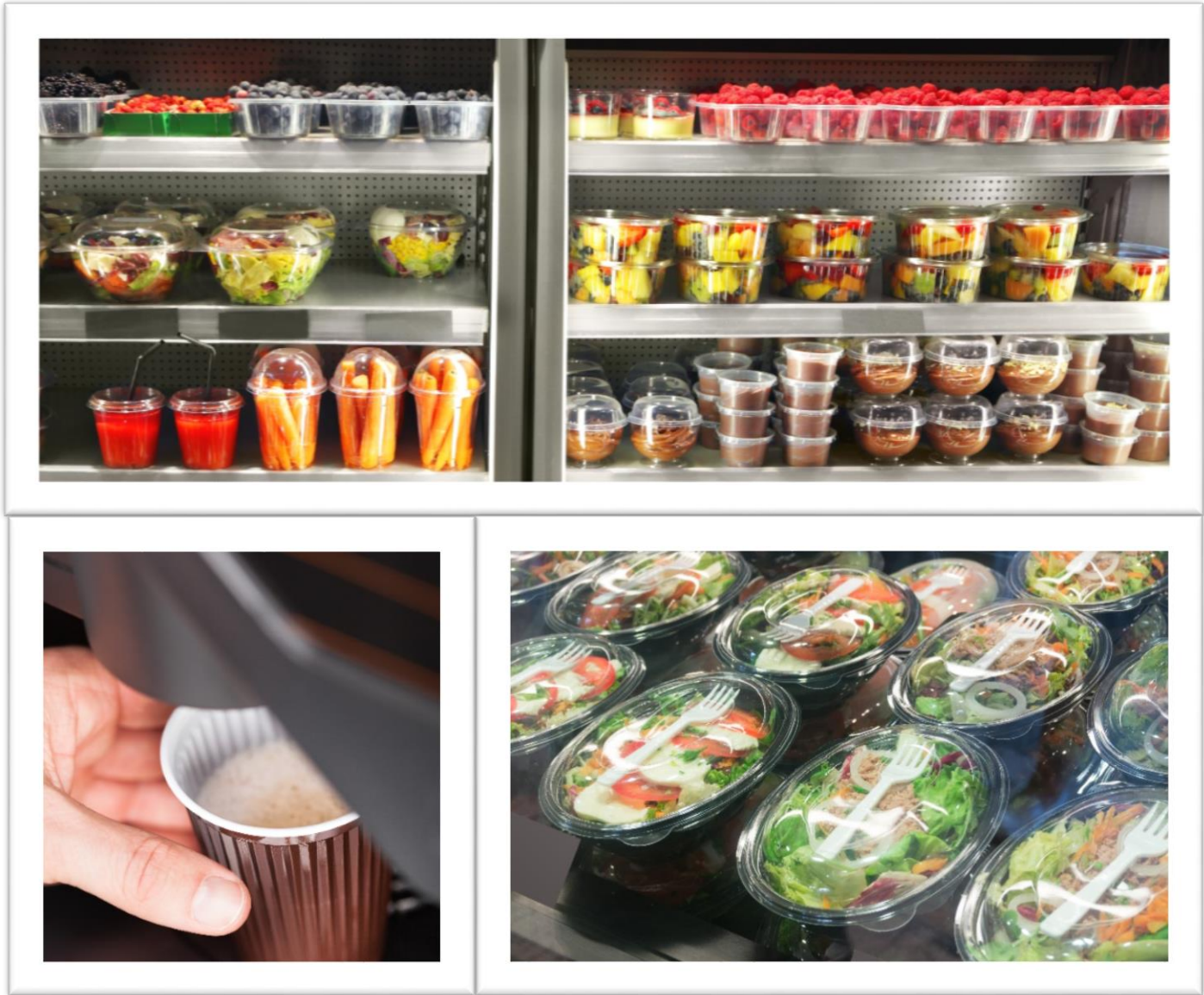


# MICRO MARKETS: GUIDELINES AND STANDARD PLAN APPROVAL



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## ***Introduction***

This booklet was developed to provide guidelines and assistance to those preparing and submitting a standard plan for a micro-market.

