

# Los Angeles County Food Operators Food Facility Information Packet 2017



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The following information is to inform you of requirements and changes to the California Health and Safety Code that may affect your business.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please visit our website at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh), email us at [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov), or contact your local Environmental Health District Office.

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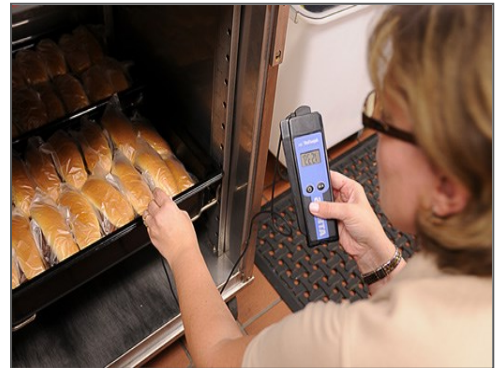


## Our commitment to Service Excellence

Food safety in Los Angeles County is a partnership between the LA County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division (EH), and the food industry. Together, we strive to ensure that the community is provided with safe food. EH is committed to improving our quality of service and our relationship with food facility operators. To build and strengthen this partnership, it is important that food facility operators understand what they can expect from us, as well as understand their rights and responsibilities.

### What Food Facility Operators Should Expect from Environmental Health:

- Considerate, respectful and professional service during health inspections, hearings, or investigations;
- A clear explanation of health and safety requirements, and alternatives and possible solutions to solve any problems or concerns;
- A response to your question or request within three business days,
- Fair and careful consideration of any concerns or issues that may come up;
- A clear explanation of our decisions during the course of a health inspection, hearing, or investigation;
- An open dialogue if our decisions are questioned; and
- Clear guidance on how you can elevate your concerns to the next level of authority, if needed.



### Food Facility Operators Have the Right to:

- Request additional information or clarification regarding decisions made by one of our Environmental Health Specialists (“health inspector”),
- Elevate concerns to the next level of authority if you disagree with a decision, without fear of retaliation, and
- Refuse a health inspector’s entry if he or she does not provide a Los Angeles County-issued identification card.

### Food Facility Operators Have a Responsibility to:

- Ensure compliance with food, health and safety laws,
- Display the same level of professionalism expected from our health inspectors, and
- Understand that the outcome of any inquiry or investigation regarding the food facility is based on food safety and sanitation requirements.

For more information, please contact Environmental Health’s Ombudsman at (626) 430-5300.

## What Restaurants and Market Owners Need to Know About Seafood Mislabeling

Protect your customers and your business from illegal seafood substitutions or mislabeling.

### Why you should avoid buying or selling mislabeled seafood:

It's illegal. Mislabeling or substituting seafood is a violation of California Health and Safety Code, Section 114087. Environmental Health conducts special inspections to protect consumers from the sale of adulterated, misrepresented and/or mislabeled seafood.

Deliberate violations of the law will be addressed during inspections. Violations include failure to disclose accurate information about a sea-food species, country of origin, weight portions, and/or size.

### Mislabeling or substituting seafood may pose a health risk to some customers.

Escolar, picture to the right, is sometimes mislabeled and sold as "white tuna." White tuna is not a real species. Escolar can cause gastrointestinal illness or other health problems for some customers. It is important to sell and offer honestly presented seafood in order to protect customer's health.



*Escolar*

### Tips for buying and selling safe seafood:

Compare the label on the food container or packaging with the invoice or receipt to make sure it matches what you ordered.

Remember, *white tuna* does not exist. If your invoice says *white tuna* or it is missing information such as species or country of origin, do not accept delivery. Return the product to the supplier or distributor, and ask for more information, or contact your Health Inspector for advice.

### Questions? We're here to help!

If you suspect seafood mislabeling or substitution, contact Environmental Health at (626) 430-5200 during business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday; call the 24-hour Hotline at (888) 700-9995; or send an e-mail to [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).

Seafood Offered	Actual Species or Less Expensive Substitute
White Tuna (does not exist)	Escolar
Snapper Red Snapper	Rockfish Tai Seabream Tilapia Ocean Perch Pollock Cod
Orange Roughy	Swai
Halibut	Striped Bass Fluke Turbot Seabass Flounder
Wild-Caught Salmon	Farm-Raised Salmon



*Red Snapper*



*Red Snapper Fillet*



*Tilapia*



*Tilapia Fillet*

## Guidance for Food Operators About

# Service Animals in Food Facilities

Service animals are permitted by the California Health and Safety code to be in all areas of the food facility where the public is normally allowed to go, such as dining and sales areas, if a health or safety hazard will not result from the presence or activities of the service animal.

### Service Animal

Service animals are dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. They are working animals, not pets.

### Work or Task Performed by a Service Animal

The work or task a service dog has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Dogs whose only job is to provide comfort, emotional support, well-being, companionship or as a crime deterrent do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. Examples of work or task of service animals are as follows:

- Guide people who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks
- Alert individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds
- Provide nonviolent protection or rescue work
- Pulling a wheelchair
- Assist a person during a seizure
- Alert a person to the presence of allergens
- Retrieve items such as medicine or the telephone.
- Provide physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities
- Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack
- Help a person with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors
- Reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications.

