate. Find out more at: https://www.sos.ri.gov/divisions/business-services/ri-trade-names

Required Documents for State Registration of Mobile Food Establishments with the RI Department of Business Regulation (DBR)

In Rhode Island, MFE's need to be registered with the State of RI Department of Business Regulation (DBR), before obtaining any municipal business permits. The applications for MFE registration can be completed online using the OpenGov Portal at: https://rhodeisland.portal.opengov.com/categories/1076/record-types/6364. The application should include the following documents with your submission. Be sure to obtain these required documents below before applying to DBR:

1. State Fire Marshall MFE Inspection Certificate:

Obtain an annual inspection of your MFE from the RI State Fire Marshal's Office, if applicable. Upon passing the inspection, the approval will be documented and retained in the OpenGov Portal. Retain a copy of the fire inspection certificate and keep it on your MFE. Obtaining a state MFE fire inspection also applies to out-of-state MFE's. To schedule an inspection, go to: https://rhodeisland.portal.opengov.com/categories/1076/record-types/6420 or call **(401) 889-5555** for more information. **Requests for fire inspections must be made at least (7) business days in advance.**

1. State Fire Marshall MFE Inspection Certificate: continued

State Fire Marshal MFE Inspections: are **only** required if the MFE is equipped with any of the following:

- Gasoline, diesel or electric generator
- Propane or compressed natural gas
- Commercial cooking equipment
- Fire suppression system

State Fire Marshal MFE Inspection Checklist:
Please review the checklist so you are familiar with items that will be inspected during the fire inspection: Click here

State Fire Marshal MFE Inspection Fee
In accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-28.2-27 an inspection fee in the amount of $100.00 shall be collected at the start of the inspection by the inspector, and a copy of the statute requiring the fee shall be supplied to the appropriate party. If a "re-inspection" is required, an additional fee of $100.00 is due at the time of re-inspection. Acceptable forms of payment must be in the form of a business check, certified bank check, or personal check **made payable to: "State of Rhode Island General Treasurer". Cash, credit cards, or money orders will not be accepted.**

2. Mobile Food Service License Issued from RI Department of Health (RIDOH):

Submit a copy of your valid Mobile Food Service license that was issued by the RIDOH, Center for Food Protection, with your DBR registration submission. This requirement applies to out-of-state MFE's as well, even if you possess a similar health license/permit from your home state you will need to obtain a RIDOH Mobile Food Service license to operate in the State of Rhode Island. For an online RIDOH Mobile Food Service application click here: https://health.ri.gov/food-safety/mobile-food-service-businesses

Checklist of RIDOH Mobile Food Establishment requirements
Click here: https://dbr.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur696/files/documents/divisions/commlicensing/FoodTrucks/MFEDOHCHECKLIST.pdf

For more information, contact the RIDOH Center for Food Protection at **(401) 222-2749.**

3. Valid Motor Vehicle Registration (If applicable):

All mobile food establishment vehicles that by state law need to be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), must submit a copy of a valid current registration with your DBR registration submission. **Out-of-state applicants** must submit a copy of a valid current motor vehicle registration issued from the state in which their vehicle is registered.

4. Valid Watercraft Registration:

If you plan to use a watercraft, submit a copy of a valid current vessel registration issued by the RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), Office of Boat Registration & Licenses, with your DBR registration submission. Vessels with **out-of-state registration** must submit a copy of a valid current vessel registration from the state in which their vessel is registered. (For online vessel registration with RIDEM click here: https://dem.ri.gov/natural-resources-bureau/boating-registration-licenses. For information about boat/vessel registration, contact RIDEM Boat Registration at **(401)222-6647.**

5. Valid Motor Vehicle Insurance (If applicable):

Submit a copy of valid proof of motor vehicle insurance with your DBR registration submission. All applicants required to register their vehicles under state law must provide proof of motor vehicle insurance.

6. Valid Watercraft Insurance:

If you plan to use a watercraft, submit a copy of valid proof of watercraft insurance with your DBR registration submission. All applicants required to register their watercraft under state law must provide proof of insurance.

7. RI Retail Sales Permit:

Submit a copy of your valid permit to make sales at retail, issued by the RI Division of Taxation, with your DBR registration submission. (For the RI Division of Taxation online Business Application and Registration (BAR) form, or to print a copy of the form: https://www.ri.gov/taxation/BAR/ for questions about sales tax registration, contact RI Division of Taxation, Registration Section at (401) 574-8829 or https://tax.ri.gov/tax-sections/sales-excise-taxes

Evaluate Potential Areas of Operation

- **Review City/Town Ordinances:**
  It is recommended that you review the city and/or town ordinances pertaining to mobile food businesses before you apply for a city/town business permit in order to become familiar with the requirements and restrictions for mobile food establishments in each municipality.
  Link to Rhode Island City and Town Ordinances: https://www.courts.ri.gov/programs-services/Pages/City-and-Town-Ordinances.aspx

- **Potential Municipalities:**
  After receiving a Registration from the DBR, it is the responsibility of the mobile food business to find their own areas of operation within the parameters set by the municipality and to apply for the appropriate MFE permits with each city or town they wish to operate within.

