



Guide for Starting a Chicken Coop in Columbus, Ohio

Getting Started

We want to help you be a successful chicken owner!

In order to have chickens (and other animals) within Columbus city limits, you need to complete the plan review process and get a permit. This guide helps you determine when you need to submit plans, who to contact and what to expect.

The City of Columbus does not allow roosters, peafowl, geese or turkeys.

Review this guide and submit your plans to start the process. Before a permit can be issued, every new chicken owner in Columbus must:

- Submit plans to be reviewed by Columbus Public Health.
- Be at least 18 years old before a permit can be issued.

Enclosure Materials and Supplies

Coops must be covered, have impervious flooring, and bedding on top of the flooring. All permanent pen runs and coops must also be rodent proof.

Approved Impervious Flooring:

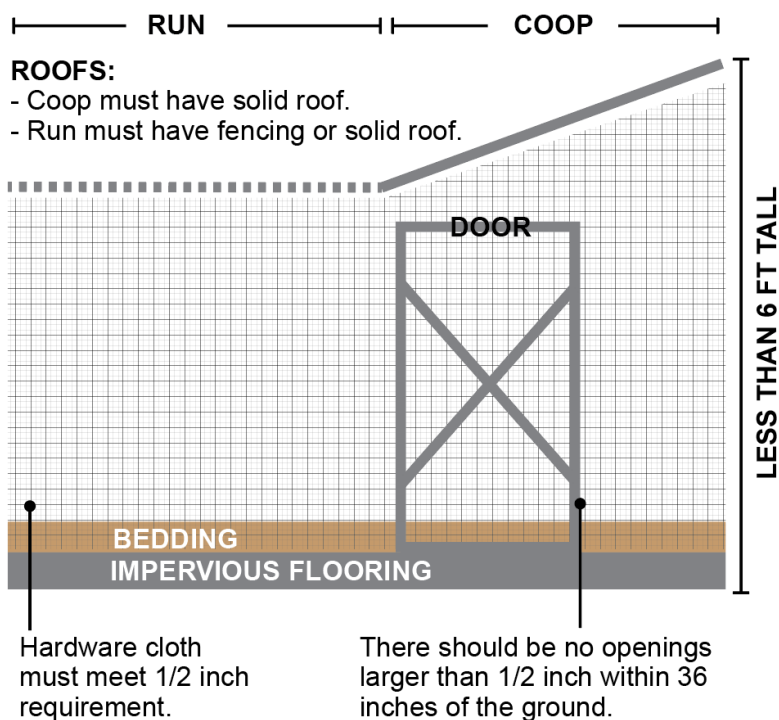
- Pavers
- Thick rubber stall mats
- Concrete
- Blacktop
- Brick
- Treated plywood
- Sheet metal

Approved Bedding:

- Straw
- Wood chips or shavings
- Grass
- Leaves
- Mulch
- Sand

Approved Rodent Proof Material:

- Hardware cloth
- Wood
- Plexiglas
- Siding



How to Rodent Proof:

- Material (listed above) must be installed from the ground to at least 36 inches high on all sides.
- There should be no openings larger than 1/2 inch.

Number of Birds Allowed

Each adult bird needs to have a minimum amount of space in the coop and run. Use the chart below to see how many square feet (ft²) each type of bird requires. These numbers do not include juvenile birds.

Type of Bird	Area per Bird - Inside Coop	Area per Bird - Outside Run
Bantam Chicken	1 ft ²	4 ft ²
Laying Hens	1.5 ft ²	8 ft ²
Large Chickens	2 ft ²	10 ft ²
Ducks	3 ft ²	15 ft ²
Pigeons	2 ft ²	N/A
Pheasant	5 ft ²	25 ft ²

Free Roaming Rules

Chickens are allowed up to four hours of “free roaming” a day, as long as the following items are met.

- Flight is prevented by wings being clipped, an overhead barrier is in place, or an alternate physical or behavioral barrier is in place.
- Waste is not allowed to get onto the adjoining property by water or wind.
- You are with the birds while they are free roaming.
- Birds can be easily and quietly returned to their pen.

Easy Cleaning Planning

- How will I get rid of the waste?
 - Refuse container or compost?
- How are you cleaning and disinfecting the coop?
- How often are you cleaning and disinfecting the coop?
- Are floors, walls and ceilings able to be cleaned?