**Note:** Beginning March 15, 2011, only dogs are recognized as service animal under titles II and III of the American Disability Act (ADA). In addition to the provisions about service dogs, the revised ADA regulations have a new, separate provision about miniature horses that have been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. For more information, please visit:

[https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)



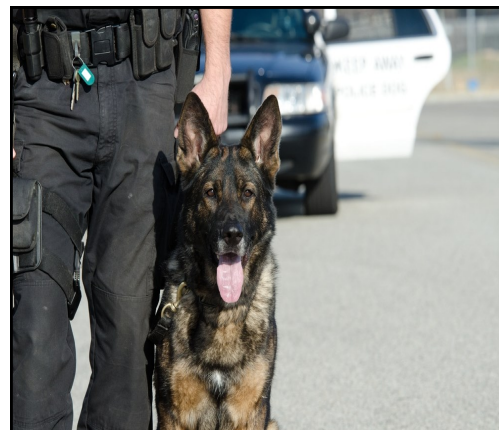
## Guidance for Food Operators About

# Service Animals in Food Facilities

*Continued*

### Other Dogs Allowed in a Food Facility

Dogs under the control of a uniformed law enforcement officer or of uniformed employees of private patrol operators of a private patrol service who are licensed pursuant to Chapter 11.5 of Division 3 of the Business and Professional Code, while those employees are acting within the course and scope of their employment as private patrol persons.



### Additional Information

- Food employees shall not care for or handle patrol dogs, service animals or pets.
- Food employees with service animals may handle or care for their service animals if they wash their hands before preparing food and handling food, utensils, and food related equipment.
- Service dogs and patrol dogs under the control or uniformed law enforcement officers or of uniformed employees of private patrol operators, or dogs accompanied by persons licensed to train guide dogs for the blind are not allowed in the food preparation and utensil wash areas at a temporary food facility and farmer's market.

**For more information about the ADA, please visit the website or call the toll-free number.**

**ADA Website**

[www.ADA.gov](http://www.ADA.gov)

**ADA Information Line**

800-514-0301 (Voice)

800-514-0383 (TTY)

## Pet Dogs in Outdoor Dining Areas

Because of an interest on the part of some restaurant owners and members of the community to allow pet dogs in outdoor dining or patio areas, Environmental Health meticulously reviewed and assessed the risk factors involved in this practice. EH has determined that food facility owners and operators may allow pet dogs in the outdoor dining or patio area at their discretion. Please note that this only applies to pet dogs; other animals such as cats, birds, or reptiles are not permitted. Service animals or dogs under the control of a uniformed law enforcement officer or uniformed employees of private patrol operations are exempt from these requirements. (California Civil Service Code, Section 54.1, 54.25.)

### The following requirements must be met in order to allow pet dogs in the outdoor dining or patio area of a food facility:

- A separate entrance is present where pets do not enter through the food establishment to reach the outdoor dining or patio area.
- No food preparation shall be allowed in the outdoor dining or patio area, including mixing of drinks.
- Multi-use or reusable utensils, such as plates, silverware, glasses, and bowls, shall not be stored, displayed, or pre-set in the outdoor dining area.
- Food and water served and/or provided to pet dogs shall only be in single-use, disposable containers.
- Employees shall be prohibited from having direct contact with pets while on duty.
- Pets shall not be allowed on chairs, seats, benches, and/or tables.
- The outdoor dining or patio area shall be maintained clean.
- In cases where excrement or other bodily fluids (urine, saliva, vomit) are deposited, an employee shall immediately clean and sanitize the affected areas.
- The outdoor dining area shall not be fully enclosed— a fully enclosed dining area shall be considered as part of the interior of the facility.
- Business operators must still follow local ordinances related to sidewalk, public nuisance, and sanitation issues.



## Proper Hand Washing

The lack of proper hand washing by food handlers has the potential to contaminate food and cause food-related illnesses. Pathogenic bacteria on hands may be transferred to foods if proper hand washing practices are not followed.

### Basic Hand Washing Requirements:

A food facility employee is required to wash their hands:

- Immediately before engaging in food preparation, handling clean equipment and utensils;
- Before initially putting on gloves to begin food preparation;
- Before dispensing or serving food or handling clean utensils, and
- After any activity that may contaminate hands, such as
  - Visiting the toilet,
  - Eating,
  - Smoking,
  - Sneezing, coughing, or using a tissue,
  - Handling raw animal products,
  - After handling soiled equipment and utensils,
  - After touching face, eyes, nose or hair
  - Emptying the trash, or
  - Other janitorial tasks.



### Single-use Gloves:

- ◇ Employees are required to wear single-use gloves to cover:
  - An impermeable cover (bandage) on a cut, burn, or rash;
  - False fingernails or un-cleanable fingernails;
  - Rings other than a plain ring or wedding band; or
  - An orthopedic support device, such as a cast, brace, or ace bandage.
- ◇ A food facility employee is required to change gloves if it is worn out and whenever hand washing is required. Single-use gloves shall not be washed.
- ◇ Single-use gloves shall be used for only one task, and no other purpose. Gloves shall be thrown away when damaged, soiled, or when interruptions in the food handling occur.



### Ready-to-Eat Foods:

As a general rule, bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food is to be avoided. All food facility employees who work with ready-to-eat food should minimize bare hand contact and use suitable utensils such as tongs, single-use gloves, spatulas or dispensing equipment.

### Questions?

- Visit [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh)
- Contact your local Environmental Health District Office
- Call the EH Consultative Services program at (626) 430-5320.

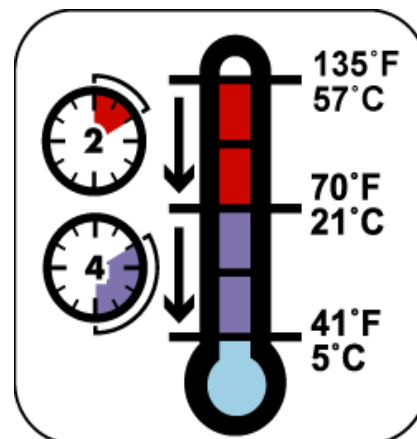


## Temperature Control: Keep Foods Away from The Danger Zone

After cooking or heating, perishable food that is not intended for immediate consumption must be cooled quickly. *Rapid cooling* will prevent microbial growth by limiting the time food is exposed to the temperature danger zone.