## **WHAT IS A MICRO MARKET?**

A micro market is a self-checkout retail food establishment that replaces a bank of vending machines. In a micro market, a customer picks up a product from an open rack display, a reach-in refrigerated cooler, then scans the UPC bar code for each product at a payment kiosk. The customer pays with a single payment, be it cash, credit card or stored value card. Another unique feature of the micro market is that it operates without an employee present, just like vending machines. All micro markets are equipped with a 24 hour a day security system monitoring customers as they make their selections and checkout. Micro markets are designed to be in “closed locations.” This refers to a business that has a moderately secured facility for a known group of employees where the micro market can be located in a designated area away from heavy public traffic.

The layout of a vending machine installation and a micro market are typically the same. A micro market can go into the exact same space that vending machines occupy and vice versa. In addition, all the vending and micro market equipment is portable and mobile.

## **GUIDELINES**

### ***How a Micro Market Works***

A micro market is serviced on a pre-set schedule by a route driver. The route driver arrives at a location, checks the equipment to be sure it is working correctly, cleans the equipment on a set schedule, check products to be sure they are still “in date” and will be until the next service date, pulls any products that will be “out of date” and then stocks the product shelves and refrigerated and/or freezer units with new product. Through the use of on-line software, the route driver brings only what products are actually needed. The “out of date” products are returned to the warehouse for accountability and proper disposal at the end of day.

Today, government agencies at all levels along with businesses are requesting or mandating that healthier food options be available to their employees. Traditional vending has come a long way to improve its’ offerings but is still very limited by column or shelf space size and selections as to what items can be sold in a typical vending machine. A micro market expands the number of products that can be sold in the same floor space a typical bank of vending machine would occupy. In addition, a customer can read all the nutrition information on the label of a food product because they can hold it before purchasing.

### ***Micro Market Equipment***

To merchandise all the products available in a micro market you will typically find:

- Shelving, be it wall or free standing for popular snacks, candies, gum, mints, low-calorie, low-fat healthy alternative snacks and sundry items.
- Single or double door glass front reach-in refrigerators for premium beverages, sparkling drinks and juice varieties.
- Single door glass front reach-in refrigerator for fresh crisp salads and fruit; deli sandwiches, subs, soups and other meal options; breakfast sandwiches, pastries and cereals.

### ***Public Health Safeguards***

**Food Safety** - All refrigeration equipment must maintain a temperature of 41° F. All refrigeration equipment have self-closing doors to help maintain correct temperatures. In addition all refrigeration equipment are equipped with automatic shut-off controls that prevent the equipment from selling food by locking the door when there is a power failure, mechanical failure or other condition that results in an internal temperature greater than 41° F for longer than 30 minutes. Only an authorized service technician or the route driver has the ability to reset the equipment after it is has been determined what caused the temperature failure.

**Food Security** - Micro markets are designed to be located in a closed location serving a known set of employees. As mentioned earlier, micro markets operate without a person-in-charge being present. To prevent theft and tampering of food products, micro markets are equipped with 24/7 surveillance cameras. In this way, the time and date products were purchased can be traced back and matched to the person who made the purchase.

## **STANDARD PLAN APPROVAL**

To obtain a public health permit, the plan for the micro market must first be approved. Since the layout of a micro market is typically the same, the Department, in collaboration with the industry, may approve a “Standard Plan” for an owner who plans to open future micro markets of a similar design instead of having the owner submit a new plan for every future micro market (s)he proposes.

To obtain a standard plan approval, the owner of a proposed micro-market is required to submit two copies of a standard plan to the Plan Check Program for review and approval. Upon approval, the Department shall use the standard plan to approve future micro-markets of similar design and operated by the same owner.

A standard plan must include the following:

- Equipment list with make/model specifications such as type and number of refrigeration units used for Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF) and beverages, as well as the number of racks used for food in the facility.
- Location of all refrigeration units and equipment. The refrigeration units used in the facility for PHF must meet American National Standards Institute (ANSI) certification standards with

the capability of self-monitoring temperature, and equipped with self-locks if the temperature goes above 41° F.

