MICROENTERPRISE HOME KITCHEN OPERATION (MEHKO) ORDINANCE



Microenterprise Home Kitchen Operations (MEHKOs)

- AB 626
- Became effective January 1, 2019, including a MEHKO as a type of food facility in the California Retail Food Code.
- Authorizes the use of home kitchens for small-scale, food production and direct food sales by home cooks.
- Gives the County "full discretion" to authorize MEHKOs in its jurisdiction.
- San Mateo County Resolution & Pilot:
- January 2019, Board approved a resolution expressing support.
- o July 20, 2021, Board approved a 2-year pilot





MEHKO Requirements

- 30 meals/day or 90 meals/week max.
- \$100,000 in gross annual sales/year max.
- Onsite dining, delivery, food cart sales or takeout.
- Onsite cooking classes, food demonstrations.
- May employ up to one employee.
- Permitted use of residential property per zoning, building and fire codes.
- No exterior advertisements.
- Food safety training required.
- Cart storage onsite, if approved by EHS.





Pilot Ordinance

- Board approved ARPA funds to start up the program and provide free health permits during 2 year pilot
- 31 entrepreneurs (84% women)
- Menus included Indian vegetarian tika masala, Hawaiian kalua pork, Salvadoran pupusas, Brazilian BBQ, Filipino pancit bihon, Yucatan panuchos, Hong Kong-style noodles, among others
- Provided the County and cities the opportunity to assess the benefits of MEHKOs before permanently adopting.
- Provided data to help determine long-term staffing needs and estimated costs for a permanent MEHKO program

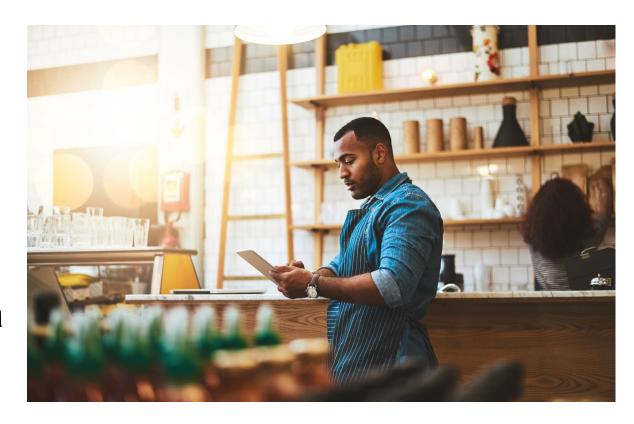






Next Steps

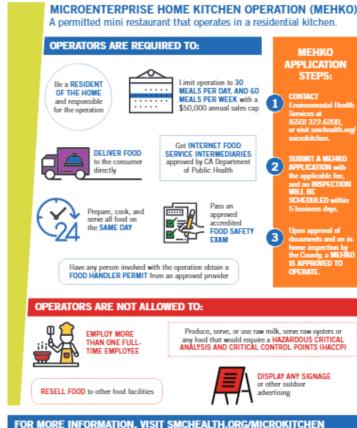
- Make Ordinance Permanent:
 - Would legalize and permit Microenterprise Home Kitchens countywide.
 - Would provide a permanent option for people to start a micro food business as a hobby or as a starting point for a future in the restaurant industry.
 - OAnnual permit fee: \$1,108
- Offset with another year of fee credits for MEHKO businesses.





Resources & Outreach

- Webpage: smchealth.org/microkitchen
- Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor
- Email: mehko@smcgov.org
- **MEHKO Online Resources:**
 - Training video
 - Training materials (Spanish, Tagalog, Chinese)





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Questions?