*Bacteria can grow in the “danger zone”—the range of temperatures usually between 42°F and 134°F.*

*Rapid cooling* is achieved by bringing the temperature of the cooked food from 135°F to 70°F within two (2) hours, and from 70°F to 41°F within four (4) hours.



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### Cooling methods:

- Place hot food in shallow containers and place containers in an ice bath, stirring constantly.
- Use rapid cooling equipment.
- Use containers that facilitate heat transfer.
- Add ice as an ingredient to hot foods.
- Cut hot foods into smaller portions.



### Defrost frozen foods:

- Under refrigeration that maintains the temperature of the food at 41°F or below.
- Completely submerge the frozen foods under potable, cold, running water for a period of time not to exceed two (2) hours at a water temperature of 70°F or below.
- In a microwave oven.
- As part of a cooking process.



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## Temperature Control: Storing Foods at the Correct Temperature

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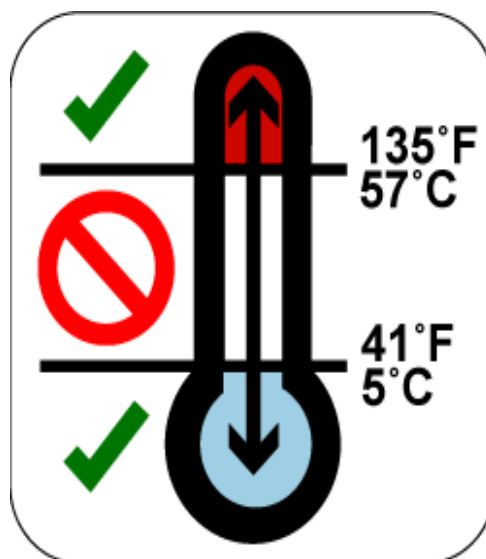
**Keep hot foods hot**  
AT 135°F or ABOVE 135°F.



**DANGER ZONE:**  
**Keep potentially hazardous foods**  
**out of the danger zone**  
**between 42°F and 134°F.**



**Keep cold foods cold**  
AT 41°F or BELOW 41°F.



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### Temperature requirements for storing common foods

Product	Storage Temperature
 Pasteurized milk and pasteurized milk products	45°F or below
 Shell eggs	45°F or below
 Mollusca	45°F or below
 Fresh fish	41°F or below
 Fresh meat	41°F or below
 Fresh poultry	41°F or below

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## Temperature Control: Cooking and Reheating Requirements

*continued*

To ensure that your foods are cooked safely, always use a food thermometer to measure internal temperature. Check the temperature in several places to ensure that the food is cooked all the way through. Cook food items to the recommended *minimum internal temperature* shown below.



### Ground, chopped, and flaked meats (beef, veal, lamb, and pork):

All raw ground, chopped, or flaked and formed meats must be heated to a *minimum internal temperature* of at least 157°F, or held at 155°F, for 15 seconds. For safety, most ground meat products should be cooked until it is brown in the middle; temperatures should be taken in the thickest part of the food. If cooking appears uneven, the temperature of any uncooked area should also be taken.



### Eggs and foods containing raw eggs:

All foods made with raw eggs must be heated to a *minimum internal temperature* of at least 145°F. Temperatures should be taken at the center of the egg-containing food. Cooked egg whites and yolks should be firm after cooking, not “runny.” After cooking, eggs must be held at or above 135°F. Pooled raw shell eggs must be kept refrigerated at 41°F or below until cooked to prevent the growth of bacteria.



### Pork and pork products:

All pork or foods made with pork must be heated (cooked) to a *minimum internal temperature* of at least 145°F for 15 seconds. Some pork may contain parasitic worms and harmful bacteria. Thorough cooking is an effective way to make pork and pork products safe for consumption.



### Poultry, chopped or ground poultry, and foods stuffed with meat or poultry:

All poultry (chicken, turkey, duck, goose, etc.) and foods stuffed with meat or poultry must be heated to *minimum internal temperature* of at least 165°F. Whole turkey breast should have a temperature of at least 165°F.



### Microwaving raw meat, eggs, and poultry:

When foods containing raw ground meat, eggs, pork, or poultry are cooked in a microwave oven, they must be heated to a *minimum internal temperature* of at least 165°F. These foods must be heated in a covered microwavable container, and stirred or rotated frequently to assure even heating. After microwaving, let the food stand in its covered container for at least two minutes prior to serving.



### Reheating certain foods:

When cooked foods are being reheated, a *minimum internal temperature* of at least 165°F for 15 seconds is necessary to kill bacteria that can grow as the food cools.

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## Temperature Control: Time as a Public Health Control

Time is usually used in combination with temperature to control the growth of bacteria and ensure that food is safe to consume. However, under specific conditions, food may be removed from temperature controls for short periods of time— less than four (4) hours— and rely only on *Time as a Public Health Control (TPHC)*. Used correctly, time can be an effective control; on the other hand, if time is not closely monitored, food-related illnesses may result.