- Location of the nearest handwash facility readily available to employees stocking food products in the micro-market.
- Location of a sign readily visible from the automated payment area stating the name, address, and telephone number of the business responsible for the micro-market to whom complaints/comments shall be addressed.

The micro-market shall comply with the following requirements:

- Micro-market area may not exceed 300 square feet in size.
- The building must be rodent-proofed. Doors leading into the building are to be self-closing and have no more than ¼ inch gap around the perimeter of the door. All holes and gaps in the walls and ceilings must be sealed. Screen window openings must be equipped with tight-fitting fly screens.
- Owner shall provide 24/7 video surveillance records upon request by the Department. The video recordings shall be of sufficient resolution to identify consumers.

**Approved Standard Plan:** If an owner with an approved standard plan is proposing to install a micro-market at another location, the owner should contact the Specialized Food Services Program (SFS). For more information to begin the permit processing, please contact the SFS Program at (626) 430-5421.

### ***FY 2015-16 Fees***

|   |       |
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| Plan Check  | \$129 |
| Public Health Permit (Food Market Retail, low risk) | \$251 |

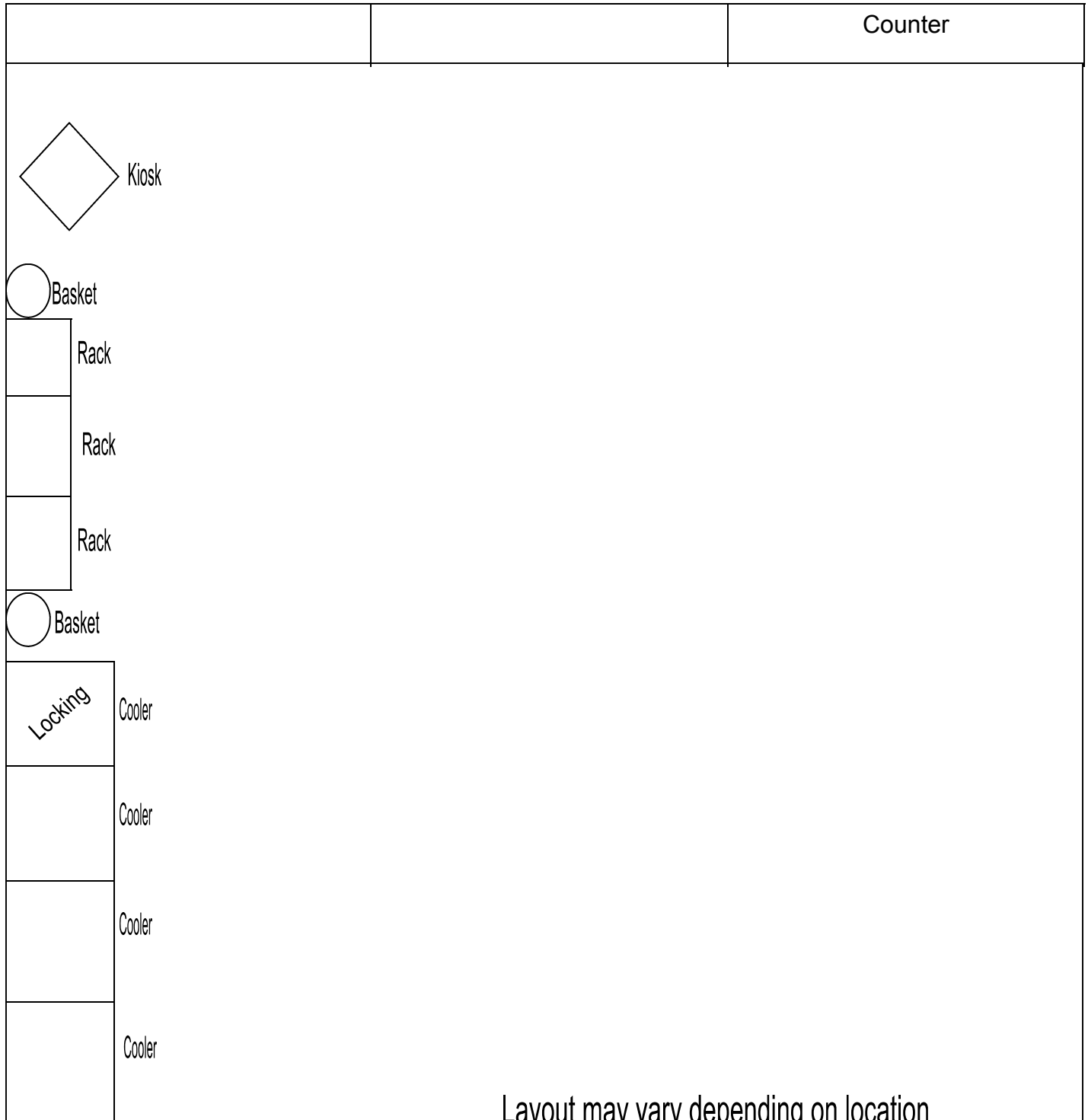
### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Plan Check Program  
5050 Commerce Drive  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 430-5560

