



Commercial Permits Mobile Food and Coffee Vending Fact Sheet

This fact sheet provides guidance for mobile food and coffee vendors applying for a commercial permit to operate in Townsville City Council controlled areas.

Important information to know before operating your mobile food and coffee business

When is a Commercial Permit required?

Commercial Permit activities

Vendors wishing to operate independently in Council-controlled spaces (outside of organised events) **must apply for a Commercial Permit.**

- This permit allows trading in approved public locations under specific conditions and ensures compliance with Council's local laws.
- Vendors are responsible for their own site selection, application process, and adherence to location restrictions and operational guidelines.

Vendors and stalls at events

Vendors trading as part of an organised event (e.g. markets, festivals, community events) are managed by the event organiser and **do not require a Commercial Permit.**

If you are interested in operating at an event, please contact the event organiser.

Choosing a location for your mobile food and coffee business

When deciding on a location, Council will assess your proposal under *Subordinate Local Law No. 1.2 (Commercial Use of Local Government Controlled Areas and Roads) 2011*. This law allows Council to apply conditions to ensure safety, accessibility and fairness in public spaces.

To help your application progress smoothly, consider the following guidelines used in Council's assessment and select a location:

- at least 200 metres away from a school zone while the 40 km/h limit is active
- at least 500 metres away from bricks-and-mortar businesses selling similar products during their operating hours, unless you have written consent and can provide it to Council
- at least 50 metres away from other street food and coffee vendors, unless written consent is provided to Council
- not directly in front of residential property
- clear of bus stops, emergency access points, shelters, signage, or Council infrastructure
- not on roads with speed limits of 70 km/h or more, or on unsealed shoulders; in rural areas without kerbing, keep at least 9 metres from the road edge
- at least 100 metres away from intersections and pedestrian crossings.

Can vendors put tables and chairs out for customers?

Tables and chairs may be allowed if:

- they are structurally sound, safe and do not obstruct pedestrians.
- they adhere to kerb setback requirements as per Council's [Outdoor Dining and Footpath Activation Policy](#).

Approval depends on factors such as location, available space, and type of equipment. Vendors must include a site plan showing the layout with their application. All furniture must be packed away after trading and outdoor dining rules apply.

How do I access power and water supply?

Vendors are required to supply their own power, water and waste/rubbish removal and are not permitted to access any Council assets for this purpose.

How to apply for a Commercial Permit

To operate as a mobile food and coffee vendor in a Council-controlled space, you must complete the following steps:

Step 1: Appropriate food safety requirements

- If applicable to your operation, obtain a current food handling certificate.
- If required, apply for a [Mobile Food Licence](#) through Council's Environmental Health team.

Step 2: Prepare your Commercial Permit application

- Identify the location(s) you wish to operate from and contact the Commercial Permits Officer to discuss identified locations.
- Complete the [Commercial Permit Application Form](#) and include copies of:
 - Certificate of Currency for \$20 million Public Liability Insurance with Townsville City Council listed as an interested party and current Motor Vehicle Insurance for food and coffee truck/trailer
 - Food Licence, Food Handling Certificate, First Aid and Blue Card (if relevant)
 - a completed [Risk Assessment](#) document
 - a detailed site plan showing your proposed layout (including signage and proposed furniture).

Step 3: Submit your application

- Ensure all documentation is complete before submission. Incomplete applications cannot be assessed.
- Applications are assessed in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This process can take up to 30 business days from the time all documentation is correctly submitted. Once approved, an agreement will be sent to you for signing and upon return an invoice will be issued. You may begin trading upon payment of the relevant invoice.
- [View Fees and Charges](#).

Contact us

For more information or assistance, contact the Commercial Permits Officer via email commercialpermits@townsville.qld.gov.au or phone 13 48 10.



For more information,
visit Council's website

