

The Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals has information for food and beverage establishments regarding considerations and requirements for operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. [You can visit the Iowa DIA COVID-19 Resources webpage here.](#)

### **Food Service and Retail Food Establishments**

A **Food Service Establishment** license is for a food establishment where food is being prepared or served for individual portions typically intended for consumption on the premises, or is subject to Iowa sales tax. Examples include restaurants, concession stands, catering operations, commissaries, salad bars, buffets, and convenience store food service.

A **Retail Food Establishment** license is for a food establishment that sells foods to consumer customers intended for preparation and consumption off the premises. Examples include grocery stores, candy stores, variety stores, and retail spaces of convenience stores.

Some establishments that have both retail and food service sales will require both types of food licenses, including many convenience stores and grocery stores.

[Application for a Food Service or Retail Food Establishment License](#)

[Basic Requirements for a Food Establishment](#)

[Food Safety 101](#)

[Employee Health Form 1-B](#)

[Employee Health Form 1-B - Spanish](#)

## Mobile Food Units and Push Carts

A **Mobile Food Unit** is a food establishment that is readily movable, which either operates up to three (3) consecutive days at one location or returns to a home base of operation at the end of each day.

A **Push Cart** is a non-self-propelled vehicle food establishment limited to serving non-potentially hazardous foods or commissary-wrapped foods maintained at proper temperatures, or limited to the preparation and serving frankfurters.

[Application for a Mobile Food Unit License](#)

[Iowa Mobile Food Unit and Push Cart Requirements](#)

[Food Safety 101](#)

## Temporary Food Stands

[Click here for the Temporary Food Stands page](#)

### Farmer's Market Information

In order for licensing requirements included here to be applicable, a market must meet the statutory definition of a Farmer's Market set forth in 137F:

**Farmers Market** means a marketplace which operates seasonally, principally as a common market for fresh fruits and vegetables, on a retail basis, for off-premises consumption.

A Farmer's Market license is only valid for a temporary establishment that sells potentially hazardous foods at farmer's markets within one county. A separate Farmer's Market license is required for each county in which potentially hazardous foods are sold.

[Application for a Farmer's Market License](#)

[Farmer's Market Requirements](#)

[Temporary Handwash Station Set Up](#)

### Home Bakeries

A **Home Bakery** is a licensed bakery located in a residence. A Home Bakery may prepare refrigerated or unrefrigerated baked goods for sale directly to household consumers for off-premises consumption or to other retail outlets such as restaurants and grocery stores. Baked goods are defined as: breads, cakes, doughnuts, pastries, buns, rolls, cookies, biscuits, and pies (except meat pies). Annual gross sales of a home bakery may not exceed \$35,000.

Baked goods that do not require refrigeration may be sold directly from the residence to individual consumers without a Home Bakery license. These products may not be further resold.

[Application for a Home Bakery License](#)

[Home Based Food Operations](#)

[Home Bakery Q & A](#)

## Vending Machines

A **Vending Machine** is a food establishment which is a self-service device that, upon insertion of a coin, paper currency, token, card, or key, dispenses unit servings of food in bulk or in packages without the necessity of replenishing the device between each vending operation. Iowa law exempts vending machines that dispense only prepackaged non-hazardous foods, panned candies, gumballs, or nuts from obtaining a license. Vending machines that require a license are those dispensing the following items:

- “Non-prepackaged foods” which include post and pre-mix machines dispensing such items as coffee, soft drinks, soups, and similar items in cups; and

- “Potentially hazardous foods” which are food products that must be stored at 41 °F or colder, or 135° F or hotter.

[Application for a Vending Machine License](#)