

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

**LIMITED COMPLIMENTARY FOOD SERVICE GUIDELINES
FOR HOTELS, MOTELS and INNS**

September 2009

BACKGROUND

Commonly when hotels, motels and/or Inns offer a “continental breakfast” to their room rental guests, there is confusion in the industry as to what type of food service is permissible without a standard commercial kitchen. It is recommended that all complimentary food service activities at Hotels, Motels or Inns be permitted by the local environmental health authority.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance for allowable methods for service of complimentary (continental) breakfasts at hotels or motels that do not meet the definition of a “restricted food service facility” as defined in the California Retail Food Code section 113893. This document will provide some guidance for allowable limited complimentary food service activities that do not require a standard commercial kitchen.

COMMON REQUIREMENTS

1. The limited complimentary food and/or beverage service is incidental to the main business. These sites lack a standard commercial kitchen.
2. Limited complimentary food service only applies to a continental style early morning breakfast.
3. The cost for this service is incorporated in the room rate and is offered only to the registered guests. No sale of this food to the general (non-lodging) public is permissible.
4. The limited complimentary food service is located within the physical enclosure of the hotel, motel or Inn.
5. Restroom facilities must be provided within 200 feet of the service area.
6. No additional food service activities or sales may take place in the hotel, motel, or Inn that is approved for limited complimentary food and/or beverage service. This does not preclude approved vending machines that may be located on the premises.

ALLOWABLE LIMITED COMPLIMENTARY FOOD SERVICE

1. Only commercially prepackaged, pre-portioned, non-potentially hazardous foods and beverages from approved sources may be served. The only exceptions to non-potentially hazardous beverages include pre-packaged, individual serving-sized milk and fruit juices.
2. Examples of approved food service include: pre-packaged and pre-portioned cereal, non-potentially hazardous pastries, whole uncut and pre-washed fruits, and individual serving-sized pre-packaged condiments such as sugar, butter, cream cheese or jam. No food preparation is permitted.
3. Individually portioned toast, bagels, toaster waffles or other bakery items are acceptable when pre-wrapped at an approved food facility such as a nearby restaurant or a permitted caterer.
4. A commercial toaster or microwave unit may be provided for the customers to heat their pastries or other bakery items.
5. Coffee service is allowed when served from commercial coffee carafes or pots. It is preferable that coffee service is under an agreement with a professional coffee vending service. An alternative method of cleaning and sanitizing equipment for coffee service as approved by the local environmental health authority may be used for facilities lacking a certified three compartment sink.
6. Only single-use plates, cups and utensils may be provided to the customers.
7. Foods are to be ordered daily or as often as possible to limit the amount of food stored on the premises.
8. All foods shall be obtained from an approved source and properly labeled in accordance with the California Sherman Food, Drug, and Cosmetic law.
9. Plan Check and Health permitting requirements are equivalent to that of a pre-packaged food facility. Commercial refrigeration is required for the storage and display of individually sized milk and juice containers. Food preparation such as waffle making or cutting of fruit and service in excess of these restrictions requires a commercial kitchen in compliance with the California Retail Food Code by the local environmental health authority.