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September 10, 2026

TRANSITION OF SOFT SERVE MACHINE LICENSING AND INSPECTIONS TO CDFA – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2027

Dear Soft Serve Operator,

This letter is to inform you of an upcoming regulatory change involving all Soft Serve and Semi-Frozen machines (License category 1510) currently permitted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Division (DPH EH).

Beginning January 1, 2027, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch (MDFS), will assume full regulatory activities of licensing, inspection, and sampling of all soft serve machines in Los Angeles County, with the exception of the City of Long Beach. DPH EH and CDFA have been coordinating this transition to ensure continuity of service for operators throughout the county.

Due to this transition, DPH EH will not issue permit renewal notices for the 2027 calendar year. Instead, CDFA will be issuing renewal notifications and billing for the 2027 calendar year beginning in mid-October 2026.

If you do not receive your Semi-Frozen (Soft Serve) License renewal by December 1, 2026, please contact the CDFA Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch Licensing Unit at MDFSLIC@cdfa.ca.gov or (916) 900-5008.

On October 1, 2026, CDFA will begin processing all new soft serve machine applications and new applicants must apply directly through CDFA.

Please note that DPH EH will continue to conduct inspections and soft serve sampling until December 31, 2026. Beginning January 1, 2027, all inspections, sampling, evaluations, compliance reviews, and licensing actions for soft serve machines will be conducted exclusively by CDFA's Milk and Dairy Food Safety Branch.

DPH EH will continue to conduct inspections of food facilities under the authority of the California Retail Food Code, which requires all food equipment, including soft serve machines, to be cleaned and sanitized at the frequency specified by the manufacturer or every 24 hours. Soft serve machines which are not cleaned and sanitized as required will be marked as a violation on the Food Official Inspection Report. A separate Soft Serve Official Inspection Report will not be issued.

If you have any questions prior to the transition date, please contact Magdy Wahba, Chief Environmental Health Specialist, at (626) 430-5597. We appreciate your cooperation and your continued commitment to food safety. Additional updates will be shared as needed throughout the remainder of 2026.

Sincerely,



James Dragan, Branch Director
Specialized Food Inspection Branch

JD:dn