

Senate Bill No. 972

CHAPTER 489

An act to amend Sections 113818, 113831, and 113868 of, and to add Chapter 11.7 (commencing with Section 114368) to Part 7 of Division 104 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to retail food.

[Approved by Governor September 23, 2022. Filed with
Secretary of State September 23, 2022.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 972, Gonzalez. California Retail Food Code.

(1) Existing law, the California Retail Food Code (the code), establishes uniform health and sanitation standards for, and provides for regulation by the State Department of Public Health of, retail food facilities and requires local health agencies to enforce these provisions. Existing law, for purposes of the code, defines a “cottage food operation” as an enterprise that has no more than a specified amount in gross annual sales, is operated by a cottage food operator, and has no more than 1 full-time employee within the registered or permitted area of a private home where the food products are prepared and packaged. Existing law provides for the regulation of microenterprise home kitchen operations and limits those operations to not serving more than 30 individual meals per day and not more than 60 individual meals per week and to no more than \$50,000 in verifiable gross annual sales, as adjusted for inflation. Existing law authorizes the local enforcement agency to decrease the limit on the number of individual meals prepared based on the food preparation capacity of the operation.

This bill would authorize a cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation to serve as a commissary or mobile support unit for up to 2 compact mobile food operations if the cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation permit includes an endorsement from the local enforcement agency that the cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation is capable of supporting the preparation and storage of the food being sold from the compact mobile food operation and the storage and cleaning of the compact mobile food operation. The bill would authorize nonpotentially hazardous foods prepared in a cottage food operation to be served from a compact mobile food operation. The bill would define “compact mobile food operation” as a mobile food facility that operates from an individual or from a pushcart, stand, display, pedal-driven cart, wagon, showcase, rack, or other nonmotorized conveyance. The bill would require compact food operations to conduct only limited food preparation.

(2) The code defines “limited food preparation” as food preparation that is restricted to specified activities, including dispensing or portioning of

nonpotentially hazardous food, slicing and chopping of food on a heated cooking surface during the cooking process, and holding, portioning, and dispensing foods that are prepared at a satellite food service or catering operation.

This bill would include in the definition of “limited food preparation” dispensing and portioning for immediate service to a customer of food that has been temperature controlled until immediately prior to portioning or dispensing, slicing and chopping of nonpotentially hazardous food or produce that has been washed at an approved facility, hot and cold holding of food previously prepared at an approved permanent food facility, and reheating of food that has been previously prepared at an approved permanent food facility and held at the approved temperatures.

(3) The code defines “mobile food facility” and regulates what types of food may be provided at a mobile food facility. The code requires mobile food facilities to meet specified health and safety standards, including access to warewashing sinks, restrooms, and handwashing facilities and required quantities of potable water.

This bill would require a compact mobile food operation to meet the applicable requirements of mobile food facilities, except as specified. The bill would exempt a compact mobile food operation that has 25 square feet or less of display area and sells only prepackaged, nonpotentially hazardous foods or whole uncooked produce from the code, except as specified. The bill would authorize a compact mobile food operation to display or sell food outdoors, if certain conditions are met, including, among other things, overhead protection provided above all food display areas. The bill would require a compact mobile food operation that engages in the preparation of raw meat, raw poultry, or raw fish to meet additional specified requirements. The bill would authorize the enforcement agency to preapprove a standard plan for a standardized or mass-produced facility intended to serve as a compact mobile food operation and would authorize a compact mobile food operation to use that standardized or mass-produced facility after a final inspection, but without submitting plans for the individual unit. The bill would authorize the enforcement agency to collect a fee for the final inspection.

(4) Existing law requires commissaries and other approved facilities servicing mobile support units, mobile food facilities, and vending machines to meet specified standards.

This bill would authorize an enforcement agency to approve a facility with nonconforming structural conditions if those conditions do not pose a public health hazard. The bill would also require an enforcement agency to approve the storage of a compact mobile food facility in a permitted permanent food facility if, after initial inspection, the agency determines that the compact mobile food facility is protected from contamination. The bill would authorize the enforcement agency to charge a fee to administer these provisions.

(5) The code requires a food facility to have a valid permit to be open for business and authorizes the local enforcement agency to charge a fee for the permit or registration or related services.

This bill would authorize the local enforcement agency to reduce the fee for the permit, registration, or related service for an applicant seeking approval of a compact mobile food operation or related operations.

(6) Under existing law, violation of the code is a misdemeanor, unless otherwise specified.