### Which foods may be used with *Time as a Public Health Control*?

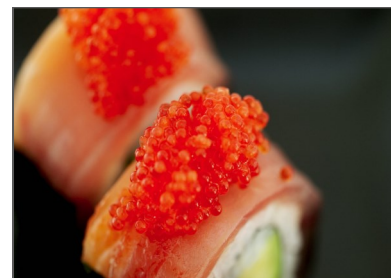
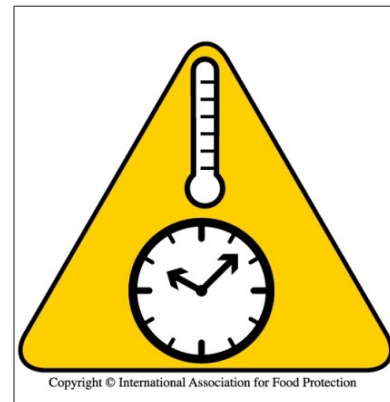
- Potentially hazardous foods (PHF) held before cooking.
- Ready-to-eat (RTE) foods that are displayed or held for service for immediate consumption.

### What conditions must be met when using TPHC?

- Inform your local Environmental Health District Office (enforcement agency) of the intention to use TPHC.
- Label food containers to indicate four hours past the time food was removed from temperature control— e.g. if food was removed from temperature control at 12:00 p.m., mark 4:00 p.m. on the food container to indicate when the food must be discarded.
- Cook and serve potentially hazardous foods within the four hour time frame, or discard the food past four hours.
- Serve ready-to-eat foods within the four hour time frame, or discard the food past four hours.
- Discard any food that has exceeded the four hour time frame or food that is in unmarked food containers.
- Maintain written procedures to make sure compliance with TPHC and rapid cooling method for food that is prepared, cooked, and refrigerated before time is used as a public health control; these procedures must be available for review upon request.

### Note

Once Time has been used as a Public Health Control, food cannot be placed back under temperature control to be used at a later time. Foods that have exceeded the four (4) hour time frame must be discarded.



## Communicable Disease Reporting

Effective July 1, 2007, all food facility employees, including supervisors and workers, are required to report employee illness as outlined below (California Retail Food Code Sections 113949-113950.5 and 113974).

### Responsibilities of the food facility employee:

In order to ensure food is safe from food-related illness or harm, food facility employees must tell the Person-in-Charge if:

1. They have been diagnosed with one of the reportable illnesses listed here (a “reportable illness” means that a doctor or hospital must report the illness to the public health department).
2. They have a cut or open wound on their hand or arm.

### Responsibilities of the Person-in-Charge:

Once a reportable illness or cut/wound has been reported by a food facility employee, the Person-in-Charge must:

1. *Exclude*<sup>1</sup> employees diagnosed with one of the reportable illnesses listed here.
2. *Restrict*<sup>2</sup> employees who have a cut or open wound on their hand or arm.
3. *Restrict*<sup>2</sup> employees with symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

### Persons-in-Charge must also report to the LA County Department of Public Health if:

1. Employees are diagnosed with one of the reportable illnesses listed here.
2. Two or more employees have symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea within the same time period.

All food facility employees must comply with these responsibilities, exclusions<sup>1</sup>, and/or restrictions<sup>2</sup>.

### Upon receipt of a reportable illness report, the LA County Department of Public Health may:

1. Exclude food facility employees diagnosed with a reportable illness who have symptoms and are considered infectious.
2. Restrict food facility employees diagnosed with a reportable illness who are considered infectious, even if they are not showing or do not have symptoms.
3. Close the food facility until the health risk is resolved.
4. Require medical evaluation of food facility employees.

<sup>1</sup>*Exclude or exclusion:* to prevent a person from working as a food facility employee or from entering a food facility, except for those areas open to the general public.

<sup>2</sup>*Restrict or restriction:* to limit the activities of a food facility employee so that there is no risk of transmitting a disease that is transmissible through food. The food facility employee shall not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, and/or un-wrapped single-use utensils.

### Reportable Illnesses:

Amebiasis  
E.coli  
Hepatitis A  
Norovirus  
Salmonellosis  
Shigellosis  
Typhoid Fever

### To report employee illness:

- Call the LA County Department of Public Health Morbidity Unit at (888) 397-3993 (Mon-Fri, 8:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.)
- Complete an online report at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/reports/CMR-H-794.pdf](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/reports/CMR-H-794.pdf)
- Call the LA County Operator at (213) 974-1234 (after hours, weekends, or holidays)

### For more information:

- Go to: [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh)
- Call the Environmental Health Wholesale Food & Safety Program at (626) 430-5400.

## Guidelines for Safe Food Donation

Donating surplus food from hotels, restaurants, other food facilities, and catered events can be a great way to help local missions and other charitable organizations that serve those in need. Although a special public health permit is not required, donating or receiving surplus foods must be done in a way that minimizes food safety risks. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Environmental Health Division has prepared the following food safety guidelines to help facilitate safe food donations.

### Approved Source of Donated Foods:

Prepared foods and meals must be donated only by permitted restaurants, hotels, food processing facilities, food distributors, or catered events. Donated foods are limited to foods or food portions which have not been previously served to a consumer. Individuals who wish to donate food should only provide uncooked, pre-packaged food products that can be prepared on site by approved food handlers.

### Facilities Receiving Donated Food:

Most missions or charitable organizations receiving donated foods operate under a public health permit so they are familiar with food handling requirements. If an organized event or charitable organization does not operate under a public health permit, the donated foods are to be immediately served and consumed.

### Temperature Control:

Donated foods that require temperature control must always remain at 41°F or below for cold foods or 135°F or above for hot foods, prior to transportation. When refrigerated transport is available, foods should be held below 41°F, while in transport to the venue. If refrigerated transport is not available, the food items should be labeled “Process Immediately” and must not be out of temperature controls for more than 2 hours. Donations consisting of whole produce, canned goods, dry foods and other similar products can be delivered anytime with no requirement for temperature controls or delivery times.

