Exit Doors, Signs, and Emergency Lighting Requirements

527 CMR 1.00, s. 14.4

Exits and means of egress must be free of obstructions to the parking lot or sidewalk. Remember to shovel snow away from the exterior of all doors that lead outdoors. Exit signs and emergency lighting must be operational at all times.

Severe criminal penalties for violating occupancy limits and blocked egress were passed in the aftermath of the fire at The Station nightclub.

Crowd Manager Requirements

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.1.5.6

A crowd manager is needed in facilities that feature entertainment by a live band or recorded music generating above normal sound levels and which have specific areas designated for dancing. Be sure to discuss this with your local fire department. For more information on crowd manager requirements or to take the online training program, please visit **www.mass.gov/dfs**.

Rubbish Handling

527 CMR 1.00, c. 19

Rubbish should be emptied daily and removed from the building unless stored in a waste storage room.

Decorations, Curtains, Draperies and Window Treatments

527 CMR 1.00, s. 12.6.2

Requires certification that these products meet flammability standards.

General Housekeeping

527 CMR 1.00, c. 10

Store cleaning chemicals in a safe and secure area (not next to heat sources). Shut off appliances each day.

Keep a 3-foot circle of safety around heating appliances that is free of things that can catch fire.

Teach kitchen fire safety to cooking staff because kitchen fires are one of the leading causes of fires in restaurants.

Teach burn first aid to all staff (cool water and call 9-1-1).

Fire Lanes

527 CMR 1.00. c. 18

Regulations on designation, maintenance and preventing obstruction of fire lanes. Keep clear at all times.

Division of Fire Safety
978-567-3375 • www.mass.gov/dfs

10/16

Fire Prevention in Restaurants

Guide for
Owners, Operators, and Fire Departments

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE SERVICES
Peter J. Ostroskey • State Fire Marshal

A restaurant is an establishment where meals and refreshments are served. Everyone enjoys going out to eat with family and friends for a good meal and refreshments, or just for take-out.

A fire destroys buildings, but also has a costly effect on business owners and their employees.

2013 Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting Data

In 2013, there were 392 building fires in restaurants and other eating and drinking establishments that caused four civilian injuries and $1.8 million in property damage.

This pamphlet is designed to give a quick summary of the fire prevention regulations affecting restaurants and includes directions on where to find more detailed information. Fire prevention laws can be found in MGL Chapter 148 and all fire prevention regulations can be found in 527 Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR). The Department of Fire Services' website has these and many helpful Advisories. Visit www.mass.gov/dfs and look for DFS Advisories under News & Events.

Place of Assembly

(A building or room with more than 50 occupants such as theatres, auditoriums, and restaurants.)

527 CMR 1.00, s. 20.1.5.10.3.1

Needs a certificate of inspection from the building official which will set the occupancy limit. **Note:** The occupancy limit for the building includes employees as well as guests.

Commercial Cooking Operations Requirements for Exhaust Hood Inspections

527 CMR 1.00, c. 50

Covers regulations on installation and maintenance of commercial cooking operations. Commercial cooking exhaust hoods require inspection and cleaning. Frequency is determined by the volume of cooking and is outlined in the table below.

Schedule of Inspection for Grease Buildup	
Type or volume of cooking	**Inspection frequency**
Systems serving solid fuel cooking operations	Monthly
Systems serving high-volume cooking operations such as 24-hour cooking, charbroiling, or wok cooking	Quarterly
Systems serving moderate-volume cooking operations	Semiannually
Systems serving low-volume cooking operations, such as churches, day camps, seasonal businesses or senior centers	Annually

Based on the results of the inspection, a determination is made by the inspector if the system needs to be cleaned.

License to Serve Alcohol

The Fire Safety Act of 2004 amended MGL c.10, s. 74 to require all applicants for an alcohol beverage license (issued under the authority of the Alcohol Beverage Control Commission) to submit an annual valid certificate of inspection as a pre-condition to the issuance or renewal of this license. The license referred to in this section is a Chapter 138, s. 12 pourers' license for alcohol intended to be consumed on the premises.

Fire Suppression Systems for Commercial Cooking Operations

Fixed Extinguishing Systems

527 CMR 1.00, c. 50, NFPA 96

Cooking that produces grease-laden vapors are required to have a fixed extinguishing system.

These systems are required to be inspected every six months by a licensed company. See **www.mass.gov/dfs** for more information.

Portable Extinguishers

527 CMR 1.00, s. 13.6, NFPA 10

Says where, how many and what kind of fire extinguishers are needed along with testing and inspection requirements.

Upholstered Furniture, Molded Chairs and Re-Upholstered Furniture

527 CMR 1.00, s. 12.6.3

Requirements are different for sprinklered and unsprinklered buildings.

Flammability testing requirements for furniture. Furniture should be resistant to fire. It can produce volumes of toxic smoke.