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Permit Process – New Retail Food Facility FAQs

1. What is a retail food facility?

A Retail Food Facility includes any business or entity that sells or gives food (or beverage) to the public (e.g., customers, students, patients, inmates, homeless or needy). This includes restaurants, markets, farm stands, farmers' markets, bars, snack bars, school or staff cafeterias, detention facility kitchens, caterers, production kitchens, commissaries, cottage food, charitable feeding, temporary events (e.g., fairs, festivals), skilled nursing and hospital kitchens, and mobile food (food trucks, ice cream trucks, food carts).

2. What are the steps to open a new retail food facility?

- Step 1: Submit plans to the Environmental Health Plan Review Section.
- Step 2: After the plan are approved by Environmental Health, obtain any necessary permits from the local building department.
- Step 3: Once the plans are approved and building permits obtained, the construction or remodel work can commence. **Do not start construction or remodel work until the plans are approved by Environmental Health and any necessary building permits are obtained from the local building department.**
- Step 4: Arrange for Environmental Health to conduct the required construction inspections.
- Step 5: Once the final construction approval is granted by Environmental Health, complete a "Health Permit Application: Food Facility and Public Pool" and pay the permit fee and then the facility or business can commence operation. You will be mailed a Placard Pending to post in a conspicuous location. After your first routine inspection, this placard will be replaced with a placard based on the result of the inspection.

3. Are there other agencies I should contact?

Contact the local city regarding business licenses and other requirements. The fire department may also have requirements. The sewer district may have requirements for a grease trap or grease interceptor. See below for contact information:

- California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control – If beer, wine, or spirits are sold.
<https://www.abc.ca.gov/>
- California Department of Food and Agriculture – If a soft-serve machine is in use or if meat products will be smoked, cured, or dried.
<https://www.cdffa.ca.gov/>
- California Division of the State Architect – For projects involving public schools.

- <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/DSA>
- City Building, Planning, and Fire Departments
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/1243/View-Cities-of-Contra-Costa>
 - Contra Costa County Department of Conservation and Development – Planning and building department issues in unincorporated areas of the county.
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/3383/Conservation-Development>
 - Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
<https://www.cccfpd.org/>
 - Contra Costa Hazardous Material Division – Large CO₂ tanks.
<https://cchealth.org/hazmat/>
 - East Contra Costa Fire Protection District
<https://www.eccfpd.org/>
 - BAAQMD – Cooking vapor exhausts; backup generators
https://www.baaqmd.gov/?sc_itemid=EF41E646-BE3B-48BC-9DE8-DAFCB9C6C33B
 - Central Contra Costa Sanitary District
<https://www.centrsan.org/>
 - Delta Diablo Sanitary District
<https://www.deltadiablo.org/>
 - Ironhouse Sanitary District
<https://www.ironhousesanitarydistrict.com/>
 - Mt. View Sanitary District
<https://www.mvsd.org/>
 - Rodeo Sanitary District
<http://rodeosan.org/>
 - Stege Sanitary District
<https://www.stegesand.org/>