



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO HEALTH AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION**

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Dependent Operator Guide to Permitting

A **Dependent Food Service Operator** is any person or business who engages in a lease or rental agreement with the permit holder of a permitted permanent food establishment, or **Shared Permanent Food Facility (SPFF)**, to use the SPFF to perform food production and/or food service operations to supply food and related services to the general public.

- A dependent food service operator may be a mobile food facility operator, a temporary food facility (food booth) operator, may provide direct sales of food products at the leased or rented permitted food establishment or host facility, or may prepare for off-site catering operations.
 - *If you do not have a permanent retail food facility under permit with this Department and you wish to utilize one that another person holds the permit for to perform your food production or food service operations, then you are a dependent food service operator.*

The Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) recognizes that there is a growing demand by **Dependent Food Service Operators** to have access to the County's local permanent food facilities to prepare their food products. EHS's goal is to make the sharing of food facilities by multiple businesses work smoothly, while ensuring that safe food handling practices are in place to protect the public's health.

The following is a **step-by-step guide** to help a potential **Dependent** food facility operator and the permit holder of a permanent food facility (shared **Permanent** food facility operator), such as a commissary, restaurant, or other EHS approved food facility.

A **shared permanent food facility** may be a permitted commissary or other approved permitted **Retail Permanent Food Facility**, such as a Restaurant, Retail Market, or Catering Operation Facility, wherein the permit holder leases or rents kitchen facilities to **dependent food service operators**. The permanent food facility must possess the adequate space and equipment necessary for the safe operation of the dependent food service operator.

- **Commissaries** are intentionally designed to be used by mobile food facilities such that the operational requirements of the mobile food facility can be accomplished. This permanent food facility operator possesses a commissary permit.
- **Other approved Retail Permanent Food Facilities** are not commissaries but are approved to share kitchen facilities. These may be approved to service some mobile food facilities, however approval is not guaranteed.

Steps in the permit review and approval process for Dependent food facility operators:

Step 1: Apply for a Health Permit

The **Dependent** food facility operator must submit copies of the following documents along with payment of their health permit to EHS to begin the permit review process:

- Health Permit **Application** for a **Dependent Food Service Operator Permit**
- Shared Primary Food Facility Review Form**
- Shared Primary Food Facility Use Agreement** must be signed by both the **Primary** food facility operator who holds the facility's health permit and the prospective **Dependent** food facility operator.
- Written Operational Procedures for Catering Operation** (if operation includes catering off-site events)
- Sample menu** of food items to be prepared or served.
- Prepackaged food label sample(s)** of food items prepackaged prior to service.
- State of California **Processed Food Registration**, as required by the CDPH-FDB.
- State of California **Cannery License**, as required by the CDPH-FDB.
- State of California **Milk Product Plant License**, as required by the CDFA-MDFS.
- State of California **Meat Processing Establishment License**, as required by the CDFA-MPES.
- Food Manager Certificate & Food Handler Cards**

Step 2: Review the Health Permit Application Package

EHS staff will review the *Permit Application Packet and all applicable documents*. EHS staff will contact the **Dependent** and **Primary** operators as needed to complete the evaluation of the Dependent operator permit. If a site inspection is required, EHS staff will contact the interested parties to arrange a site visit.

Step 3: Post the Permit at the Facility

Once issued by EHS, the approved health permit must be posted in a conspicuous location at the **Primary** food facility. **Dependent** food operators will be subject to at least one annual inspection.

Prepackaged Food Label Guidance

If food will be prepackaged prior to sale or distribution, visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/GeneralFoodLabelingRequirements.pdf> for information on labeling requirements.

State of California Processed Food Registration

The California Department of Public Health's Food and Drug Branch (CDPH-FDB) regulates the manufacture, processing, storage, and distribution of food products in California. California law requires that businesses obtain a Processed Food Registration (PFR) if food is manufactured, packaged, labeled, or warehoused in California. The foods covered include:

General foods such as; bakery products, noodles, seafood (except molluscan shellfish), fruit juices, snacks, nuts, oils, processed or packaged vegetables, candy, etc. The PFR allows firms to manufacture products not specifically covered by another CDPH-FDB or CDFA license.

For information on what food production may require a PFR and how to obtain one, visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/Pages/FDBPrograms/FoodSafetyProgram/ProcessedFoodRegistration.aspx> For more information, you may call: **(916) 650-6500**.

Cannery License

Retail food operators that are interested in low-acid or acidified canned, jarred, or hermetically sealed foods are to contact the CDPH-FDB to determine if their food item requires a PFR or Cannery License. For information regarding whether the food you process requires a PFR or Cannery License, **you may call: (916) 650-6500**. It is the responsibility of the food facility operator to obtain the required registration or license from the CDPH-FDB.

Food Manager Certificate & Food Handler Cards

Each **Dependent** food facility that prepares, handles, or serves nonprepackaged potentially hazardous food must have at an owner or employee who has successfully passed an approved and accredited **food safety certification** examination within 60 days of commencing operation. Food facilities that prepare, handle, or serve only food other than nonprepackaged potentially hazardous food must demonstrate adequate knowledge of food safety principles as they relate to the specific food facility operation. All other individuals involved in the preparation, storage, or service of any food in the food facility must obtain a valid **food handler card** from an accredited provider within 30 days after the date of hire. For more information on accredited food certification and food handler programs, visit the following website:

<https://www.ansica.org/wwwversion2/outside/ALLdirectoryListing.asp?menuID=8&prgID=8&status=4>