

Home Food Establishments

Q: What foods can be prepared with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: Baked goods are they only foods that can be prepared under a Home Food Establishment License. Baked goods are narrowly defined in the regulation. *“Baked good” means breads, cakes, doughnuts, pastries, buns, rolls, cookies, biscuits, and pies (except meat pies).*

Q: Can candies, snack foods, or other foods baked in the oven be prepared with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: No, all foods prepared under the Home Food License must meet the definition of a baked good that is set forth in the regulation.

Q: Can baked goods dipped in chocolate or caramel be prepared with a Home Food License?

A: No, the process of dipping baked goods in chocolate transforms the finished product into a candy or snack food and creates additional food safety hazards.

Q: Can baked goods that require refrigeration be prepared with a Home Food Establishment License, such as cheesecakes and cream pies?

A: Yes, provided you have refrigeration that is adequately sized and will hold the internal temperature of your finished product at or below 41 degrees F.

Q: Can unbaked pies or cookie dough be sold with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: No, only finished products are allowed to be sold under a Home Food License.

Q: Can home canned fruits or preserves be used in the production of baked goods prepared with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: No, all ingredients must come from licensed and approved sources except for fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, honey, and shell eggs.

Q: What products or ingredients are allowed with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: Contact your local inspector or inspection agency for guidance.

Q: What type of facility is required to obtain a Home Food Establishment License?

A: A Home Food License can only be approved in a residential kitchen.

Q: What general facility requirements are there for Home Food Establishments?

A: The establishment must be clean and sanitary. Food must be stored protected from contamination at all times. All outer openings must be protected and the establishment must be free of insects, rodents, garbage, and debris. Adequate hot and cold water under pressure, toilet facilities, hand washing facilities, and utensil washing facilities are also required.

Q: Can a Home Food Establishment have a private well?

A: Hot and cold water under pressure must be provided from a public water system **or** private well that is tested annually for nitrites and coliform and must meet Iowa drinking water standards. Records of water tests must be maintained at the establishment and made available to the regulatory authority.

Q: What are the health and hygiene requirements for a Home Food Establishment?

A: Food handlers must be free of contagious or communicable diseases, sores or infected wounds. Hair restraints must be worn. Food handlers must keep themselves clean and wear clean outer clothing. Smoking is not permitted while handling or preparing food. Hands must be washed as frequently as necessary to maintain good sanitation.

Q: Where can baked goods prepared with a Home Food Establishment License be sold?

A: Baked goods can be sold directly to the consumer from the home or sold for resale to other businesses including restaurants, grocery stores, and other retailers.

Q: Can baked goods prepared with a Home Food Establishment License be sold at the Farmers Market?

A: Yes, if the baked goods require refrigeration you would also be required to obtain a Potentially Hazardous Food Farmers Market License.

Q: Are there limits to sales under the Home Food License?

A: Yes, sales cannot exceed \$20,000 annually. Sales of more than \$20,000 would require a Food Processing License. A Food Processing License could not be permitted in a residential kitchen.

Q: Are pets allowed on the premises Home Food Establishment?

A: In general it is unlikely with some types of pets like cats and dogs that are free to move around the home. A pet must be excluded from any room where food may be stored or prepared at all times even when you are not in production. The individual inspector will have to determine if there are adequate measures to exclude the pet from the storage and preparation areas. The burden of proof lies with the license holder to show the pet will be excluded from the storage and preparation areas.

Q: Does a Home Food Establishment License allow food to be consumed on the premises?

A: No, food can only be prepared and sold for consumption off the premises.

Q: Is labeling required for baked goods sold with a Home Food Establishment License?

A: Yes, the following information is required to be on each package:

- Name and address of the person or business preparing the food,
- The common name of the food,
- A list of all ingredients in the food, beginning with the ingredient that is in the largest amount and continuing in descending order,
- The quantity of the contents in terms of weight, measure, or numerical count.

Q: What regulations apply for baked goods sold across the state line or over the internet?

A: In addition to the Iowa regulations, FDA regulations govern foods involved in interstate commerce. Please contact the FDA to inquire about federal regulations. The Kansas City District Office number is 913-495-5108.

Q: How is a Home Food Establishment License obtained?

A: A completed application with appropriate fee must be received by the food inspection agency covering your geographic region at least 30 days prior to the intended opening date. Once the application is received your kitchen must be inspected and approved to operate before production begins.