

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Maryland

A comprehensive guide to the cottage food statute, sales rules, and county-level zoning and health-department overlays for home bakers operating under MD COMAR 10.15.03.27.

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STATUTE	TIER	IJ GRADE	COUNTIES COVERED	LAST VERIFIED
MD COMAR 10.15.03.27	Good	C-	24	2026-05-05

**IMPORTANT – NOT LEGAL ADVICE**

This report compiles publicly-available statutes, regulations, and county zoning rules into a research reference. It is **not legal advice** and is provided **without warranty** as to accuracy, completeness, or current applicability.

Cottage food law changes frequently. Counties may amend zoning, health departments may issue new permits, and state legislatures may update statutes after the publication date shown above. **Always verify rules directly with your state department of health/agriculture and your county health and planning offices before relying on them for any business or regulatory decision.** Consult a licensed attorney for advice specific to your situation.

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## Executive summary

This report covers the Maryland cottage food framework — the state statute, the regulatory body administering it, what producers can and cannot sell, and county-level rules layered on top of state law for the 24 Maryland counties included in this dataset.

### ANNUAL SALES CAP

50000

### FOOD HANDLER CERTIFICATION

recommended

### DIRECT SALES ONLY

no

### REGISTRATION REQUIRED

depends

### KITCHEN INSPECTION

upon-complaint

### INDIRECT SALES (RETAIL/ONLINE/WHOLESALE)

limited (see notes) — Sales at retail food stores (indirect) are allowed but require prior submission of labels and documentation of ANSI-accredited food safety course completion to the Maryland Department of Health before any retail sales can commence. The Department must notify the producer in writing that requirements are met before retail sales begin.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Full verbatim statute text retrieved from [regs.maryland.gov](https://regs.maryland.gov) (the official Maryland Regulations Library) and cross-confirmed with [law.cornell.edu](https://law.cornell.edu) and the MDH Cottage Food Guidelines PDF (revised 10/2022). Original input `statute_url` (`dsd.state.md.us`) returned a 504 timeout; `state_dept_cottage_url` returned 404. Updated `statute_url` to the working [regs.maryland.gov](https://regs.maryland.gov) canonical URL. The MDH guidelines PDF ([health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/MDH%20Cottage%20Food%20Businesses\\_Revised\\_9-2022\\_FINAL.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/MDH%20Cottage%20Food%20Businesses_Revised_9-2022_FINAL.pdf)) confirms the \$50,000 annual revenue cap from COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1). Most recent amendment effective 11/27/2024 (Emergency rule exp. 5/26/2025). Food handler cert is only required for retail store channel. Registration (free online ID number request) is optional unless selling at retail stores. Separate On-Farm Home Processing License available for farmers to sell pickles, dried fruit, hot sauces up to \$40,000.

## Code of Maryland Regulations 10.15.03.27 - Farmer's Market, Bake Sales, and Cottage Food Business

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**CITATION**

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

**ENACTED**

2007

**LAST AMENDED**

2024

**CONFIDENCE**

HIGH

### Allowed foods

Non-potentially hazardous foods prepared in a residential kitchen, including non-PHF baked goods (breads, cookies, cakes, pies without perishable fillings), non-PHF candy (hard candies, brittles), acid-fruit jellies, jams, preserves and butters from enumerated fruits, and all other non-PHF foods produced by a licensed entity. Dry goods (spice blends, coffee, teas) and certain snacks (kettle corn, granola) are also permitted.

### Prohibited foods

Potentially hazardous foods requiring refrigeration are prohibited, including meringue pies, cheesecakes, cream/custard pies, baked goods with cream cheese or buttercream icings that require refrigeration, low-acid canned foods, acidified foods/pickled products (pickles, salsa, pepper jelly, mustard, BBQ sauce), garlic/vegetables in oil, raw sprouts, fish, shellfish, meat, poultry, milk/dairy products, beverages, and fermented foods.

### Labeling requirements

Labels must include: business name and address (or name, phone, and MDH-assigned ID number); product name; ingredients in descending order by weight; net weight or volume; allergen information per federal requirements; nutritional information if any claim is made; and the statement in 10-point or larger type: 'Made by a cottage food business that is not subject to Maryland's food safety regulations.' Retail store labels must additionally include phone number, email address, and date the product was made.

