Requirements to Obtain a Change of Ownership - Food Dealer's Permit in the City of Houston

Administrative Requirements:

1. Menu: Type of food served (Open Foods, Package Foods, Temperature Controlled for Safety Foods).
2. Floor plan, Equipment Schedule, Government Identification, State Sales and Usage Tax Certificate.
3. Newly built food establishment or remodel of an existing establishment are required to submit plans to the Houston Planning Center for review.

Operational Requirements:

1. Floors: Floors in the food preparation areas, utensils washing area(s), toilet rooms, vestibules, and dressing rooms shall be smooth and easily cleanable. Floors in these areas shall be constructed of non-absorbent materials such as sealed concrete, ceramic tile, or similar materials and graded to drain. Floor drains shall be provided that are flushed for cleaning, or in areas were pressure spray method for cleaning of equipment. Junctions where the floor and walls shall be covered and sealed. The installation of exposed utility lines and pipes on the floor is prohibited.
2. Walls and Ceiling: Wall in areas of food preparation, food storage, equipment and utensil washing areas shall be light in color, smooth, non-absorbent, and easily cleanable. Studs, joists, rafters, utility service lines, or pipes shall not be exposed in these areas.
3. Toilets: Toilet facilities shall be conveniently always located and accessible to employees. Toilet facilities shall be completely enclosed and tight-fitting, self-closing solid doors.
4. Hand Washing Sinks: Hand washing sinks shall be located for easy use by all employees, in food preparation and utensils washing areas. Hand-washing sinks should always be accessible to employees, including in the toilet room. Each hand-washing sink shall be provided with hot (100º F.) and cold running water. Water is to be tempered by means of mixing valve or a combination faucet. Hand-washing soap and disposable paper towels or an electronic hand drying device is to be provided. Signage must be provided at hand washing sink in the preparation area(s), utensil washing area(s), and toilet room(s).

5. Cleaning and Sanitation: A three-compartment sink (15”X15”X12”) is required for washing, rinse, and sanitize of equipment or utensils. Water at least 110º F. must be provided by the sink faucet to each compartment. Drain boards of adequate size shall be provided.
6. Plumbing: Potable (drinking) running water is to be used for cooking and sanitation purposes. Backflow prevention is to be utilized to prevent contamination of potable water sources. Wastewater must be discharged into the public sanitary sewage system. Grease interceptor and sample wells are required and located outside of the building. Plumbing line including water heaters, must be enclosed within the walls or in a cabinet.
7. Equipment: Equipment must be commercial standards and operate according to manufacture guidelines. Equipment must be provided to facilitate the cleaning of the establishments and to prevent food contamination. Floor mounted equipment, unless readily movable, shall be sealed to the floor, or elevated on legs to provide at least 6” clearance between the floor and bottom edge of the equipment. Sufficient space shall be provided between and behind each piece of mounted equipment. The space between adjourning equipment units or adjacent wall(s)must be sealed if it is exposed to seepage. Refrigeration must be able to hold food at 41º F. and below. Instillation of new equipment must be review by the Houston Planning Center.
8. Utility Sink: At least on utility sink (Mop Sink) or curbed cleaning facility with a floor drain shall be provided and used for cleaning of mops or similar wet floor cleaning tools.
9. Ventilation: Provide ventilation to have sufficient removal of excessive heat, odors, fumes. All rooms which obnoxious odors, vapors, or fumes originate shall be mechanically vented to the outside.
10. Lighting: Working areas must have 50 foot-candles at the distance of 30” from the floor where food employees may be working with food, utensils, knives, or where employee safety is a factor. 30 foot-candles 30” from the floor where hand washing, utensils washing, equipment and utensil and storage, and in toilet rooms. 20 foot-candles shall be provided at surfaces where food is provided to the customers’ self-service.
11. Garbage: Garbage and refuse containers, dumpsters, and compactors system shall be stored on or above a smooth surface of non-absorbent materials, such as concrete or lade asphalt.
12. Laundry Facilities: Only washing and drying of items necessary for the operation. If a washer is provided, then a dryer must also be provided.
13. Insect and Rodent Control: Opening to the outside shall be effectively protected against the entrance by tight-fitting, self-closing door, closed windows, screening, controlled air currents and other means.

14. Poison and Toxic Materials: All cleaning agents, chemicals, poisonous or toxic material shall be stored and located from all food and food contact surfaces. Stored in a cabinet or in a specific area used for no other purpose. Poison and toxic material shall not be stored above food, food equipment, utensils, or single service Items.