The food donor must check to ensure proper temperatures at the time of the transfer to the receiving facility or food transporter. The person-in-charge at the receiving venue should also check the temperature of the food upon receipt and note the time that the food is received. See the attached sample Food Donation Delivery Form on page 3 for an outline of helpful information that should be captured upon delivering, transporting or receiving foods.



## Guidelines for Safe Food Donation, continued

### **Protection from Contamination:**

Food must be protected from potential contamination at all times through the use of sanitary, food-grade containers, and by ensuring that transport vehicles are clean and free of vermin.

### **Questions:**

For more information, please contact Environmental Health at (626) 430-5200 during business hours, 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday; call the 24-hour Hotline at (888) 700-9995; or e-mail [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).

## State and Federal Food Donation Statutes

### **California Health and Safety Code, Section 114432:**

Any food facility may donate food to a food bank or to any other nonprofit charitable organization for distribution to persons free of charge.

### **California Health and Safety Code, Section 114433:**

No food facility that donates food as permitted by Section 114432 shall be subject to civil or criminal liability or penalty for violation of any laws, regulations, or ordinances regulating the labeling or packaging of the donated product or, with respect to any laws, regulations, or ordinances, for a violation occurring after the time of donation.

### **California Civil Code, Section 1714.25(a):**

Except for injury resulting from negligence or a willful act in the preparation or handling of donated food, no food facility that donates any food that is fit for human consumption at the time it was donated to a nonprofit charitable organization or a food bank shall be liable for any damage or injury resulting from the consumption of the donated food. The immunity from civil liability provided by this subdivision applies regardless of compliance with any laws, regulations, or ordinances regulating the packaging or labeling of food, and regardless of compliance with any laws, regulations, or ordinances regulating the storage or handling of the food by the owner after the donation of food.

### **United State Code, Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, Title 42, Chapter 13A, Section 1791:**

**(c)(1)** A person or gleaner shall not be subject to civil or criminal liability arising from the nature, age, packaging, or condition of apparently wholesome food or an apparently fit grocery product that the person or gleaner donates in good faith to a nonprofit organization for ultimate distribution to needy individuals.

**(f)** This section shall not be construed to create any liability. Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede State or local health regulations.

## Food Donation Delivery Form

Perishable Food Item(s) (Continue Items on Back of This Page if Needed)	lbs.)	DONOR Temperature at holding	Time Taken	RECEIVER Temperature at receipt	Time Taken	Accepted
						YES or NO
						YES or NO
						YES or NO
						YES or NO
						YES or NO

### Donated Form:

Name of Facility or Event	Public Health Permit #
Address	Phone #
Delivered by (Print Name)	

### Transported By (if other than donor or recipient):

Name of Facility or Event	Public Health Permit #
Address	Phone #
Delivered by (Print Name)	

### Donated To:

Name of Facility or Organization	Public Health Permit # (if applicable)
Address	Phone #
Received by (Print Name)	

I acknowledge that the food item(s) listed above meet the temperature holding requirements for potentially hazardous foods, as defined in Section 113871 of the California Retail Food Code.

Donor Signature	Date
Recipient Signature	Date





## Frequently Asked Questions: New construction, Remodel, or Tenant Improvement of a Food Facility— Plan Check

### When are plans required to be submitted to the Environmental Health Plan Check Program?

Complete floor plans are required if you fall into one of the following categories:

1. New construction
2. Tenant improvement: conversion of an existing non-food facility into a food facility
3. Remodel of an existing food facility due to change of operation or change of menu which will result in:
  - the addition, removal, or change out of food-related equipment and fixtures;
  - any replacement or significant modification of an integral piece of equipment;
  - relocation of the existing kitchen, storage room, restroom, bar, or janitorial facilities; and/or
  - replacement of a water heater.



### How many sets of plans should I submit?

New construction, remodels, and/or tenant improvements are required to submit three (3) sets of complete plans. Once the plans are approved, they will be distributed as follows:

1. One (1) set remains on file with the Plan Check Program;
2. One (1) set is to be kept at the jobsite by the food facility operator, architect, and/or contractor; and
3. One (1) set must be submitted, by the applicant, to the local Building & Safety Department.

### What should be included on the plans for new construction or tenant improvement?

Plans shall contain the following information:

- General Site Plan: the location of the food facility, trash area, exterior walls, windows, and doors. Include locations of remote food storage, common use restrooms, and/or janitorial facilities, if applicable.
- Window and door schedules.
- Equipment plan/schedule that is clearly identified and includes corresponding manufacturer specification sheets for all of the equipment. The equipment list shall match the equipment plan/schedule.
- Plumbing plans— if applicable, shall include waste details, hot and cold water lines, grease interceptor/trap detail, locations of floor drains and/or floor sinks, and location and rating of water heater (KW/BTU).
- Mechanical plans— if applicable, shall include mechanical hood and make-up air calculations, elevations, and manufacturer specification sheet.
- Electrical plans.
- Lighting schedule.
- Finish schedule— including manufacturer specification sheets, floors, walls, cove base and ceiling details, and elevations that shall match floor plan. Samples of finishes, colors, and paint may be required.
- Any applicable elevations and details.

Continued on next page

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## Frequently Asked Questions: New Construction, Remodel, or Tenant Improvement of a Food Facility— Plan Check

*continued*

### What other information or documents should be provided along with the plans for new construction or tenant improvement?

The following information shall be provided in addition to the plans:

1. Menu(s) for the food facility, and
2. On-site management letter for common use restrooms and/or janitorial facilities (if applicable).