This bill would make violations of the code by an operator or employee of a compact mobile food facility or a sidewalk vendor punishable only by an administrative fine. Additionally, by making changes to the definition of various crimes and by adding new crimes under the code, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 113818 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

113818. (a) “Limited food preparation” means food preparation that is restricted to one or more of the following:

(1) Heating, frying, baking, roasting, popping, shaving of ice, blending, steaming or boiling of hot dogs, or assembly of nonprepackaged food.

(2) Dispensing and portioning of nonpotentially hazardous food or dispensing and portioning for immediate service to a customer of food that has been temperature controlled until immediately prior to portioning or dispensing.

(3) Holding, portioning, and dispensing of any foods that are prepared for satellite food service by the onsite permanent food facility or prepackaged by another approved source.

(4) Holding, portioning, and dispensing of any foods that are prepared by a catering operation.

(5) Slicing and chopping of nonpotentially hazardous food or produce that has been washed at an approved facility or slicing and chopping of food on a heated cooking surface during the cooking process.

(6) Cooking and seasoning to order.

(7) Juicing or preparing beverages that are for immediate service, in response to an individual consumer order, that do not contain frozen milk products.

(8) Hot and cold holding of food that has been prepared at an approved permanent food facility.

(9) Reheating of food that has been previously prepared at an approved permanent food facility and held at temperatures required by this chapter.

(b) “Limited food preparation” does not include any of the following:

(1) Slicing and chopping potentially hazardous food, other than produce, unless it is on the heated cooking surface.

(2) Thawing.

(3) Cooling of cooked, potentially hazardous food.

(4) Grinding raw ingredients or potentially hazardous food.

(5) Washing of foods.

(6) Cooking of potentially hazardous foods for later use.

(7) Handling, manufacturing, freezing, processing, or packaging of milk, milk products, or products resembling milk products subject to licensing under Division 15 (commencing with Section 32501) of the Food and Agricultural Code.

SEC. 2. Section 113831 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

113831. (a) “Mobile food facility” means any vehicle used in conjunction with a commissary or other permanent food facility upon which food is sold or distributed at retail. “Mobile food facility” does not include a “transporter” used to transport packaged food from a food facility, or other approved source to the consumer.

(b) “Single operating site mobile food facilities” means at least one, but not more than four, unenclosed mobile food facilities, and their auxiliary units, that operate adjacent to each other at a single location.

(c) “Compact mobile food operation” means a mobile food facility that operates from an individual or from a pushcart, stand, display, pedal-driven cart, wagon, showcase, rack, or other nonmotorized conveyance.

SEC. 3. Section 113868 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

113868. “Portable” means equipment that is capable of being lifted and moved or has utility connections that are designed to be disconnected or of sufficient length to permit the unit to be moved for cleaning, and does not exceed 100 pounds (46 kg) in weight or is otherwise designed to be mobile.

SEC. 4. Chapter 11.7 (commencing with Section 114368) is added to Part 7 of Division 104 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

CHAPTER 11.7. COMPACT MOBILE FOOD OPERATION

114368. A compact mobile food operation, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 113831, shall meet the applicable requirements of Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 114294), except as provided in this chapter.

114368.1. (a) Any compact mobile food operation with 25 square feet or less of display area from which only prepackaged nonpotentially hazardous food and whole uncooked produce is sold is exempt from the requirements of this part, except that the facility shall comply with all of the following:

(1) Sections 113980, 114047, 114049, 114390, 114393, 114397, and 114399.

(2) Chapter 1 (commencing with Section 113700).

(3) Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 113728).

(b) (1) A local enforcement agency may inspect a compact mobile food operation that is exempt, as specified in subdivision (a), during the facility's hours of operation and other reasonable times on the basis of a consumer complaint or just cause.

(2) For the purposes of determining compliance with this chapter, a compact mobile food operation that is not exempt as specified in subdivision (a) is subject to permitting and routine inspections or inspections on the basis of a consumer complaint or just cause.

(c) The local enforcement agency may recover the costs of investigation and enforcement of this section, subject to any limitations in this part on fines issuable to compact mobile food operations.

114368.2. (a) Compact mobile food operations shall conduct only limited food preparation, as defined in Section 113818. Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, a compact mobile food operation, as defined in subdivision (c) of Section 113831, may display or sell food outdoors, if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

(1) Overhead protection are provided above all food display areas.

(2) Food items from the outdoor display are stored consistent with this chapter at all times other than during business hours.

