

The Benefits of Having a Public Health Permit



- ✓ Knowing that you are operating a safe business.
- ✓ Receiving guidance on safe food handling practices.
- ✓ Gaining customer trust by showing commitment to food safety.
- ✓ Avoiding paying fines or having food taken away.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR SIDEWALK VENDING

► Compact Mobile Food Operation (CMFO)

A CMFO allows someone to become a permitted food business owner and sell food from the sidewalk. It is a mobile food facility that can only operate from the following:

- **Non-motorized vehicles like a pushcart**
- **A stand, showcase, rack, display that is 25 square feet or less:** *May only sell prepackaged, non-potentially hazardous foods, such as commercially packaged chips, soda, un-cut fruits/vegetables*

► Temporary Food Facility (TFF)

A TFF participates in community events like county fairs, festivals, and night markets.

To learn more about TFF and the application process, contact the Community Events Program at (626) 430-5320 or email communityevents@ph.lacounty.gov.



Learn How to Obtain a Public Health Permit

Visit ph.lacounty.gov/EH-Permits or contact our **Mobile Food Program** at (626) 430-5500 or email EHVIP@ph.lacounty.gov.



Become a Permitted Sidewalk Food Business

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

Role of the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division

The Environmental Health Division inspects various food businesses, including restaurants and mobile vendors, to ensure compliance with local, State, and Federal codes in the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County. Its goal is to prevent foodborne illness through inspections and public education.

Public Health Permits are required for all food business, including sidewalk food vendors and must adhere to the California Health and Safety Code to minimize risks.

Note: Pasadena, Long Beach, and Vernon have their own environmental health departments.

What happens if I operate without a Public Health Permit?

- The inspector will issue an Official Inspection Report (OIR) instructing you to stop operations because you did not have a Public Health Permit. Additionally, OIR highlights other critical food safety issues.
- An administrative citation can also be issued which includes a fine for operating without a permit.

Why Was My Food Taken Away?

Inspectors can take away food for many reasons, such as:

- Finding dirty or poorly kept equipment or utensils that might make the food unsafe.
- Suspecting that utensils are releasing harmful substances like lead or cadmium, which is against the California Health and Safety Code.
- Keeping food at the wrong temperature.

Note: Pop-up street food vendors are not allowed under state law.

Operating a food business without a Public Health Permit is a violation. You must stop all food preparation and public sales until you have the necessary permits to operate properly.

Basic Food Safety Requirements

All food businesses need a Public Health Permit to operate, and sidewalk food vendors must follow specific food safety standards.



Access to clean water – safe for drinking & cooking:

Food handlers must have access to clean water to wash their hands or clean utensils.



Access to a bathroom:

Food handlers must have access to a bathroom to maintain proper hygiene (e.g., washing hands with soap, using single use paper towels).



Protect food from vermin & contaminants:

There must be proper food coverage and storage to prevent food contamination from rodents, pests, dust, and germs.



Use approved equipment:

Food handlers must have equipment that is approved to keep food at safe temperatures and protected from contamination.



Maintain sanitary conditions:

All equipment and surfaces used in food preparation must be kept clean and sanitized.



Required to purchase all food from approved sources:

All food and ingredients must be bought from approved suppliers to ensure quality and safety.



Must keep food at safe temperatures:

Equipment must maintain safe food temperatures to help prevent the risk of foodborne illness.

- Perishable cold items must be kept at 41°F or below.
- Perishable hot items must be kept at 135°F or above.



Food in Good Condition/Safe and Unadulterated:

All food and ingredients need to be kept free from contamination and spoiling during preparation, serving, storing, and transportation.



Permit Available:

Food trucks/carts and sidewalk food vendors must have a valid Public Health Permit and post their certification sticker in a visible location.