### What should I submit when I am remodeling?

Remodels include changes to the food facility, changing food facility operations (e.g. from a take-out only facility to an eat-in facility), or changes to the menu(s). Along with three (3) sets of complete plans, include the following:

- Equipment plans/schedules that are clearly identified or labeled for the existing layout, along with plans for the proposed changes;
- Manufacturer specification sheets for new or additional equipment;
- Plumbing plans— if applicable, shall include waste details, hot and cold water lines, grease interceptor/trap detail, locations of floor drains and/or floor sinks, and location and rating of water heater.
- Mechanical plans— if applicable, shall include mechanical hood and make-up air calculations, elevations, and manufacturer specification sheet.
- Electrical plans— if applicable.
- Finish schedule— including manufacturer specification sheets, floors, walls, cove base and ceiling details, and elevations that shall match floor plan. Samples of finishes, colors, and paint may be required.
- Water heater rating (BTU or KW), if adding new plumbing fixtures or sinks.
- Operational letter if the food facility will remain in operation during the remodel.
- Copy of the valid Public Health Permit.

### How long does it take for plans to be reviewed?

Plans are reviewed on a “first come, first served” basis. Initial plan review will be done within 20 business days (excluding holidays) from the day the payment is received.

### I cannot wait 20 business days for a review; can my plans be expedited?

Yes, plan review may be expedited with payment of an additional Plan Check fee. The initial review of your plans will be completed within 10 business days (excluding holidays) from the date payment is received. For an example of expedited fees, see the chart on the next page.

Continued on next page

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# Frequently Asked Questions: New Construction, remodel, or Tenant Improvement of a Food Facility— Plan Check

*continued*

## How do I submit plans?

To submit plans:

- Visit your local Environmental Health Plan Check office and submit three (3) sets of plans;
- Fill out a Plan Check Application Form; and
- Include the applicable payment (see chart for a partial list of fees).

A Plan Check number will be assigned to your plans for tracking purposes.

## Can I start new construction, remodeling, or tenant improvement while waiting for my plans to be approved?

Construction, remodeling, or tenant improvement should not begin until plans have been approved by the Environmental Health Plan Check Program. You are also required to obtain all necessary permits from your local Building & Safety Department prior to starting the proposed work.

## Can I start training employees, stocking food, or using the remodeled areas or equipment after I finish the work and have obtained approval from my local Building & Safety Inspector?

Remodeled areas or equipment, or the newly constructed food facility shall not be used, stocked with food, or used to train employees before receiving field approval from the Environmental Health Plan Check Program.

FOOD MARKET RETAIL PLAN (*Supermarkets – see example below)		
Size in square feet	Fee	Expedited Fee
25-50	\$746	\$1,119
51-1999	\$973	\$1,459.50
2000-5999	\$1,071	\$1,606.50
6000-19,999	\$1,363	\$2,044.50
20,000 or more	\$1,655	\$2,482.50
RESTAURANT PLAN		
Size in square feet	Fee	Expedited Fee
500 or less	\$908	\$1,362
501-1999	\$1,330	\$1,995
2000-3999	\$1,622	\$2,433
4000-9999	\$1,979	\$2,968.50
10,000 or more	\$2,368	\$3,552
FOOD WAREHOUSE PLAN		
Size in square feet	Fee	Expedited Fee
0-500	\$746	\$1,119
501-4,999	\$876	\$1,314
5000-9,999	\$1,006	\$1,509
10,000 or more	\$1,103	\$1,654.50
MINOR REMODELING PLAN (Must provide copy of current Public Health Permit)		
Size in square feet	Fee	Expedited Fee
300 or less	\$274	\$411

For a complete list of Plan Check fees or for more information, visit the Environmental Health website at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh), or call the Plan Check Program at (626) 430-5560.



## Warning: Health Inspector Imposters

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is warning food facility owners and operators against scam artists who pose as health inspectors and target restaurants, unlawfully taking money by manipulating food facility owners. To protect yourself and your business, please note the following.

**Our Environmental Health Specialists (also known as health inspectors) pride themselves on considerate, respectful, and professional service in the field. An Environmental Health Specialist should always:**

- Introduce him or herself to the food facility owner, operator, or manager;
- Present a Los Angeles County-issued photo identification card;
- Provide a Los Angeles County-issued business card upon request; and
- Direct the food facility owner, operator, or manager to pay any fees to the local Environmental Health District Office, Environmental Health Headquarters, or the Los Angeles County Treasurer Tax Collector (for health permits).



**An Environmental Health Specialist should not:**

- Call to schedule appointments for routine inspections— routine inspections are always unannounced;
- Accept any payment for services during an inspection;
- Charge money or fees for *A, B, C Letter Grades*, signs, or equipment;
- Sell or endorse products; and/or
- Ask owners to call phone numbers and enter numeric codes, or tell the owner to give out a code when called to schedule an inspection.

**The impersonation of a public officer is a criminal offense. Anyone found impersonating a health inspector or other government employee is guilty of a felony crime.**

**What should I do if I receive a visit or a call from someone claiming to be a health inspector?**

- If the individual claiming to be a health inspector is unable to provide a valid, LA County-issued photo ID, and/or an LA County-issued business card, contact your local Environmental Health District Office to confirm that he or she is a current Environmental Health employee. If the EH District Office is unable to confirm the health inspector's identity, contact your local law enforcement agency.
- If the person requests you pay them directly for a service, contact your local EH District Office and your local law enforcement agency.
- Do not give the person money, pay any "fees," or permit the individual to "inspect" the food facility.
- Do not provide any personal, financial, or security information.
- If possible, get the person's name and contact information.

