



GUIDANCE FOR COTTAGE FOOD OPERATORS (CFO's) IN SAN MATEO COUNTY



Environmental Health

Permit & Registration – As a new cottage food operator, determine where you will sell your product. There are two levels of Cottage Food Operations:

- Class A – Direct sales from the operator to the customer.
- Class B* – Direct and Indirect sales, including from operator to customer and operator to third party to customer.

Once you know your Class, submit the “**Cottage Food Operation Form**” and gain approval from Environmental Health prior to operating. *Class B CFO's require an inspection before operating.

Planning & Building

Approval – You must obtain approval from the City or County planning office that has zoning jurisdiction in your residential area. If you plan to remodel your home to accommodate your new CFO, contact your local building department.

STRUCTURAL RECOMMENDATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Registered / Permitted Area

Foods are to be prepared ONLY in the kitchen of your private home. Rooms within the home that are attached to the kitchen can be used for CFO storage if used exclusively for the CFO.

*Kitchen Floors Walls & Ceilings**

Smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable. No carpet flooring. Coving at wall base is recommended to facilitate cleaning. Paint walls and ceilings with glossy or semi-gloss paint. *When replacement floors are needed, contact this department for information on approved flooring materials.

Lighting

Use shatterproof light covers to protect food from broken lights.

Ventilation

Adequate ventilation for cooking equipment must be provided. Mechanical ventilation may be necessary. Screened windows are allowable.

Refrigeration

Refrigeration units must be clean with enough space to store all potentially hazardous ingredients (such as milk, butter and eggs). Refrigerators used for CFO ingredients or foods cannot be used to store personal items.

Equipment & Utensils

It's best to use commercial grade equipment and utensils. All equipment and utensils must be clean and in good repair.

Countertops

Counters must be maintained clean and in good condition without any signs of defect or deterioration that would prevent them from being cleanable. Tile counters must be sealed and in good repair. Wooden preparation surfaces, such as a dough table or cutting board must be food-grade.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Handwashing

Wash your hands before preparing or packaging foods. Wash with warm water and liquid soap for 20 seconds, then dry your hands with a paper towel. Use gloves and utensils whenever possible to avoid touching food with your bare hands.

NEVER HANDLE FOOD WHEN YOU'RE SICK.

Temperature Control

Store all potentially hazardous ingredients (milk, butter, eggs, etc.) at 41°F or below to keep them safe. Put a thermometer in your refrigerator and check it daily.

Store frozen potentially hazardous foods in their frozen state until use. The best way to thaw frozen foods is overnight in the refrigerator.

Clean & Sanitized Surfaces

Wash your counters and other contact surfaces with soap and warm water, rinse, then sanitize with a clean towel soaked in sanitizer (1 gallon water to 1 tablespoon of bleach).

Keep area free of rodents and insects.

Clean & Sanitized Utensils

Washing equipment and utensils must be done in one of the following ways:

One compartment sink:

Wash with liquid soap and warm water in the sink then rinse. Fill sink with sanitizer solution of one tablespoon bleach per gallon of water (100 PPM). Submerge utensils in sanitizer. Allow to air dry.

Two compartment sink:

Wash with liquid soap and warm water and rinse in the first compartment. Fill second compartment with sanitizer solution of one tablespoon bleach per gallon of water (100 PPM). Submerge utensils in sanitizer. Allow to air dry.

Three compartment sink:

Wash with liquid soap and warm water in the first compartment. Rinse with warm water in the middle compartment. Fill third compartment with sanitizer solution of one tablespoon bleach per gallon of water (100 PPM). Submerge utensils in sanitizer. Allow to air dry.

Domestic dishwashing machine:

The machine must have a high heat drying cycle to sanitize utensils. The high heat cycle must be at least 165°F or greater.

Separate CFO Activities

Don't prepare, package or handle CFO products during other domestic activities such as family meal prep, dishwashing or dinner parties.

Keep infants, small children and pets out of the kitchen during CFO activities.

No Smoking

Smoking is never allowed in the Registered or Permitted Area of your CFO.

Hair Restraints

Wear hair restraints such as hats, hair coverings, or hair nets to keep your hair from contacting food, clean utensils and equipment.

Clean clothes

Wear clean outer clothing or aprons to prevent contamination of food, equipment, utensils, and food contact surfaces.

Garbage

Properly remove and dispose of all trash in a sanitary manner as necessary. We recommend using disposable bags to contain the trash. Minimize odor, rodent and insect activity by storing trash in leak-proof containers and covering with tight-fitting lids.

Water & Sewer

A protected, pressurized, potable supply of hot and cold water must be provided for your operation. The water supply must be from an approved water system. If your home is served by a private water system such as a well, yearly water sampling is required to ensure the absence of coliform bacteria.

Restrooms

Keep your restroom clean and in good repair, including a sink with warm water, liquid soap and paper towels for washing hands. We recommend paper towels for drying your hands because reusable towels can spread dangerous bacteria.

For more information, visit us at:

<http://smchealth.org/food>
or call (650) 372-6200