## Statutory text — verbatim excerpt

### Statute excerpt — verbatim

A. A cottage food business may offer for sale the homemade foods specified in §B of this regulation when the foods are: (1) Made in a private home kitchen; and (2) Offered or sold only in the State: (a) Subject to the requirements of §C(6) and (7) of this regulation, at a retail food store; or (b) Directly to a consumer: (i) At a farmer's market; (ii) At a bake sale; (iii) At a public event; (iv) By personal delivery; or (v) By mail order. B. The Department shall allow the preparation and sale of the following foods in accordance with §A: (1) Non-potentially hazardous hot-filled canned acid fruit jellies, jams, preserves, and butters; (2) Fruit butters made only from apples, apricots, grapes, peaches, plums, prunes, quince, or another fruit or fruit mixture that will produce an acid canned food; (4) Non-potentially hazardous baked goods; (6) Non-potentially hazardous candy. C. (1) The Department shall allow the owner of a cottage food business to sell only cottage food products processed and packaged in Maryland that are: (a) Produced or packaged in a residential kitchen; (b) Stored on the premises of the cottage food business; and (c) Prepackaged with a label that contains: name and address of the cottage food business or name, phone number, and identification number assigned by the Department; name of the product; ingredients in descending order by weight; net weight or volume; allergen information; nutritional information if any claim is made; and printed in 10 point or larger type: "Made by a cottage food business that is not subject to Maryland's food safety regulations." (6) Before the owner of a cottage food business may sell a cottage food product to a retail food store, the owner shall submit to the Department documentation of the owner's successful completion of a food safety course in the past 3 years approved by the Department and the American National Standards Institute.

Source: <https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

## Official sources

**Statute** <https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

**State dept page** <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

**Extension service** <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/cottage-food-business-law>

**Forrager.com** <https://forrager.com/law/maryland/>

State dept of agriculture / health: **Maryland Department of Health**

## County-level rules

The state statute above sets the floor. Each county may add a home-occupation permit, business license, or zoning rule on top of state law. The 24 Maryland counties below are sorted by population (largest first).

RANK 44 · FIPS 24031 · Rockville

## Montgomery County

Population 1,056,910 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **HIGH**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED**    yes — Montgomery County follows Maryland state baseline for cottage food (COMAR 10.15.03.27). The state \$50,000 annual cap applies. Montgomery County adds a home occupation permit requirement: home-based businesses generating more than 5 visits per week or employing a non-resident must register with Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS). Cottage food operations requiring more than 5 customer visits/week would trigger this requirement.

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN**    no

**PET RESTRICTIONS**    state baseline applies

**WATER SUPPLY**    state baseline applies

**HANDWASHING**    state baseline applies

**FOOD STORAGE**    state baseline applies

### Inspection & permitting

**INSPECTION REQUIRED**    upon-complaint — State: inspection upon complaint. County DPS: zoning inspection required if home occupation permit obtained. Home occupation area limited to 33% of total dwelling floor area.

<b>HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT</b>	conditional — Montgomery County DPS requires registration for home-based businesses generating more than 5 visits/week or employing a non-resident. Most cottage food operations (typically low-traffic) would not trigger this requirement. If triggered: submit paper application to DPS; provide site plan, floor plan, and parking photos; home occupation area limited to 33% of floor area. Certificate is non-renewable and valid while business operates at that address.
<b>LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE</b>	varies by city

### Customer-facing rules

<b>ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP</b>	yes
<b>ON-SITE SIGNAGE</b>	conditional
<b>DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES</b>	State baseline applies: direct-to-consumer sales. Cottage food cannot be sold outside Maryland. Montgomery County requires a Farmer's Market License to sell at county farmers markets. Cottage Food Business is exempt from this license requirement under COMAR 10.15.03.27.
<b>MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME</b>	state baseline applies; county home occupation permit required if employing non-residents