**To report fraudulent activity or request more information, contact the Environmental Health District Surveillance & Enforcement Branch at (626) 430-5200.**

## California Food Handler Card

As of January 1, 2012, certain food facility employees are required to obtain a California Food Handler Card (SB 602 and SB 603). Each state has different food safety training courses. Food service workers employed in California will need to obtain a state-specific Food Handler Card.

### Who is required to have a California Food Handler (CFH) Card?

All food employees who prepare, store, or serve food. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Servers,
- Chefs, head chefs, cooks, head cooks,
- Bartenders, and
- Hosts and hostesses who handle food.

Bussers and General Managers or other supervisors may also need to have a CFH Card. Managers who already have a Food Protection Manager Certification do not need to obtain a separate CFH card.

### How do you get a CFH Card?

You will need to take a basic food safety training course, and pass an exam with a score of 70 percent or better. Training courses are available through any American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited training provider. A list of accredited food handler programs can be found by visiting the ANSI website at [www.ansica.org](http://www.ansica.org).

### Where are CFH Cards accepted?

CFH Cards are accepted everywhere in California except Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties, where local programs are instead enforced.

### Who pays for the Food Handler training?

The law does not require employers to pay for an employee's time and expense to take the training and exam. The California Food Handler Card is the property of the employee who can take it to another employer as long as the card is valid.

### How long is the card valid?

CFH Cards are valid for three years from the date of issuance. Employers must keep a copy of each employee's card on file.

### Who enforces the law?

Local health departments are responsible for enforcing the law.

#### Who is exempt from the CFH Card Law?

Certified farmers markets

Commissaries

Convenience stores

Grocery stores

Licensed health care facilities

Mobile support units

Public and private school cafeterias

Restricted food service facilities

Retail stores where a majority of sales are from a pharmacy

Temporary food facilities

For a complete list of exemptions or for further information on the California Food Handler Card, visit the EH website at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh) or call your local Environmental Health District Office.

## VIETNAMESE RICE CAKE

### Senate Bill 969

#### Vietnamese Rice Cake (Bánh Tét or Bánh Chưng)

Vietnamese rice cake also known as Banh Tet or Banh Chung, is defined as a confection that contains a combination of rice, beans, and meat or fruit wrapped tightly in banana leaves for cooking. Banh Tet is a rice cake in cylindrical shape, and Banh Chung is a rice cake in a square shape. SB 969 which became effective on January 1, 2017 requires that manufacturers of Vietnamese rice cakes adhere to the following requirements:



#### Cooking Method:

- ◆ Vietnamese rice cakes are prepared using a traditional Vietnamese method that includes cooking by boiling in water for at least 10 hours.
- ◆ Vietnamese rice cakes are required to be handled, prepared, and stored under clean and sanitary conditions.
- ◆ Vietnamese rice cakes must be cooled to 70°F after cooking.
- ◆ Any Vietnamese rice cakes that are unwrapped from the banana leaves after cooking shall be refrigerated.



#### Labeling:

All manufacturers of Vietnamese rice cakes shall affix a label designed by the Vietnamese Rice Cake Association, Inc., on the Vietnamese rice cakes that indicates the following:

- ◆ The date and time the cooking process was completed
- ◆ A statement printed on the label that states that the “rice cake must be consumed within 24 hours of the date and time the cooking process was completed”

#### Holding:

- ◆ Vietnamese rice cakes must be stored at 70°F or below, for no more than 24 hours.
- ◆ Vietnamese rice cakes that have been stored above 70°F or for more than 24 hours shall be disposed.

## MAJOR FOOD ALLERGENS

Effective January 2017, the California Retail Food Code (Cal Code) was amended to include eight major food allergens. The code requires the person in charge of the retail food facility and all food employees to have adequate knowledge of major food allergens and the symptoms that a major food allergen could cause in a sensitive individual who has an allergic reaction.

### The Eight Foods Identified by the Law are:

1. Milk
2. Eggs
3. Fish (e.g. bass, flounder, cod)
4. Crustacean shellfish (e.g. crab, lobster, shrimp)
5. Tree nuts (e.g. almonds, walnuts, pecans)
6. Peanuts
7. Wheat
8. Soybeans

These eight foods and any ingredients that contains protein derived from one or more of them, are designated as “major food allergens”.

### FOOD ALLERGY SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of food allergies typically appear from within a few minutes to two hours after a person has eaten the food to which he or she is allergic.

### Allergic Reactions Can Include:

- Hives
- Flushed skin or rash
- Tingling or itchy sensation in the mouth
- Face, tongue, or lip swelling
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- ♦ Abdominal cramps
- Coughing or wheezing
- Dizziness and/or lightheadedness
- Swelling of the throat and vocal cords
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness

### The Hard Facts:

#### Severe Food Allergies Can Be Life-Threatening

Following ingestion of a food allergen (s) a person with food allergies can experience a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction called **anaphylaxis**. This can lead to: constricted airways in the lungs, severe lowering of blood pressure and shock (“**anaphylactic shock**”) and suffocation by swelling of the throat. Prompt administration of epinephrine by autoinjector (e.g., Epi-pen) during early symptoms of anaphylaxis may help prevent these serious consequences.

For more information on food allergies, visit:

<http://www.fda.gov>



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

# Point Deduction Modification to the Food Official Inspection Report

The Food Official Inspection Report (FOIR) has been modified to include new point deductions. Due to the increased risk to the public's health and safety associated with multiple Major Critical Risk violations and specific closure violations, additional points will now be deducted from the food facility's inspection score.

### 1. When was the FOIR point deduction modification implemented?

The point deduction modification was implemented July 2016. There will be a six month 'grace' period to inform the restaurant and food market industry and operators of this change. Full implementation of the point deductions will begin January 1, 2017.

