



What to Expect During a Wake County Transitional Permit Evaluation

Do You Need a New Permit?

Food Establishment Permits are non-transferrable. A new permit is required whenever there is a change of ownership. This includes:

- Sale to a new owner.
- Transfer via bankruptcy or court order.
- Transfer between a sole proprietorship and an LLC, even if the "owner" is the same.

The following may not be considered ownership changes:

- Transfer of part or all of an entire corporation or LLC to another entity, so long as the establishment remains under the original corporation or LLC.

Please contact our team with any questions regarding whether a change requires a new permit.

Documents You Will Need During the Evaluation:

- A completed Food Establishment Permit Application.
- Contact information, including phone and email for restaurant and owner, and billing address.
- Emergency contact phone number and email address.
- Food Protection Manager Certificate for owner or person in charge (if available).
- Copies of dine-in and to-go menus (if available).

A representative of the buyer must be present at the time of the evaluation for a permit to be issued.

To operate a food establishment in Wake County, you are required to have a North Carolina Food Establishment Permit. If you are purchasing an existing establishment and are making **minimal menu and equipment changes**, you may be eligible for a Transitional Permit. A Transitional Permit allows you to continue to operate the business while making any necessary repairs to equipment and physical facilities.

A food establishment may be eligible for a Transitional Permit if:

- It is an existing permitted food establishment.
- It is either currently operating or has been closed for less than one year.
- You will be making minimal or no changes to the menu or equipment.
- You will be making no changes to equipment or physical facilities that would require a Building Permit (such as a Building, Plumbing, Electrical, or Mechanical permit). *Adding or moving cooking equipment under a hood generally requires a Building Permit and may make an establishment ineligible for a Transitional Permit.*
- Necessary repairs to the establishment are such that the repairs would not require a Building Permit.

Establishments found to be ineligible for a Transitional Permit must be permitted through the Plan Review process. Contact Wake County Plan Review at 919-856-7417 or visit <http://www.wakegov.com/food> for more information.

If you plan to purchase a food establishment, please reach out to our office as early as possible in the process. A member of our Environmental Health & Safety Management Team will make an appointment to visit the establishment with you to evaluate for a Transitional Permit. Please contact our office at 919-856-7414 or 919-857-9445 and we will match you with the appropriate staff for your evaluation. Our staff will provide you with an application and schedule a visit.

A Transitional Permit Evaluation is different than a regular health inspection.

Unlike a regular inspection, this evaluation focuses on equipment and physical facilities, and no grade is posted. During your evaluation, the establishment will be assessed for items such as:

- Condition of all equipment and physical facilities.
- Ability of hot and cold holding equipment to hold foods at proper temperatures.
- Proper light levels throughout food preparation areas, storage areas, and restrooms.
- Proper floor, wall, and ceiling finishes.
- Adequate hot water, and a properly sized water heater.
- Adequate sneezeguards and other measures to protect food from the public.
- Properly functioning plumbing, including backflow prevention.



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Documents You Will Not Need:

- Payments for the evaluation and permit. North Carolina DHHS will bill you for any permit-related fees. Wake County Field Staff do not accept payments.

A Transitional Permit May Be Denied For:

- Any Imminent Hazard which causes or would cause the establishment to be immediately closed, such as sewage backup, no water under pressure, or insufficient refrigeration.
- Major equipment or physical facilities changes, such as addition of equipment under a hood, or addition of walls.
- Physical facilities damage such that repairs cannot be completed without issuance of a Building Permit.

If you receive a permit:

- You may begin operating immediately.
- You will be provided with a list of necessary repairs and upgrades.
- You have 180 days to complete all listed items.
- Your establishment will be graded at least once during the 180 days and the inspector will check on your progress and answer any questions about the list.
- Failure to complete all listed items within 180 days will result in the permit expiring. If the permit expires, the establishment will be closed and Plan Review will be required for a new permit to be issued.
- Contact your inspector with any questions related to repair list items. This can minimize costly rework.

It is very important that the restaurant be fully cleaned before your Transitional Permit Evaluation. A clean restaurant is important for food safety and will help facilitate a proper evaluation. It is strongly recommended that you complete the following:

- **Clean all floors, walls, and ceilings.** Remove greasy buildup from walls, ceilings, and light fixtures.
- **Clean all cooking equipment.** Remove all cooked-on food and grease residues. Clean tops and sides of all cooking equipment. Detail clean areas such as shelving and casters.
- **Clean all warewashing equipment.** Clean undersides of three compartment sinks. Clean interior and exterior of dish machines.
- **Clean user-serviceable portions of hood systems.** This includes visible portions of the hood as well as hood filters. Hood components behind the hood filters should only be cleaned and serviced by professionals.
- **Clean interior and exterior of all refrigeration and hot-holding equipment.** Clean all door gaskets and hinges. Clean all interior shelving and wipe walls and floors of reach-in coolers and hot hold cases.
- **Clean shelving in kitchen and dry-storage areas.**
- **Clean interiors of cabinets and storage closets.** Remove unnecessary items and arrange in an orderly manner so walls and floors can be evaluated.
- **Clean outdoor mop sinks and trash enclosures.**

Equipment and physical facilities that are too dirty to properly evaluate for condition may be required to be cleaned during the Evaluation.

Avoid these common mistakes as you prepare for a Transitional Permit Evaluation:

- **Avoid making repairs prior to the Evaluation.** Repairs must be made to certain sanitation standards. Our staff can provide additional guidance during the evaluation. Consider delaying repairs until after the evaluation to avoid costly rework.
- **Do not paint any equipment.** Most restaurant equipment cannot be painted without voiding its sanitation certification. "Rusty" shelving and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned to allow for evaluation but must not be painted. Painted equipment may be required to be replaced.
- **Avoid deep cleaning around open foods and clean utensils.** Deep cleaning is highly recommended, but it should take place only when active food preparation is not taking place, and when foods, single use items, and clean utensils can be moved to a safe location.

Wake County Permits are issued under the NC Food Code and the NC .2600 Rules.

This document is intended as a guide to help you prepare for a Transitional Permit and does not cover all parts of the Rules. It is recommended that you are familiar with the Rules prior to requesting a Transitional Permit.