### Relevant county code

Montgomery County DPS Home Occupation registration; COMAR 10.15.03.27

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Montgomery County adds a home occupation registration requirement for high-traffic or non-resident-employee home businesses (more than 5 visits/week threshold). Most cottage food operators would not reach this threshold. Maryland state's \$50,000 annual cap is notably lower than many states. Montgomery County's Farmer's Market License is required for some market vendors, but cottage food businesses are explicitly exempt from this requirement. Cities of Takoma Park, Rockville, and Gaithersburg have their own cottage food rules.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www2.montgomerycountymd.gov>

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-permitting-services/all-permits/residential-permits/home-occupation-process>

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/departments-health-human-services/about-us/licensure-regulatory-services/environmental-health-unit/farmers-market-license>

RANK 54 · FIPS 24033 · Upper Marlboro

## Prince George's County

Population 957,189 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; annual cap \$50,000 · **HIGH**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Prince George's County explicitly allows cottage food production at home for sale at farmers markets and temporary events only. County zoning constraints generally do not allow residential property for food preparation for public consumption except for cottage food and B&B continental breakfast exemptions.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required; well water or public supply acceptable with appropriate testing
HANDWASHING	Standard sanitation required per MDH guidelines
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per COMAR 10.15.03; no additional county-specific requirements found

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Health department investigates upon receipt of complaint. No routine inspections for cottage food.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Cottage food businesses must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Contact Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE) for home occupation permit requirements. The county's official page states zoning constraints apply and cottage food is an exception to normal residential food production rules.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** State baseline: direct-to-consumer at farmers markets, fairs, festivals; customer pickup from home allowed per MDH 2025 guidelines; retail store sales allowed up to 50% of total. County page notes sales at farmers markets and temporary events specifically. Annual cap \$50,000.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** unknown

## Relevant county code

COMAR 10.15.03.27 (state baseline); Prince George's County zoning code (residential food production restrictions with cottage food exception)

### RESEARCH NOTES

Prince George's County has a specific web page on home food service that explicitly states zoning constraints generally prohibit residential food prep for public consumption, with cottage food as a named exception (for farmers markets and temporary events). The 2025 MDH guidelines confirm cottage food is allowed from home with sales at farmers markets, fairs, festivals, customer pickup, retail stores (up to 50%), and personal/mail delivery. No county health permit is issued for cottage food. County zoning compliance required. The county's DPIE page should be consulted for any home occupation permit applicable to the business operation itself.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/health>

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/permitting-inspections-and-enforcement>

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov>

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/permitting-inspections-and-enforcement/plan-review/building-plan-review-division/health-section/home-food-service>

<https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/health/environmental-health/food-safety-permits-inspections/can-i-sell-food-i-make-home-public>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

RANK 71 · FIPS 24005 · Towson

## Baltimore County

Population 850,737 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; annual cap \$50,000 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — State baseline applies. Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Annual cap \$50,000. Cottage food businesses must comply with applicable county and municipal laws. Contact Baltimore County zoning/permits.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required; state baseline
HANDWASHING	Standard sanitation required
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per MDH guidelines

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Baltimore County Health Department may investigate upon complaint. No routine inspections.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Baltimore County has home occupation permit requirements for home-based businesses. Contact Baltimore County Office of Permits, Approvals and Inspections (PAI) or the Zoning Review Division. Maryland cottage food guidelines state: cottage food businesses must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws and ordinances.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Farmers markets, fairs, festivals, customer pickup from home, retail stores (up to 50% of sales), and personal/mail delivery within Maryland. \$50,000 annual cap. No out-of-state sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	unknown

### Relevant county code

COMAR 10.15.03.27; Baltimore County Zoning Regulations for home occupations

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Baltimore County follows Maryland state baseline. The 2025 MDH guidelines explicitly state cottage food businesses must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Baltimore County has separate county government from Baltimore City (an independent city). No Baltimore County-specific cottage food ordinance beyond state rules was found. County zoning/permits office should be consulted for home occupation requirements.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/health>

