

Opening a Burger Restaurant



Get an idea of possible permitting and other regulatory considerations for a gourmet burger shop in a location that housed a similar business before — however, the new owner will be introducing a new menu, including fried foods.

A former deli location has been closed for a few months. The new owner/operator intends to remodel the space and update the kitchen with new equipment to accommodate the new menu, which will feature gourmet burgers and shakes.

- Existing restaurant space
- New menu and kitchen equipment
- Minor remodel and a new sign
- Carry-out and eat-in service

- Maximum Occupancy: 75
- Outside seating: tables and chairs
- No alcohol served
- Minor employees

On the List	For this Scenario	Variables	Cost/Time
Permitted Use*	The owner should check with the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections to confirm the permitted use is up-to-date and allowed. Because this burger restaurant location was a deli before, the permitted use is likely up-to-date.	If the use is allowable, but is different from the established use, then a Change of Use Permit can be processed along with construction permits. If the desired use is not allowable, then prior to construction permits the owner must apply for Conditional Use Approval – but there's no guarantee they'll get it.	A Conditional Use Approval, before construction permitting, can take 5-7 months for a decision – this varies case by case. <u>More info</u>
Historic District or Building*	The owner should check with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods to see if their site has special requirements. This burger restaurant location is not in a historic neighborhood or landmark building.	If the location is in a historic neighborhood or landmark building, any improvements (such as a new sign) would require a Certificate of Approval.	Certificates of Approval can take 4-6 weeks for a decision. <u>More info</u>
Permitted Occupancy*	The owners should check the location's Certificate of Occupancy to see if it meets their needs for the new restaurant. Because this burger restaurant occupancy is under 100 (this scenario's occupancy is 75), there are no additional occupancy requirements.	 Occupancy of over 100 requires sprinklers and annual Assembly Permit. Occupancy of more than 300 also requires a fire alarm. Increasing the rated occupancy can require additional exits, strengthening of floors, etc. 	More info

	On the list	For this Scenario	Variables	Cost/Time
Kitchen	Grease Traps and Interceptors	All restaurants must have a grease trap or interceptor. This burger restaurant prepares fried and grilled food, which may require robust grease removal equipment. However, carryout orders reduce the amount of dishwashing and the grease load.	The types and amounts of food served and amount of dishwashing will determine the size and type of grease trap or interceptor the restaurant needs. The owner should check the fats, oils, and grease (FOG) program with Seattle Public Utilities for more information on FOG requirements for restaurants and businesses.	Costs depend on the type of interceptor and difficulty of installation. After a plumbing plan review approval, the owner can get a Plumbing Permit from King County to install a grease trap or interceptor the same day. <u>More info</u>
Permits	Health Department Restaurant Plan Review*	The owner should schedule a pre-submittal conference with Public Health-Seattle & King County to determine level of plan review required. Because this burger restaurant is adding equipment and changing the menu, it will need a Remodel Plan Review.	 A more comprehensive Full Plan Review is required if: The previous location was closed more for than a year. The menu changes from previous operation or additional kitchen equipment is added. 	The plan review costs \$430-\$860 depending on the level of review required. <u>More info</u>
	Annual Food Service Business Permit [*]	The owner must get a Food Service Business Permit before the Public Health- Seattle & King County pre-opening inspection. It then needs to be renewed every year. Because this burger restaurant includes preparing and cooking raw meat on-site, it will be classified as Risk Level 3.	There are 3 categories of risk. The Food Service Business Permit annual fee is based on the risk category of the foods served and seating capacity.	Risk Level 3 Food Service Business Permits cost \$819-\$1,158 annually depending on seating capacity. <u>More info</u>
	Construction and Remodeling	Because the owner of this burger shop is planning on remodeling, they'll need construction and trade permits.	Structural, electrical, plumbing, or mechanical (hood) modifications require building and/or trade permits from Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections, and may also require plumbing permits from King County.	Minor changes may use a "24-Hour Review" Construction Permit and/or over- the-counter trade permits. Remodels and trade permits can take 5-9 weeks and costs are based on project value or number of fixtures. <u>More info</u>
	Fire Sprinklers	Because the occupancy of this burger restaurant is less than 100, no fire sprinklers are required.	 Sprinklers are typically required for: Restaurants, bars, and banquet halls more than 5,000 square feet, or with occupancy of more than 100. All nightclubs, establishments not located on the ground floor, and establishments with more than 350 square feet for dancing or viewing performers. 	Sprinkler and fire suppression plan review and permits from the Seattle Fire Department can take 4 weeks per cycle of review. <u>More info</u>

	On the list	For this Scenario	Variables	Cost/Time
	New Sign Permit	Because this burger restaurant is changing names and will need a new sign, a sign permit will be required.	Sign permits may require additional permitting, including: • Electrical Permit for lighted signs.	Each permit has a separate application and fees. More info
I			 Street Use Permit if over the right-of-way. Department of Neighborhoods approval, if applicable. 	
egistration	Outside Seating	Because this burger restaurant will have outside tables and chairs, a permit is required.	 Outside seating requires 1 of 2 types of permits from the Seattle Department of Transportation: Tables and Chairs (allows tables and chairs that are open for use by the general public – no table service allowed) Sidewalk Café (allows more permanent seating area with table service) 	Tables and Chairs Permit: \$172 for plan review, \$146 for permit, and \$140 annual renewal fee. Sidewalk Café Permit: \$516 plan review, annual fee of \$146 plus square footage charge, takes up to eight weeks. <u>More info</u>
Reg	Business Registration*	All businesses must register with the City of Seattle, the state Business Licensing Service, and the IRS.	State specialty licenses are also required for serving liquor, selling tobacco, and gaming and lottery activities.	Most registrations take 1-2 days if done online or 14 days by mail; various fees apply. Specialty licenses have various timelines and fees. <u>More info</u>
	Teen Employees	Because this burger shop will have minor employees, the owner will need a Minor Work Permit.	A Minor Work Permit from the state is required to hire employees under 18. No minor employees? No Minor Work Permit needed!	Apply through the state's Business Licensing Service. More info

*Required of all restaurants regardless of size or location

Hypothetical restaurant scenarios are for demonstration purposes only. Your situation may differ significantly, which may affect licensing and other regulatory requirements. While the information and estimated fees are accurate as of May 2013, always consult the appropriate department or agency for the most current information.