Municipal Permitting Information

- **City/Town MFE Permit:**
  After receiving your **State Registration** from the DBR, you can then apply for a MFE permit to operate in a specific city or town, **if a permit is available**, and/or if required by the municipality. For a few municipalities you can do this through the State e-Permitting Portal. If a municipality is not on the State e-Permitting Portal, contact each municipality clerk's office directly to apply. **Link to a list of municipality websites**: https://www.ri.gov/towns/

- **Special Events:**
  Depending upon the municipal ordinance, MFE's may need to obtain a MFE permit from the city or town where the special event will take place. In some cases, you may be able to obtain a one-day permit to participate in a special event if you do not already hold a MFE permit with the municipality. Check with the Event Coordinator or the municipality clerk's office.

- **Event Permit/Temporary Mass Gathering Permit**
  Any person or entity desiring to hold a MFE event on municipal property, such as an Event Coordinator, needs to obtain an Event Permit/Temporary Mass gathering Permit from the municipality prior to holding the event. For a few municipalities you may be able to do this through the State e-Permitting Portal, otherwise contact the appropriate municipality having authority over the property you wish to use to obtain an application for a permit and fee information.

State-Owned Property

- **Special Use Permits for State-Owned Property:**
  Any person or entity desiring to hold a MFE Event on state owned property, such as an Event Coordinator, must first obtain permission from the state agency having jurisdiction over such property. Applicable permit fees may vary by property type and activity, consult with the appropriate state agency having authority over the property you wish to use. In most cases you will need to submit an application directly to the state agency.

Are You Familiar with Rhode Island State Laws, Regulations, and Municipal Ordinances Pertaining to Mobile Food Establishments (MFE's)?

Educate Yourself:

- **RI State Law:** Mobile Food Establishment Act – it is recommended that you review R.I. Gen. Law § 5-11.1 at: https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE5/5-11.1/INDEX.HTM
- **RI State Rules and Regulations:** Rules and Regulations are implemented by the RI Department of Business Regulation (DBR). It is recommended that you review the rules and regulations at: https://rules.sos.ri.gov/regulations/part/230-30-35-1
- **Link to Rhode Island City and Town Municipal Ordinances:** You should review the city and/or town ordinances pertaining to mobile food businesses to become familiar with the restrictions for mobile food establishments in each municipality you wish to be licensed with. https://www.courts.ri.gov/programs-services/Pages/City-and-Town-Ordinances.aspx
- Link to the State of Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation: Mobile Food Establishments (Food Trucks) Website: https://dbr.ri.gov/divisions/commlicensing/FoodTrucks.php

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State of Rhode Island
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS REGULATION
Commercial Licensing
1511 Pontiac Avenue, Bldg. 68-2, Cranston, Rhode Island 02920
Tel: (401) 462-9500 | Email: DBR.CommLicInquiry@dbr.ri.gov

State of Rhode Island
Mobile Food Establishment (MFE)

Checklist for Registration with RI Department of Business Regulation

Business Operation Licensing

- ☐ If you wish to operate your business through a formal, incorporated business structure such as a **Limited Liability Company (LLC), Corporation, Limited Partnership (LP), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), or Non-Profit Corporation**, you will need to register your business with the RI Department of State. Find out more at: https://www.sos.ri.gov/divisions/business-services/ri-business/start-your-rhode-island-business
- ☐ If you do **not** wish to incorporate a business but plan to use a business name that is different from your legal name (a Sole Proprietorship or General Partnership), you will need to register a **Trade Name** with the RI Department of State for each RI city or town in which you will operate.
  Find out more at: https://www.sos.ri.gov/divisions/business-services/ri-trade-names

Required Documents for State Registration

- ☐ Mobile Food Establishment Fire Inspection Certificate (Make appointments seven (7) business days in advance via phone at 401-889-5555)
  - **NOTE: Only required if the MFE is equipped with:**
    - **Gasoline, diesel or electric generator**
    - **Propane or compressed natural gas**
    - **Commercial cooking equipment**
    - **Fire suppression system**
- ☐ Mobile Food Service License from Department of Health (For information, call 401-222-2749)
  - **NOTE: Out-of-State MFEs are required to obtain a license from the Rhode Island Department of Health, even if in possession of a similar license from its home state**
- ☐ Valid Motor Vehicle Registration (If applicable)
- ☐ Valid Watercraft Registration (If applicable)
- ☐ Valid Motor Vehicle Insurance (If applicable)
- ☐ Valid Watercraft Insurance (If applicable)
- ☐ State of Rhode Island Retail Sales Permit (For information, call RI Division of Taxation at 401-574-8829)

Municipality Registration

- ☐ Review city/town ordinances pertaining to mobile food business (https://www.courts.ri.gov/programs-services/Pages/City-and-Town-Ordinances.aspx)
- ☐ Contact municipality regarding obtaining permits for operation

State Statutes and Regulations

Read up on the Rhode Island Statute regarding Mobile Food Establishments: https://webserver.rilegislature.gov/Statutes/TITLE5/5-11.1/INDEX.HTM

Read up on the State Regulations regarding Mobile Food Establishments: http://bit.ly/RIMFERegs

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Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation, Commercial Licensing
Tel: (401) 462-9500 | Email: DBR.CommLicInquiry@dbr.ri.gov

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