<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/permits>

<https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

RANK 112 · FIPS 24003 · Annapolis

## Anne Arundel County

Population 588,109 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · HIGH

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods only. \$50,000 annual gross sales cap. MDH review required for sales at retail stores (Class B equivalent); no license required for direct-to-consumer only. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws and ordinances.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction; general sanitation standards
WATER SUPPLY	No specific mandatory water testing in state baseline unless private well (general food safety consideration)
HANDWASHING	Recommended but not explicitly required by state regulation for cottage food operations
FOOD STORAGE	Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-PHF foods

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint-based inspection only per Maryland state cottage food guidelines
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**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT**      yes — Anne Arundel County passed Bill 81-20 (October 19, 2020) specifically allowing cottage food businesses as home occupations under county zoning. Introduced by Councilmember Rodvien, the ordinance defines cottage food businesses and permits them as home occupations in residential zones. Maryland state cottage food guidelines explicitly state 'Cottage food businesses must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws and ordinances' and direct producers to 'contact your local permits, licensing and zoning department.' Anne Arundel County has a dedicated cottage food-as-home-occupation framework.

**LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE**      varies

### Customer-facing rules

**ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP**      yes

**ON-SITE SIGNAGE**      conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES**      Direct-to-consumer sales: home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail order within Maryland. Sales to retail stores require MDH review (no license). \$50,000 annual cap. No out-of-state sales. No wholesale over 50%.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME**      Not specified in state cottage food law

### Relevant county code

Anne Arundel County Bill 81-20 (Zoning - Home Occupations - Cottage Food Businesses, passed October 19, 2020)

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Anne Arundel County is notable for having passed specific cottage food-as-home-occupation legislation (Bill 81-20) in 2020. This is a county-level action directly addressing cottage food businesses in the zoning code. Maryland state guidelines (2025 update PDF retrieved from health.maryland.gov) confirm cottage food businesses must comply with county/municipal laws and to contact local licensing/zoning. \$50,000 annual cap at state level. Direct sales and limited retail allowed. Confidence high: both the county legislation (aacounty.org official page) and the state guidelines PDF were found from official sources.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.aacounty.org>

<https://www.aacounty.org/county-council/legislation/bill-81-20>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

RANK 113 · FIPS 24510 · Baltimore

## Baltimore city

Population 584,548 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · MEDIUM

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods only. \$50,000 annual gross sales cap. Must comply with all applicable city laws and ordinances. Baltimore City is an independent city with its own health department regulations.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state cottage food pet restriction; general sanitation standards
WATER SUPPLY	Municipal water supply (Baltimore City); no separate testing requirement for cottage food
HANDWASHING	Recommended but not explicitly required by state regulation
FOOD STORAGE	Standard home kitchen storage for approved non-PHF foods

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint-based inspection only per Maryland state cottage food guidelines; Baltimore City Health Department may also have authority
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Baltimore City is an independent city (equivalent to a county) with its own health department and zoning code. Maryland state guidelines direct producers to 'contact your local permits, licensing and zoning department.' Baltimore City Zoning Code governs home occupations. Cottage food businesses must comply with city zoning, and a home occupation permit or business license from Baltimore City may be required. Baltimore City Health Department may have additional requirements.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Direct-to-consumer sales: home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail order within Maryland. Sales to retail stores require MDH review. \$50,000 annual cap. No out-of-state sales.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** Not specified in state cottage food law

## Relevant county code

Baltimore City Zoning Code (home occupation provisions). State: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Baltimore City is an independent city in Maryland (not part of any county). Same state baseline as Anne Arundel County. Maryland state cottage food guidelines explicitly say operators must comply with county/municipal laws and contact local zoning. Baltimore City has its own health department and zoning authority. Unlike Anne Arundel County, no specific Baltimore City ordinance equivalent to Bill 81-20 was found in research. Confidence medium: state baseline confirmed; Baltimore City-specific zoning/home occupation permit requirements not retrieved.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.baltimorecity.gov>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

RANK 213 · FIPS 24027 · Ellicott City

## Howard County

Population 332,011 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; \$50,000 annual sales cap; no license required for direct-to-consumer; MDH review required for some sales channels; non-TCS foods only ·

HIGH

## Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — Non-TCS non-perishable foods only; \$50,000 annual gross sales cap; labeling required; MDH compliance letter required for wholesale/grocery sales; local zoning must be verified

