



The mission of the Division of Environmental Health is to enhance the quality of life in Tulare County through implementation of environmental health programs that protect public health and safety as well as the environment.

Any operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vends, or otherwise provides food/beverages for human consumption to the public is a retail food facility and requires a health permit. This includes restaurants, markets, pop-up events, food trucks, catering services, and more.

Permits for retail food facilities within Tulare County are issued by the food program, ensuring safe food handling practices, proper sanitation, and compliance with the California Health and Safety Code.

The type of food permit required for your business depends on factors such as menu, location, and duration.

APPLYING FOR A HEALTH PERMIT

1. Decide which health permit your business requires. Consider your menu and where you plan to prepare and sell food. If you are unsure which permit you need, contact us to speak with an inspector.
2. Apply for your health permit. You can apply online at www.tularecountyeh.org or in person at 5957 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277
Office hours:
M–Th: 8 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
F: 8 a.m.–12 p.m.
3. Pay for your permit and any other health fees. Payments can be made on-line with a credit card or in person with cash, check, or credit card.

CONTACT US

tularecountyeh@tularecounty.ca.gov

(559) 624-7400

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.tularecountyeh.org



HHSA
Public Health

Environmental Health Division
FOOD PERMITS

(559)624-7400
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TULARE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH DIVISION
5957 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277
Phone: (559) 624-7400

PERMANENT FOOD FACILITY

Examples of permanent food facilities include restaurants, walk-ups, bakeries, and retail markets. This permit allows the sale of open food and prepackaged food at a permanent food facility with permanent floors, walls, and ceilings. Food may be prepackaged on site and sold on site if properly labeled. Food prepackaged on site may NOT be sold to a facility at a different location. Caterers and community event vendors may utilize permitted permanent food facilities to prepare food that will be served at their events.

COMMISSARY

A commissary is a permanent facility required for food preparation and/or service of a mobile food facility. This permit allows food preparation for mobiles, caterers, and TFF vendors as well.

HOST FACILITY

A host facility is a commercial building that meets certain basic requirements to support a catering operation. Permitted caterers can operate at the host facility for up to 4 hours per day. All catering dishes and equipment shall be properly washed and stored at the catering operation's permitted kitchen.

COTTAGE FOOD

A cottage food permit allows for the sale of low-risk, non-perishable, prepackaged food prepared and prepackaged in a home kitchen. This is the ONLY permit that allows food preparation in a home kitchen. Cottage food is restricted to only certain foods such as bread, candy, cookies, cupcakes, etc. A cottage food permit does not allow the sale of any perishable food. Cottage food may be sold directly from the cottage food operation, at community events, wholesaled to other permitted food facilities, or shipped within the state of California.

MOBILE FOOD UNIT

A mobile food unit permit allows for the sales of food from a vehicle, trailer, or cart used in conjunction with a commissary. Mobile food units may operate at any location in Tulare County, including roadsides, parking lots, private events, or community events. Mobile food units operating at community events must first submit a completed vendor application to the organizer of the event. If operating in one location for more than 1 hour, a completed restroom form must be submitted, and the commercial restroom must be within 200 feet of mobile food unit.

SWAP MEET VENDOR

This permit allows for the sale of whole, uncut produce and prepackaged, non-perishable foods at Swap Meets. This permit does not allow sales of any food/beverages at community events or any location that is not a permitted swap meet.

SEASONAL VENDOR

A seasonal vendor permit allows preparation of non-perishable food inside a fully enclosed food booth or building at a single location for a six-month, seasonal period. This location must be a non-residential property with commercial restroom access within 200 feet of the food booth.

CATERER

A catering operation is a food service providing limited food preparation at an off-site location, such as a contracted private event, community event, or at a host facility. The caterer must prepare and store all food and equipment at an approved kitchen (permitted food facility). The caterer and the proposed kitchen must complete and sign a kitchen agreement form. Food may not be prepared or stored at a home kitchen.

COMMUNITY FOOD EVENT

A community event is an event that is of civic, political, public, or educational nature, including state and county fairs, city festivals, circuses, and other public gathering events approved by Tulare County Environmental Health. Community events taking place in Tulare County, where food or beverages are distributed to the public, require a health permit issued by Tulare County Environmental Health. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to ensure compliance with health standards and secure the required health permits for the organizer and all participants. Applications, including the organizer application and ALL vendor applications, must be submitted by the organizer a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the event. Though the organizer and vendors may have cost-saving annual permits, a temporary food event permit must be obtained by organizers for each and every event they organize.

ORGANIZER ANNUAL PERMIT

An annual organizer permit is a cost-saving permit that allows the organizers of community events to organize numerous events per year, paying one flat fee instead of a one-time organizer fee for each event they organize. This permit does not exempt the organizers from submitting the required organizer and vendor applications for each food event they organize.

EVENT VENDOR ANNUAL PERMIT

An annual vendor permit is a cost-saving permit that allows the vendor to participate in numerous events per year, paying one flat fee instead of a one-time event fee for each event. Annual vendors may only participate in an event AFTER submitting a completed vendor application to the organizer of the event. This permit does NOT allow the sale of any food/beverages at a private event or any location other than a permitted community event in Tulare County.