(3) Outdoor displays comply with Section 113980 and have been approved by the enforcement agency if the compact mobile food operation is required to obtain a permit.

(b) A compact mobile food operation shall not sell food other than nonpotentially hazardous prepackaged food or whole produce, or conduct any food preparation, unless it meets the applicable operational requirements of this chapter, including applicable requirements for integral equipment, handwashing, and restroom access.

(c) Equipment that is required to be integral to a compact mobile food operation shall either be permanently attached to the primary unit or securely fastened to the primary unit by means that would prevent unintentional removal. Equipment may be considered integral despite being portable or otherwise removable for cleaning, maintenance, or as part of its regular function.

(d) A compact mobile food operation operating from an individual shall not conduct any food preparation or sell foods other than nonpotentially hazardous prepackaged food or whole produce.

114368.3 (a) (1) A permitted cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation may serve as a commissary or mobile support unit for up to two compact mobile food operations if the cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation permit includes an endorsement from the local enforcement agency that the cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation is capable of supporting the preparation and storage of the food being sold from the compact mobile

food operation and the storage and cleaning of the compact mobile food operation.

(2) Transactions at a compact mobile food operation operated by a cottage food operator shall constitute “direct sales” for the purposes of paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 113758.

(3) Transactions at up to two compact mobile food operations operated by a cottage food operator shall not count toward the annual gross sales restrictions in Section 113758 applicable to cottage food operations if the governing body has authorized this action.

(4) Nonpotentially hazardous foods prepared in a cottage food operation may be served from a compact mobile food operation.

(5) Food prepared in a microenterprise home kitchen operation may be served from a compact mobile food operation operated by the microenterprise home kitchen operation permitholder.

(6) The meal and gross annual sales limitations in paragraphs (7) and (8) of subdivision (a) of Section 113825 do not apply to the sale of nonpotentially hazardous food or produce for up to two compact mobile food operations operated by the microenterprise home kitchen operation if the governing body has authorized this action.

(7) With the authorization of the governing body and if the enforcement agency determines that the operation does not pose a public health hazard, a permitted microenterprise home kitchen operation may serve as a commissary for up to two compact mobile food operations. The meal and gross annual sales limitations in paragraphs (7) and (8) of subdivision (a) of Section 113825 apply unless the governing body sets a higher meal and income limitation.

(8) The governing body of a local jurisdiction that permits microenterprise home kitchen operations pursuant to Section 114367, may set the meal and income limitations in paragraphs (7) and (8) of subdivision (a) of Section 113825 at a higher level than provided in those paragraphs for microenterprise home kitchen operations that operate in conjunction with a compact mobile food operation. Notwithstanding this subdivision, the levels in effect, by statute or ordinance, as of January 1, 2023, shall remain in effect until changed by the local jurisdiction.

(b) (1) Existing permanent food facilities may be permitted to support the operations and storage of compact mobile food operations pursuant to the requirements of this section.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, upon an evaluation verifying that a permanent food facility satisfies subdivisions (a) to (f), inclusive, of Section 114326, an enforcement agency shall approve the use of a permitted permanent food facility to satisfy the requirements of Section 114295 for a compact mobile food operation.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, upon an evaluation verifying that the compact mobile food operation will be stored in a manner that protects the compact mobile food operation from contamination, an enforcement agency shall approve the storage of a compact mobile food operation in a permitted permanent food facility.

(4) Except when a determination is made by the enforcement agency that any nonconforming structural conditions pose a public health hazard, the enforcement agency may approve a facility to support operations of a compact mobile food operation.

(5) Plan submission shall not be required for an existing permanent food facility to support the operations of a compact mobile food operation when a determination is made by the local enforcement agency that the current operation and structural facilities of the permanent food facility can successfully provide the necessary functions of a commissary for a compact mobile food operation.

(6) An approved permanent food facility that will be used for cooling of food for a compact mobile food operation shall be approved by the enforcement agency for cooling.

(c) (1) Unless prohibited by local ordinance, an enforcement agency may allow the use of a private home for the storage of a compact mobile food operation if it determines, after an evaluation, that storage in the private home would not pose a public health hazard and that the compact mobile food operation will be stored in a manner that protects the compact mobile food operation from contamination.

(2) No more than two compact mobile food operations may be stored in a private home unless the enforcement agency finds that storage of more than two compact mobile food operations in a private home would not pose a public health hazard.

(3) The storage area within the home shall be designated and clearly identified upon approval and shall not be relocated without the review and approval of the local enforcement agency.