Coop and Nesting Facility Planning

- Will the structure design/materials endure years of use?
- How will you place the coop so the smell from the wind is limited?
 - Wind mostly comes from the west or south-west in Columbus.
- How will you place the coop to stop rain from getting into the coop?
- Where are you going to hang the food and water?
 - Are the support beams able to handle hanging heavy containers?
 - Hanging or placing the food or water containers just above the height of the animal's vent is best.
- Does the coop allow for good air flow?
 - Vents may need to be installed, especially at the roof level.
 - Tree canopy may provide shade and keep it cool, but it has risks because wild bird poop or parts of the trees may spread illness to your birds.
- How much lighting will the structure/windows provide?
 - Molting can be minimized if your birds get more than 14 hours of light every day.
- Where will your nesting boxes be?
 - Nesting boxes should not be placed under roosts and do not need to be off the floor.
 - You can make a nesting box using a cardboard box. Cut a half-circle hole on the front for access and use a weight or block to hold it in place.
 - One nesting box is needed for each 4-5-layer hens.
- Where will the roosts be installed?
 - The lowest roost should be higher than the top of the nesting boxes.

Recommended Temperature for Chicks

Age	Cage Brooding	Floor Brooding
1-3 days	91-93°F (33-34°C)	95°F (35°C)
4-7 days	90-93°F (32-34°C)	92°F (33°C)
8-14 days	85-89°F (29-31°C)	89°F (31°C)
15-21 days	80-84°F (26-29°C)	84°F (29°C)
22-28 days	75-79°F (24-26°C)	79°F (26°C)
29-35 days	70-74°F (21-23°C)	74°F (23°C)
36+ days	70°F (21°C)	70°F (21°C)

Qualities of Chicken Breeds

Breed	Purpose*	Average Eggs per Week	Egg Size	Egg Color	Docile (easy to handle)	Broody (likes to sit on the nest)
Ameraucana	Egg	3	Medium	Green/blue	Yes	No
Australorp	Dual	3	Large	Light brown	Yes	No
Cochin	Ornam.	2	Medium	Brown	Yes	Yes
Cornish crosses	Meat	1	Small	Light brown	No	Yes
Delaware	Dual	4	Large	Brown	Yes	Yes
Hamburg	Egg	4	Small	White	No	No
Lakenwelder	Egg	3	Medium	Cream	No	No
White Leghorn	Egg	5	Extra large	White	No	No
Maran	Egg	3	Large	Dark brown	No	Yes
Orpington	Dual	3	Large	Brown	Yes	Yes
Orloff	Dual	2	Medium	Light brown	Yes	No
Polish	Ornam.	2	Very small	White	Yes	No
Plymouth Rock	Dual	4	Large	Brown	Yes	Yes
Rhode Island Red	Dual	5	Extra large	Brown	Yes	No
Sicilan Buttercup	Egg	2	Small	White	No	No
Silkie	Ornam.	3	Small	Cream	Yes	Yes
Star	Dual	5	Large	Brown	Yes	No
Sussex	Dual	4	Large	Light brown	Yes	Yes
Welsummer	Dual	4	Large	Dark brown	No	Yes
Wyandotte	Dual	4	Large	Brown	Yes	Yes

* Ornam. = Ornamental

STEP 1 OF GETTING YOUR PERMIT:

Plan Review

Anyone that wants to own the following domestic birds in the City of Columbus needs to submit plans before getting a permit. Contact Columbus Public Health if you are unsure if you need a plan review.

- Chickens
- Turkeys
- Partridges
- Game birds
- Partridges
- Quail
- Ducks
- Birds raised for meat or eggs
- Birds kept or trained for competition
- Birds kept outside a structure or shelter

There is a \$50 plan review fee.

- If you are eligible for SNAP or WIC, you will not be charged the plan review fee.
- The plan review fee must be submitted with the application. If you wish to pay online, check that box on the application and an invoice will be sent to you that tells you what to do.

Submit your plans, application and plan review payment to begin the plan review process.

- We will begin reviewing the plans to make sure the design and materials are up to city code. If we have questions or if changes need to be made, we will contact you (generally by e-mail).
- When plans are approved, we will notify you (generally by e-mail) and schedule an inspection.

STEP 2 OF GETTING YOUR PERMIT:

Final Inspection

Once your plans have been approved, you can build your coop and run. After that, it's time for your final inspection. To prepare for the final inspection, review the list below to be sure that:

- ☐ All construction work is done.
- ☐ Proximity of coop/run prevents waste from getting on other properties.
- ☐ Feed is stored and given in a way to prevent rodents.
- ☐ You know how to handle and care for the animals.
- ☐ You have a written cleaning and disinfection schedule.
- ☐ You have proof of waste disposal methods.
- ☐ General appearance and health of the animals has been verified.
- ☐ Coop/run is secure.
- ☐ Coop/run has impervious flooring.
- ☐ Coop/run is rodent proof.

STEP 3 OF GETTING YOUR PERMIT:

Permit Payment, Renewal & Inspections

Permit Payment: If there are no issues found, we will collect the payment for the permit fee at the end of the final inspection. You will get an inspection sheet that says the permit was approved.

- Permit fee is \$100 and valid for four years.

Renewal & Inspections: You need to get your permit renewed once every four years. You will be billed for your renewal license one to two months before your current license expires. Columbus Public Health will inspect the property every four years.