

TEHA Legislative Update: March 20, 2026

HB 2844 Mobile Food Vendor Program – Updates

The Texas Environmental Health Association (TEHA) continues to participate in ongoing discussions with the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) regarding implementation of the statewide Mobile Food Vendor (MFV) program under House Bill 2844.

Since our previous update, DSHS convened a second statewide advisory group meeting on March 20, 2026, to provide additional clarification on program rollout, inspection expectations, and operational considerations for local health departments.

Key Updates

- **Program Rollout and Operations:** DSHS confirmed that mobile food vendor applications are expected to open June 1, 2026, and vendors may operate upon receipt of their application pending completion of a pre-licensing inspection.
- **Inspection Timelines:** Initial implementation may result in 6-to-9-month timeframes for pre-licensing inspections, with a transition to a 14-day inspection turnaround in subsequent years.
- **Inspection Framework Changes:** Inspections are expected to be pass/fail and standardized through forthcoming State Operating Procedures (SOPs). Additionally, annual full inspections will not be required for permit renewal, which will be handled administratively.
- **Local Health Department Role:** Local jurisdictions are expected to conduct ad hoc inspections and relay violations and complaints to DSHS, while questions remain regarding the distinction between state and local authority.
- **Local Authority Maintained in Certain Areas:** DSHS confirmed that local fire and safety ordinances remain in effect, and mobile food vendors must continue to comply with local requirements in addition to the state program.
- **Temporary Event Policy:** Mobile food vendors will be required to obtain a permit for operation and may no longer operate under temporary event permits, including single-day events.
- **Contracts and SOP Development:** Draft contracts and SOPs are expected to be released shortly, with limited time for local review, and DSHS is requesting input from local jurisdictions on inspection tools, procedures, and enforcement approaches.

Current Status

Several key areas remain under development or require further clarification, including:

- State versus local enforcement authority

- Permit expiration alignment across jurisdictions
- Inspection timelines and expectations
- Technology access and administrative capacity needs

TEHA continues to actively engage with DSHS to represent the interests of local environmental health programs and to help shape practical implementation of the program.

Next Steps

TEHA will continue to participate in advisory group discussions and provide updates to our membership as additional information becomes available.

We appreciate the continued engagement of our members and encourage jurisdictions to begin internal planning related to staffing, operations, and coordination with local partners.

For questions or feedback, please contact the TEHA Business Manager at:
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