

Meat and Poultry Handlers Permit

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) Office of Meat and Poultry Services

The Office of Meat and Poultry Services (OMPS) requires all meat and poultry product handlers to register their business.

Who needs to register?

Any person engaged in business as a broker, distributor, or peddler of meat and/or poultry products. This includes persons or businesses, door-to-door sales, and wholesalers. Owners/operators of public warehouses where meat and poultry products in or for commerce are stored.

Business locations with a Virginia or Federal Grant of inspection do not need to register.

Is there a registration fee?

There is no cost for this registration.

What happens after OMPS receives my application?

You will be issued a Meat and Poultry Handlers Permit. Permits are issued for a three-year period and expire on June 30. OMPS Enforcement Officers will visit your facility to ensure compliance with the requirements of the permit.

What are the requirements Permit holders must meet?

Facilities where meat and poultry products are held must be maintained in a manner sufficient to prevent the creation of insanitary conditions and ensure that products are not contaminated and/or adulterated.

Products must be handled and stored under acceptable conditions/practices to prevent insanitary conditions and the adulteration.

Preventative rodent and pest control measures must be implemented and maintained.

Vehicles, refrigerators and/chest type freezers used for the transport of fresh or frozen meat and/or poultry products must be maintained to prevent contaminations or adulteration of products.

All meat and poultry products stored, transported, and offered for sale or sold by a Registered Meat and Poultry Handler must meet all labeling requirements as set forth in 9 CFR part 317. Each individual meat and poultry product sold must bear all required labeling on the outermost container of the product. Products must be labeled at the inspected establishment where the product was produced. **Additional labeling such as breed, animal production, and natural claims cannot be added after the product has left the inspected facility.** Point of sale advertising such as signs, brochures, product invoices, and other handouts may not include claims that are not printed on the product label.

Permit holders may not break bulk packages unless all inside packages contain all required label features.

Permit holders may not open packages, relabel products or further process products.

The permit holder must keep records such as bills of sale, invoices, bills of lading, and receiving and shipping papers for all meat and poultry products purchased, sold, shipped, received, transported, or otherwise handled. At a minimum, these records should include:

- name or description of the article,
- net weight,
- name and address of the buyer, consignee or receiver,
- if the product is shipped, the method of shipment, date of shipment, and name and address of carrier

For more information regarding the Virginia Meat and Poultry Handlers Permits, contact OMPS (804) 786-4569.