(4) Prepackaged nonpotentially hazardous food, whole fruits, and whole vegetables may be stored in the home prior to sale or preparation of that food in a compact mobile food operation.

(5) Food prepared in a private home shall not be used or offered for sale on a compact mobile food operation, unless it is a permitted cottage food operation or microenterprise home kitchen operation pursuant to subdivision (a). Violation of this paragraph may result in suspension or revocation of the permit to operate the compact mobile food operation.

(6) For purposes of determining compliance with this subdivision, a local enforcement agency may access, for inspection purposes, a private home where a compact mobile food operation is stored only if the representative has, on the basis of a consumer complaint, reason to suspect that the home is being used for food preparation, food storage, or unauthorized storage of utensils or other food facility equipment in violation of this subdivision.

(d) At the end of the operating day, potentially hazardous food that is prepared on or served from a compact mobile food operation shall be destroyed in a manner approved by the enforcement agency.

(e) For the purposes of this chapter, an endorsement by the local enforcement agency shall be a documented and recorded approval of compliance with applicable sections. An endorsement may include an inspection or evaluation, but shall not require a registration or permit.

(f) The enforcement agency may collect a fee for any permit, endorsement, inspection, or evaluation issued or conducted pursuant to this chapter in an amount that does not exceed the reasonable administrative costs of the enforcement agency.

114368.4. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (b), a compact mobile food operation that is approved for limited food preparation that prepares raw meat, raw poultry, or raw fish is subject to warewashing and handwashing facility requirements as outlined in Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 114294).

(b) (1) A compact mobile food operation may satisfy the requirements of Sections 114313 and 114314 by demonstrating access to a permitted auxiliary conveyance containing the necessary handwashing and warewashing sinks when operating at a site-specific location. The auxiliary conveyance may be operated by the same or a different permitholder. An enforcement agency may permit an auxiliary conveyance to serve multiple compact mobile food operations operating in close proximity to the auxiliary conveyance, as determined by the enforcement agency.

(2) If an auxiliary conveyance is not operated by the permitholder of the compact mobile food operation, the operator of the auxiliary conveyance shall obtain a permit from the enforcement agency to operate the auxiliary conveyance and service compact mobile food operations.

(3) The permit application for an auxiliary conveyance not operated by a compact mobile food operation shall include a site plan and shall be submitted to the enforcement agency at least two weeks prior to the operation of any food facility in conjunction with the auxiliary conveyance.

(4) The site plan for an auxiliary conveyance not operated by a compact mobile food operator shall show the proposed location and storage of the auxiliary conveyance, the proposed locations of any food facilities that will utilize the auxiliary conveyance, restrooms, refuse containers, potable water supply faucets, waste water disposal facilities, and all shared warewashing and handwashing facilities.

(c) A compact mobile food operation that is approved for limited food preparation that does not prepare raw meat, raw poultry, or raw fish shall do one of the following:

(1) Provide a three-compartment sink as described in subdivision (a) of Section 114313.

(2) Provide at least one two-compartment sink that complies with subdivision (e) of Section 114099.3.

(3) Provide a one-compartment sink with at least one integral metal drainboard, an adequate supply of spare preparation and serving utensils to replace those that become soiled or contaminated, and warewashing facilities that comply with subdivision (a) of Section 114313 in reasonable proximity to, and readily accessible for use by, food employees at all times.

(4) Maintain an adequate supply of spare preparation and serving utensils on the compact mobile food operation to ensure that utensils used for potentially hazardous foods are replaced with clean and sanitized utensils every four hours or as needed to replace those that become soiled or

contaminated. A compact mobile food operation that complies with this paragraph is not required to provide a warewashing sink.

(d) A compact mobile food operation that is approved for limited food preparation that does not prepare raw meat, raw poultry, or raw fish shall provide an integral handwashing sink with at least five gallons of potable water to operate with a potable water tank with a capacity of at least five gallons for handwashing.

(e) An enforcement agency may permit a compact mobile food operation to operate with an integral water tank smaller than specified under subdivision (c) or (d) of Section 114217 if the enforcement agency finds that the compact mobile food operation is operating in an area and manner that would allow for replenishment of the water supply as needed during operations.

(f) A compact mobile food operation shall submit, to the enforcement agency, written operating procedures that include the process of filling potable water tanks if it will operate with a water tank with a capacity of less than five gallons specified in subdivisions (c) and (d) of Section 114217.

(g) A compact mobile food operation that does not prepare raw meat, raw poultry, or raw fish is exempt from any provision of this part requiring it be equipped with a water heater or otherwise be supplied with warm water.

