



## CONSTRUCTION PLAN FOR FOOD FACILITIES FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. [How long do I need to wait for my plans to be reviewed?](#) We have up to 20 working days to review all plans, new and revised. As plans are received almost daily, they are checked in the order in which they are received. All plans are logged in and date stamped to reflect the date received. This process is followed to provide fairness and equity to all customers.
2. [Do I need an architect to prepare my plans?](#) No, not technically. However, unless a customer is a licensed architect or designer, it is very difficult to discern all of the codes and regulations. Therefore, we always recommend the use of an architect or food service designer to prepare plans to satisfy all of the requirements. Any additional expense paid in the beginning will far outweigh lost time, money, and anxiety.
3. [How many sets of plans do I need to submit?](#) Initially, submit only “1” set for initial review. After all corrections have been made through the process, three final sets are to be submitted for final stamp and approval.
4. [Is the plan check fee the same as the permit fee?](#) No. The plan check fee is required to be submitted with the application and one set of plans. Plans will not be accepted without the appropriate fee and application. The permit fee is collected at the time of the final inspection.
5. [Can you answer a question about the size of my grease interceptor?](#) All grease interceptor reviews are handled directly by the Sanitary District for each city. If you are on a septic system, our Land Use Division will size the grease interceptor as part of the septic review and approval.
6. [What forms do I need for a hood?](#) See pages 33-39 of the Construction Plan Approval Procedures guide for the instruction sheet and the appropriate forms. These can also be accessed as a separate document on our County Website or at the front desk.
7. [When do I call for inspection?](#) See page 11 of the Construction Plan for detailed information regarding inspections.
8. [Do I need a permit for prepackaged foods?](#) Yes. We permit facilities such as Toys R’ Us, Best Buy, Dollar Store, etc. A detailed explanation for requirements is available on our Website (100% Pre-packaged Food Facility Requirements) and plans are required for new construction of these facilities.

9. **Do I need to pay another fee when I resubmit plans?** You are allowed up to three reviews total for plans. If additional reviews are required, an additional fee will be assessed.
10. **At what height is the floor sink installed?** The floor sink is installed flush with the finished floor and sealed around the sink perimeter.
11. **Do I really need to submit samples, even if I use quarry tile?** Yes. As there are a variety of colors, textures and look alike products, samples are always required for review and approval for all finish materials.
12. **Can I purchase used equipment?** Used refrigeration is not approved. Any other equipment proposed must be “like new” and NSF approved. Typically, equipment purchased at an auction setting will not be approved.
13. **Do I need a permit to replace my floor?** You must submit all flooring proposals, with samples, for review and approval. If your facility does not have floor drains or floor sinks, these will be required at the time a new floor is installed. A Plumbing Permit from the Building Department is also required for installation of floor sinks and floor drains.
14. **Do I need a permit to replace or install sinks, refrigeration, cooking equipment, storage, etc?** Any equipment changes that require a Plumbing or Building Permit from the Building Official require plans. Equipment changes under the hood require the hood exhaust data sheet and performance test to be performed. Based on the findings, plans may be required for upgrade or replacement of the hood. Stand alone refrigeration, shelving, etc. must be submitted to your District Inspector for review to determine if plans are required. Installation of a new hood or walk-in requires plans.
15. **I have changes to my approved plans. What do I do?** You are required to always resubmit revised plans, with a new application and fee, for all changes made during construction. See Page 11 of the Construction Plan guide for details.
16. **What is the difference between a major and minor remodel?** The scope of work will determine the fee that is assessed for your plan submittal. It is always best to submit plans with a full remodel fee to cover your scope of work. If it is determined, upon examination, that the job is actually a minor remodel, a refund or credit will be processed on your behalf.
17. **How long does the entire process take?** For Environmental Health Department, the timeframe, from initial submittal to final plan approval, can be from 20 to 40 working days. To secure all permits through Building and Fire, to include your response time to comments provided by all agencies, and to construct your facility may take anywhere from 4 to 6 months, or longer, due to unforeseen circumstances, bad weather or problems during review or construction. Please keep this in mind when planning for your project and negotiating lease time with your landlord.
18. **How do I access the website information?** [www.co.marin.ca.us/ehs](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/ehs) then select link for “Food” near the top of the page. On the Food page you will find a link to the Plan Check Process.

THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK!

OUR GOAL IS TO “GUIDE” YOU THROUGH OUR PROCESS TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS  
AND FACILITATE THE OPENING OF YOUR BUSINESS!