



### **MOBILE FOOD FACILITIES (MFF) 2018 PLACARDING IMPLEMENTATION**

On April 14, 2015 County of San Mateo joined other counties throughout the Bay Area and Northern California and implemented a colored-coded placarding system for food facilities. The system consists of using Green (Pass), Yellow (Conditional Pass) and Red (Closed) placards to effectively communicate to the public whether a food facility complies with food safety principles, enabling diners to make informed decisions when choosing a venue and to encourage food facilities to improve their safe food practices. The placarding system implemented by the County of San Mateo is consistent with food placarding systems utilized in other Bay Area jurisdictions, as such, it is a standardized tool to inform the public, and food operators about food safety practices in food facilities.

In mid-2015 several educational outreach meetings were held throughout the county to inform food facility operators and Mobile Food Operators on the new standards of the placarding program. We prepared a presentation called “How to Get a Green”, focused on good sanitary practices for food facilities. The Food Program implemented the placarding rating system of permanent food facilities in January 2016.

The San Mateo County Environmental Health Division will begin implementing a Mobile Food Facility (MFF) grading (Placarding) Program during the 2018 renewal season which takes place in the months of February- March. A month prior to the renewal season operators will be notified via mail that new permits need to be obtained along with instructions and locations of inspections. The placarding implementation will be applicable to the following type of MFFs only:

- **1541 (Limited Food Preparation Units, Hot Dog Carts, Espresso Carts, Tamales Carts, Dessert Trucks, etc.)**
- **1543 (Unlimited Food Preparation Units, Mostly Food Trucks)**

#### **What is a “Placarding Program”?**

The Placarding Program is a mandatory program which will assign one of three color-coded Placards (Green, Yellow, and Red) to your business based on an operational inspection as you are working. The color of each Placard will correspond to the number and type of health code violations found during this inspection (for important health code violations to avoid, see list below). Our Mobile Food inspectors will use the same inspection form to assess the level of “risk” presented by each Mobile Food facility. The inspection focuses more heavily on the food safety practices of employees. Mobile Food facilities with good food handling practices will earn a Green Placard which will be posted in a window of their truck, for public view. The Placarding Program will provide consumers an “at-a-glance” snapshot of the food facility, so they are more informed about where they choose to eat.

#### **What does this mean for your business?**

San Mateo County inspectors will be inspecting your MFF while you are operating during business hours on a more regular basis. The key component of the Placarding Program is an assessment of a Mobile Food facility’s cleanliness, sanitation and food safety practices during food service. As a business owner, you must be especially diligent in training your employees and keeping a close eye on any malfunctions in your equipment that could compromise the safety of the food you serve. Our goal is for each business to earn a Green Placard. However, if the inspection results in the

issuance of a Yellow or Red Placard, our inspection staff will advise you what needs to be done to get back in the Green. Please visit [www.smchealth.org/placarding](http://www.smchealth.org/placarding) to view training videos in how to get a green.

**What can you do to prepare?**

Please prepare yourself by avoiding the following major violations, which may result in the closure of your Mobile Food Business:

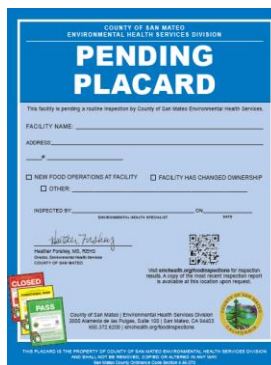
No electrical power, faulty generator, generator turned off, vehicle not plugged in, etc	Improper sewage/water disposal
No refrigeration, or refrigeration not working properly	Vermin (insect and rodent) infestation
No water, lack of potable water, or lack of pressurized water	Food infection, food intoxication, disease transmission
No hot water, or water temperature at any critical sink (hand washing, utensil washing) is less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit	Hazardous conditions that require immediate correction, or cessation of operation to prevent injury, illness or death

If you find any of the above issues, please take the necessary steps to initiate a “self-closure” of your truck, until the issues are resolved. **If we inspect your truck and find any of the issues above, you will be closed, and a Red Placard will be posted accordingly.**

**When will the Placarding Program begin?**

The food program will be implementing the MFF placarding as of February 2018 starting with the renewal season. The implementation will have a two-step process:

1. Structural Inspection: MFFs will be inspected as usual at the time of renewal, and a blue placard (Pending Placarding) will be issued to those MFFs that pass the structural requirements.



2. Operational Inspection: This type of inspection will be considered as the on the field operational inspection and will be similar to permanent food facility inspections where the MFF operators will be looked at more in the operational aspect of the day to day activities of the MFF. The MFFs will be inspected according to the CDC critical risk factors in line with our current Food Program Marking Guides. Please note that violations 60-79 are specific to MFFs and the current MFF marking guide will apply. At the end of the inspection the facility will get a score, Green, Yellow, or Red, and current placarding protocols will be applied. The placards will be smaller in size to accommodate the space limitation of the MFF (approximately 5” x 6.5”).

## What will the Placards look like?

Below is an example of what the Placards look like. You are probably familiar with these images in permanent food establishments. The Placards correspond to a “Pass” (Green), “Conditional Pass” (Yellow) and “Closed” (Red) inspection result. You will be receiving one of the Placards below, following an operational inspection after the 2018 renewal season.



For more information or questions please contact us at (650) 372-6200 or visit us at [www.smchealth.org/placarding](http://www.smchealth.org/placarding)

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