Specialized Food Service Program  
5050 Commerce Drive  
Baldwin Park, CA 91706  
(626) 430-5421

# SAMPLE

## Micro Market



Will not exceed 300 sq. feet

## Frequently Asked Questions

# Micro Markets

There is now a new business opportunity for entrepreneurs in Los Angeles County. Working together with food industry representatives, the Department of Public Health has developed guidelines and approval processes for individuals who wish to open a Micro Market. The information in this guideline will help to answer your questions on how to get started.

### What is a micro-market?

Micro-markets offer prepackaged food, snacks and beverages for sale via unattended self-checkout kiosks in an enclosed facility available to a known group of employees at a work location.

### How do I apply for a micro market permit?

A. If an approved standard plan is not on file, the owner of a proposed micro-market is required to submit a plan review application with two (2) copies of the plans and the required fee to the Plan Check Program.

B. If an applicant is proposing to install a micro-market based on an approved standard plan on file, the applicant is required to submit an application to the Specialized Food Services (SFS) Program.

### What is a standard plan?

A single plan submitted per owner, to the Plan Check Program, and approved per owner for all future businesses of a similar nature. A standard plan for a micro-market owner must include equipment specifications such as type and number of refrigeration units used for Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF) and beverages, as well as the number of racks used for food in the facility. For more information, please contact the Plan Check Program at (626) 430-5560.

### What equipment is required?

All equipment must be commercial grade and approved by a recognized testing agency. The refrigeration units that are storing PHF must have automatic shutoff switches to prevent the sale of the food in the event of a temperature control issue or power failure.

### How much are the plan review and permit fees per standard plan?

The standard plan review fee is \$129 per micro market owner. The completed plans must be submitted along with a plan review application. Once all of the required materials are received, the plans will be reviewed. You will be notified when the plan review is completed. The annual permit fee is \$251.

**Does a micro-market inside of the same building as a cafeteria need to have a separate permit?**

Yes. The micro-market must have its own permit and work separately and independently from the cafeteria, such as in a break room.

**Do the vending machines inside of a micro-market need to be permitted separately?**

Yes. Vending machines must have their own permit, even if they are under the control of the operator of the micro-market.

**Can coffee be sold inside the micro-market?**

Yes. Coffee can only be sold from coffee/cappuccino/hot chocolate vending machines that mix non-potentially hazardous ingredients with hot water to dispense a single cup of product. These machines must be commercial grade and approved by a recognized testing agency.

**Are whole fruits allowed to be sold inside the micro-market?**

Yes. Whole, intact fruits are permitted to be sold inside the micro market if stored in such a way as to protect them from contamination.

**Is the micro-market required to have a person-in-charge?**

No. The micro-market is exempt from the person-in-charge requirement.

**Do micro-markets require an annual inspection?**

Yes. Micro-markets receive a routine inspection for each fiscal year.

**Are micro-markets graded?**

No, Los Angeles County Environmental Health does not issue grades for micro-markets.

If you have any questions regarding micro-markets, please contact the Specialized Food Services (SFS) Program at (626) 430-5421.