

# Nine Polk County food vendors fall short in inspections

**Andy Koppers**  
Lakeland Ledger | USA TODAY NETWORK

In a light week of inspections, nine Polk County food vendors fell short of standards from Feb. 26 to March 3, according to state inspection reports.

Of 53 total inspections throughout the county, 44 met standards and six had perfect initial inspections -- meaning inspections that were not mandated by previous violations.

Across the county, there were no violations for rodents, insects or other pests during the week.

Among the nine vendors that fell short, requiring follow-up inspections, seven were permanent, brick-and-mortar restaurants, one was a caterer and one was a food truck. There were 29 total violations among them, 12 of which were largely clerical: things such as expired licenses, food manager certification or employee training.

The other violations ran the gamut from food-handling violations (such as storing raw animal foods improperly) to broken or soiled equipment or breaches of best practices (such as using the handwash sink for things other than handwashing).

Some violations, while they might not seem major to the common diner, are still enough to be deemed intermediate or high priority, and thus require warnings or an administrative complaint and a follow-up inspection. That's why we detail the violations for all restaurants that fell into this category each week, so readers can decide the seriousness for themselves.

As a reminder, the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation says an inspection is "a 'snapshot' of conditions present at the time of the inspection. ... An inspection conducted on any given day may not be representative of the overall, long-term conditions at the establishment."

And it's common for restaurants to have violations that make you go "yuck" and still meet standards. Readers who are curious can go to The Ledger's searchable database online at <https://data.theledger.com/restaurant-inspections/polk>.

## Vendors that fell short, and why

● **Azalea Park**, 1325 Grasslands Blvd., Lakeland: On Feb. 28, the restaurant had just two violations. One was for the person in charge lacking proof of certification (an intermediate violation). The other was for a case of chicken breasts stored on the floor in the walk-in freezer. The case was removed from the floor.

● **Dundee Diner**, 28089 U.S. 27, Dundee: On Feb. 28, the restaurant had five violations, including one high-priority violation. That was for raw animal foods with different minimum cooking temperatures that weren't properly separated in a cooler (in this case, raw chicken stored over raw fish). One intermediate violation was for two gallon jugs in the handwash sink (indicating the sink was being used for purposes other

than handwashing). Another intermediate was for the person in charge lacking proof of certification. Finally, there were two basic violations, one for fish being thawed improperly on a prep table and another for a damaged wall by the dry storage racks.

● **Joinery**, 640 E. Main St., Lakeland: On Feb. 27, the food hall in downtown Lakeland had three violations. One intermediate violation was for a soiled ice machine. Another was for the person in charge lacking proof of certification. One basic violation was for a soiled ice chute in the dining room.

● **Blue Dog Craft Barbecue**, 640 E. Main St., Lakeland: On Feb. 27, this restaurant inside The Joinery had two violations. One was for the food manager having an expired certification. The other was for "cloth used as a food-contact surface," in this case blue and white towels on top of meat.

● **Salavate Pasta**, 502 E. Main St., Lakeland: On Feb. 27, this caterer based at Catapult in downtown Lakeland had a single violation: The food manager's certification was expired.

● **Taqueria El Dorado**, 1155 W. Pipkin Road, Lakeland: On Feb. 27, this mobile food vendor had four violations. One intermediate violation was for having no "written procedures for employees to follow in response to a vomiting or diarrheal event." And there were three basic violations. One for two chest-style freezers with food inside (chicken, beef, potatoes), a bag of onions and a case of bottled water that were stored outside. Another was for its mobile food vehicle license number not being properly affixed on the outside. The last was for its service window being left open when not serving food. In a callback the following day, the only violation that remained was the license number on the outside of the vehicle.

● **Mia Pizza**, 2440 Sand Mine Road, Davenport: On Feb. 26, the restaurant received four violations. The lone high-priority violation was for operating with an expired Division of Hotels and Restaurants license. There were two intermediate violations: one for failing to provide proof of state-mandated food safety training for employees. The other was for having no chemical test kit for sanitizer used in warewashing. Finally, a single basic violation was for single-service items that were improperly stored, in this case, pizza boxes that were stored on the floor next to the front counter.

● **Sundays Grill**, 2414 Sandmine Road, Davenport: On Feb. 26, the restaurant had seven violations, including two high priority. Those were for operating with an expired license and storing cooked chicken wings in a lexan pan inside a hotel pan of raw ground beef. One intermediate violation was for hand wash sinks being used for other purposes: a sanitizer bucket in the hand sink in the storage area and six pans in the sink on the cook line. The other intermediate was for lacking proof of required food-safety training for employees. Finally, there were three basic violations. One was for boxes of oil stored on the floor in the storage room and cook line. Another was for an "in-use wet

wiping cloth/towel used under cutting board. The last was for a leaking pipe at a handwash sink. **SMB Advanced Solutions**, 3975-3979 New Tampa Highway, Lakeland: On Feb. 26, the eatery had just one violation: Making a renovation without having plans approved.