114368.5. (a) Upon receipt of complete, easily readable plans drawn to scale, and specifications satisfactory to the enforcement agency, an enforcement agency may preapprove a standard plan for a standardized or mass-produced individual unit intended to serve as a compact mobile food operation.

(b) A person proposing to operate a compact mobile food operation who has acquired an individual unit for which the construction of the compact mobile food operation has been built to approved plans shall not be required to submit plans for the individual unit, but instead shall be subject to a final inspection of the compact mobile food operation to ensure that the individual unit and proposed method of operation conform to the standard plans preapproved pursuant to subdivision (a). The permit application for a compact mobile food operation utilizing a preapproved individual unit shall include a certification that the applicant has not substantially altered the individual units from the plans preapproved pursuant to subdivision (a). The enforcement agency may collect a fee in the final inspection in an amount that does not exceed the reasonable administrative costs to the enforcement agency.

(c) The repair of equipment or integral fixtures on a compact mobile food operation or the replacement of equipment and fixtures on a compact mobile food operation with substantially similar equipment or fixtures is not a remodel, and the repair or replacement of equipment or fixtures does not require the submission of plans to an enforcement agency.

(d) A local governing body may waive or reduce a fee for the permit, registration, or related services for an applicant seeking approval of a compact mobile food operation or related operations.

(e) All new and replacement food-related and utensil-related equipment for a compact mobile food operation shall be certified or classified for sanitation by an American National Standards Institute accredited certification program, or a certification program accredited by another accreditation body recognized by the enforcement agency as providing substantially similar food safety and operational standards. In the absence of an applicable certified sanitation standard, food-related and utensil-related equipment shall be evaluated for approval by the enforcement agency.

(f) All new and replacement electrical appliances for a compact mobile food operation shall meet applicable Underwriters Laboratories standards for electrical equipment as determined by an American National Standards Institute accredited certification program or a certification program accredited by another accreditation body recognized by the enforcement agency as providing substantially similar food safety and operational standards.

114368.6. A compact mobile food operation is exempt from Section 113947.1 if the operator and any individual who is involved in the preparation, storage, or service of food for the compact mobile food operation has obtained a food handler card that meets the requirements of Section 113948.

114368.7. A compact mobile food operation is exempt from the requirements of Section 114315 if the compact mobile food operation operates with multiple employees or operators and the compact mobile food operation may remain operable by a single individual so that employees or operators may alternate use of a restroom.

114368.8. (a) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 114395, a violation of this part by an operator or employee of a compact mobile food operation is punishable only by an administrative fine.

(b) A violation of any provision of this part or regulation adopted pursuant to this part by an operator or employee of a compact mobile food operation or a sidewalk vendor shall not be punishable as an infraction or misdemeanor, and an operator or employee of a compact mobile food operation or a sidewalk vendor alleged to have violated any of those provisions is not subject to arrest except when independent grounds for that arrest exist under law.

(c) Except as provided in paragraph (d), each offense by an operator or employee of a compact mobile food operation or a sidewalk vendor may only be punished by a fine consistent with the following:

(1) A notice of violation detailing the violation, including the applicable provision of this part or regulation adopted pursuant to this part.

(2) An administrative fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) for a second violation within one year of the first violation.

(3) An administrative fine not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200) for a third violation within one year of the first violation.

(4) An administrative fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) for each additional violation within one year of the first violation.

(d) If a compact mobile food operation is required to obtain a permit from the enforcement agency, operating without a permit may be punishable by a fine not to exceed three times the cost of the permit in lieu of the administrative fines referenced in subdivision (c). An enforcement agency shall not issue any fines in excess of the amounts allowable pursuant to subdivision (c) prior to January 1, 2024.

(e) (1) When assessing an administrative fine for a first-time offense, pursuant to this section, the hearing officer shall take into consideration the person's ability to pay the fine. The enforcement agency shall provide the person with notice of their right to request an ability-to-pay determination and shall make available instructions or other materials for requesting an ability-to-pay determination. The person may request an ability-to-pay determination at adjudication or while the judgment remains unpaid, including when a case is delinquent or has been referred to a comprehensive collection program.

(2) If the person meets the criteria described in subdivision (a) or (b) of Section 68632 of the Government Code, the enforcement agency shall accept, in full satisfaction, 20 percent of the administrative fine imposed pursuant to this section.

(3) The enforcement agency may waive the administrative fine or may offer an alternative disposition.

SEC. 5. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.