

Placard and Seating Requirements for Existing Restaurants

- I. The Charlotte Fire Department or Mecklenburg County Fire Department placard establishments that serve food when the occupant load exceeds fifty (50) people. If you are adding seating, whether it is fixed or tables and chairs, you must meet the Mecklenburg County Health Department's seating requirements as well as the Fire Departments. If you increase your seating without approval from either of these agencies you may be in violation of the State Fire Codes and Health Department guidelines. You can call the Fire Department to schedule an inspection. (City of Charlotte Fire Inspections 704-336-2101), (Mecklenburg County Fire Inspections 980-314-2633 ext. 41)
- II. When adding seats to an existing restaurant the owner may have to submit plans and permits may be required through Mecklenburg County Commercial Plan Review Department.

For General plan review submittal requirements contact the Code Information & Resource Center (CIRC) for Mecklenburg County at 980-314-2633 ext. 2113. A preliminary review is recommended which will help you navigate through the system and expedite permit approval.

The plan review and permitting process may involve several City and County agencies and enforcement groups. Separate fees are required by each agency.

They are as follows:

- Health Department (Food Service): 980-314-1620
 - State rules require plan submission for seating additions.
 - Additional storage, fixtures, and hot water generating equipment may be required.
- Zoning: May require additional parking. (Charlotte – 704-336-)
- Charlotte Fire/County Fire: check exits and re-placard the restaurant.
 - County Fire Department – 980-314-2633 ext. 41
 - Charlotte Fire Department – 704-336-2101
- Mecklenburg County Code Enforcement:
 - Egress and life safety code requirements for the number of occupants
 - Electrical: additional panel loads and branch circuits
 - Mechanical: ventilation and fresh air requirements
 - Plumbing: additional seats may require additional minimum facilities and/or accessibility requirements