## Perfection

With so many small things that can go wrong during an inspection, it's incredibly tough to have a perfect one, with zero violations. Yet these six Polk County food vendors did so from Feb. 26 to March 3. Two were permanent restaurants, three were food trucks and one was a caterer.

- **Mixon's Beef Jerky**, mobile vendor, 4808 U.S. 98 N., Lakeland
- **Dominos** 3119, 1709 Shepherd Road, Lakeland
- **Dominick's**, caterer, 502 E Main St, Lakeland
- **Mas Que Fruta LLC**, mobile vendor, 211 N. Wabash Ave., Lakeland
- **La Carcacha Taqueria**, mobile vendor, 224 S. 1st St., Lake Wales
- **Taco Bell #4778**, 7840 Osceola Polk Line Road, Davenport

**LAKE GIBSON VILLAGE**  
SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY

2023 CHOICE AWARDS WINNER

**ASSISTED LIVING AND MEMORY CARE**

ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY LICENSE 13081

**863.815.6195**  
LakeGibsonVillage.com  
771 Carpenters Way | Lakeland, FL 33809

**2024 THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY'S CHOICE AWARDS**  
Best of Central Florida

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LocaliQ & The Ledger

**CELEBRATING THE BEST IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

WE PUT THE POWER IN YOUR HANDS, THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, TO NOMINATE AND VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE COMPANIES.

**NOMINATION PERIOD:**  
APRIL 9 - 30

**VOTING PERIOD:**  
JUNE 17 - 30

[YOURCHOICEAWARDS.COM/CENTRALFLORIDA](https://yourchoiceawards.com/centralflorida)

**YOU COULD WIN \$250**

OFFICIAL RULES: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER. TO VOTE AND BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE \$250 PRIZE AT LEAST 25 CATEGORIES MUST BE FILLED IN. \$250 PRIZE IS A GIFT CARD. FOR COMPLETE OFFICIAL RULES GO TO: [YOURCHOICEAWARDS.COM/CENTRALFLORIDA](https://yourchoiceawards.com/centralflorida)

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**  
Polk County Board of County Commissioners to Consider a Petition to Establish the Grenelefe Community Development District

**DATE:** April 2, 2024  
**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.  
**LOCATION:** County Administration Building, Commission Boardroom  
330 West Church Street  
Bartow, Florida 33830

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

In compliance with the provisions of Chapter 190, Florida Statutes, a public hearing will be held on April 2, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., at the Commission Boardroom in the County Administration Building, 330 West Church Street, Bartow, Florida 33830, before the Polk County Board of County Commissioners to consider an ordinance to grant a petition to establish the Grenelefe Community Development District (the "District"). The title of the proposed ordinance is as follows:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA ESTABLISHING THE GRENELEFE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 190, FLORIDA STATUTES (2023); PROVIDING A TITLE; PROVIDING FINDINGS; CREATING AND NAMING THE DISTRICT; DESCRIBING THE EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES OF THE DISTRICT; DESCRIBING THE FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF THE DISTRICT; DESIGNATING FIVE PERSONS TO SERVE AS THE INITIAL MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT'S BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

The proposed District is generally located south of Marion Road and southwest of West Lake Marion Road, as further identified in the map depicted in this notice. The petitioner has proposed to establish the District to plan, finance, acquire, construct, operate and maintain infrastructure and community facilities which may be authorized by such district under Florida law, including Chapter 190, Florida Statutes.

The information presented at this hearing will be used to afford the petitioner, landowners, any affected units of local government, and the general public, a fair and adequate opportunity to appear and present oral and written comments regarding the establishment of the District. If adopted, the ordinance will establish the Grenelefe Community Development District, name its initial Board of Supervisors, and designate the land to be serviced by the District.

Copies of the petition, the proposed ordinance and department reports are open to public inspection at the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of Polk County, located in the County Administration Building, 330 West Church Street, Bartow, Florida 33830.

All interested persons and affected units of general-purpose local government shall be given an opportunity to appear at the hearing and present oral or written comments on the petition. Any person or affected unit of general-purpose local government, who wishes to appeal any decision made by the Board with respect to any matter considered at this public hearing will need a record of the proceedings. For that purpose, the person or unit of general-purpose local government may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made that includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 286.26, Florida Statutes, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this meeting, and those seeking an interpreter, should contact the Communications Office not later than forty-eight (48) hours prior to the proceeding. Their offices are located in the County Administration Building, 330 West Church Street, Bartow, Florida 33830. Telephone Number (863) 534-6090, TDD (863) 534-7777 or 1-800-955-8771, Voice Impaired 1-800-955-8770 or 711 via Florida Relay Service.

**PUBLISH:** March 5, March 12, March 19 and March 26