### 2. What is a major critical risk violation?

A Major Critical Risk Violation poses an imminent health hazard that requires immediate correction and may require a food facility's permit to be suspended. Major Critical Violations are those listed on the left (red-shaded) side of the inspection report and identified by the "4" under the "Major" column.

### 3. What are some examples of a major critical risk violation?

Major Critical Risk Violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- ◆ Food employee hands not clean / properly washed
- ◆ Improper hot and cold holding food temperatures
- ◆ Food not from an approved source
- ◆ Food-contact surfaces not clean and sanitized
- ◆ Improper cooking temperature

### 4. How was the FOIR point deduction modified?

When a Major Critical Risk Violation is marked on the FOIR, four points are deducted from the inspection score. With the point deduction modification, in addition to the four point deduction, additional points will be deducted (a) for two or more Major Critical Risk Violations and/or (b) for specific closure violations:

#### (a) Two or more Major Critical Risk Violations

If two or more Major Critical Risk violations are marked on the FOIR, an additional three points will be deducted from the inspection score.

**Example 1:** Two Major Critical Risk violations.

MAJOR CRITICAL RISK VIOLATION MARKED	POINT DEDUCTION
#5 Hands clean and properly washed; proper glove use	4 points
#7 Proper hot and cold holding temperatures	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for multiple critical violations</i>	3 points
<b>TOTAL POINTS DEDUCTED</b>	<b>11 points</b>

#### (b) Specific Closure Violations-No Water Available, Sewage and/or Vermin Infestation

When a restaurant or market is closed for no water, sewage and/or vermin infestation, four points are deducted from the inspection score for each of these major critical risk violations. With the point deduction modification, if a

Continued on next page

The image shows a 'RETAIL FOOD OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT' form. It includes fields for Facility Name, Owner/Permitter, Address, and Inspection Date. Below these are sections for 'CRITICAL RISK FACTORS' and 'GOOD RETAIL PRACTICES'. The 'CRITICAL RISK FACTORS' section is divided into sub-sections like 'EMPLOYEES HEALTH, HYGIENE & KNOWLEDGE', 'FOOD SAFETY', 'TEMPERATURE CONTROL', etc. Each item has a grid for 'Major' and 'Minor' violations. The 'GOOD RETAIL PRACTICES' section includes items like 'Sanitation', 'Food Safety', and 'Facilities'. At the bottom, there are signature lines for the Inspector and the Facility Manager, and a page number 'Page 1 of 2'.





**(b) Specific Closure Violations—No Water Available, Sewage and/or Vermin Infestation (Continued)**

restaurant’s or market’s permit is suspended for No Water Available, Sewage, and/or Vermin Infestation, in an additional to the four-point deduction for Major Critical Risk Violations, seven points will be deducted for each of the above three specified closure violations. The FIOR reflects an 11 point deduction for each of these closure violations.

**Example 2:** Permit suspended for one of the three specified closure violations marked.

MAJOR CRITICAL RISK VIOLATION MARKED	POINT DEDUCTION
#21b) Water available	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
<b>TOTAL POINTS DEDUCTED</b>	<b>11 points</b>

**Example 3:** Permit suspended for all three specified closure violations.

MAJOR CRITICAL RISK VIOLATION MARKED	POINT DEDUCTION
#21 a) Water available	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
# 22 Sewage and wastewater properly disposed	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
#23 No insects, rodents, birds or animals present	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
<b>TOTAL POINTS DEDUCTED</b>	<b>33 points</b>

If a food facility’s permit is suspended for No Water Available, Sewage, and/or Vermin Infestation **AND** two or more additional Major Critical Risk Violations are marked, an additional seven (7) points will be deducted for each of the three specified closure types marked. The 3- point deduction for the two or more Major Critical Risk Violations (#52 on the FOIR) will not be marked.

**Example 4:** Permit suspended for two of the three specified closure types and two Major Critical Risk violations.

MAJOR CRITICAL RISK VIOLATION MARKED	POINT DEDUCTION
#10 Proper cooking time and temperature	4 points
#13 Food in good condition, safe and unadulterated	4 points
#21 b) Water available	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
#23 No insects, rodents, birds or animals present	4 points
<i>Additional point deduction for specified permit suspension violations</i>	7 points
<b>TOTAL POINTS DEDUCTED</b>	<b>33 points</b>

**For additional information, please visit our website at [www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh](http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh), call us at (888) 700-9995, or email [ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:ehmail@ph.lacounty.gov).**



## Certificate of Excellence

Retail food establishments that receive three (3) consecutive “A” ratings with no **major** critical risk violations and no repeated **minor** critical risk violations, are eligible to receive a Certificate of Excellence. These consecutive inspections must be conducted under the same Program Record Number (PR #) for the facility.

- An Owner/Operator of a food establishment must request the Certificate of Excellence by contacting their local Environmental Health District Surveillance and Enforcement office.
- The District Surveillance and Enforcement office will request specific information in order to process your request. The Department will review your request and respective Retail Food Official Inspection Reports within 45 days. If your food establishment meets the requirements for the Certificate of Excellence, your certificate will be mailed to you. If your food establishment does not qualify, you will be notified by mail as to the reason your request was denied.

## Exceptions

Food establishments located within cities that have not adopted the grading ordinance do not qualify for the Certificate of Excellence Program. An Owner Initiated Inspection shall not be considered in the three consecutive “A” ratings.

**A fee may be assessed for re-issuance of lost or stolen certificates.**

The Department of Public Health looks forward to acknowledging your food establishment for exemplifying high standards in food safety. Contact your local Environmental Health Office for more information



*“to protect health and prevent disease and promote health and well-being”*