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** no

**PET RESTRICTIONS** Standard sanitation applies; no specific state pet rule

**WATER SUPPLY** Potable water required

HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing practices
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable foods stored in sanitary conditions

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — MDH may investigate on complaint; initial inspection may be required for certain sales channels
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Howard County Planning and Zoning requires a Home Occupation Application (\$25 fee) for home-based businesses operated from a residence. Application submitted online at <a href="http://howardcountymd.gov/planning-zoning/home-occupation-application">howardcountymd.gov/planning-zoning/home-occupation-application</a>
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct to consumer at home, farmers markets, events, online (Maryland only); wholesale to grocers requires MDH compliance letter; no out-of-state internet sales
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

### Relevant county code

Howard County Planning and Zoning home occupation regulations

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Howard County confirmed: \$25 home occupation permit required from Planning and Zoning for home-based businesses. County has its own application portal. MD state cottage food rules apply on top of local requirement.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/planning-zoning/home-occupation-application>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

RANK 252 · FIPS 24021 · Frederick

## Frederick County

Population 273,829 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · HIGH

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods only; \$50,000 annual sales cap (COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1)); must operate from a residential kitchen. Optional free ID number from MDH (required only if selling through retail stores). Frederick County Health Department has a dedicated Cottage Food Business page. Home occupation permit required for zoning compliance.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified at county level; state rules require sanitary production environment
WATER SUPPLY	Public water or private well; private well water testing required
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required per state sanitation standards
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods only; standard food storage requirements apply

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint or foodborne illness investigation
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Frederick County Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 1-19) requires home occupation permit for residential-zone businesses. Maryland is a Dillon's Rule state — municipalities need specific zoning authority. Home occupation must be secondary to residential use; no external signage, limited employees, limited customer visits.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	yes

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	no

<b>DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES</b>	Direct sales to end consumers; indirect sales (retail stores) allowed with MDH ID number and food handler certification. No wholesale via brokers. Sales must remain within Maryland.
<b>MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME</b>	Not specified in state rules; home occupation ordinance limits non-resident employees

## Relevant county code

Frederick County Code Ch. 1-19 (Zoning Ordinance), §1-19-8.240 (Accessory Uses);  
[health.frederickcountymd.gov/681/Cottage-Food-Business](http://health.frederickcountymd.gov/681/Cottage-Food-Business)

### RESEARCH NOTES

Frederick County Health Department has a dedicated Cottage Food Business page ([health.frederickcountymd.gov/681](http://health.frederickcountymd.gov/681)) confirming program exists at county level and follows Maryland state rules. County zoning bill document (Bill No. 23-21) confirmed the home occupation provisions in §1-19-8.240 of the Frederick County Zoning Ordinance. CityRuleLookup confirms home occupation permit required, business license required, and \$50K MD state cap applies. Maryland state COMAR 10.15.03.27 is the operative regulation. Confidence high due to specific county health department URL found.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/681/Cottage-Food-Business>

<https://www.frederickcountymd.gov>

<https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/681/Cottage-Food-Business>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://www.cityrulelookup.com/home-business/zoning/frederick-county-md>

RANK 267 · FIPS 24025 · Bel Air

## Harford County

Population 261,059 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

<b>HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED</b>	yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods only; \$50,000 annual sales cap (COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1)). Optional free MDH ID number (required only if selling through retail stores). Home occupation permit required under Harford County zoning. Maryland is Dillon's Rule — specific zoning authority required for home businesses.
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SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified at county level; state rules require sanitary production environment
WATER SUPPLY	Public water or private well; private well water testing required
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities per state standards
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods only; extensive prohibited list including pickles, salsas, acidified foods, dairy, meat

## Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint or foodborne illness investigation
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Harford County Zoning Ordinance requires home occupation permit for residential-zone businesses. Business must be secondary to residential use. Bel Air has its own municipal zoning. Maryland Dillon's Rule means specific authority needed for home business regulation.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	yes

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	no
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct and some indirect sales (retail) allowed; retail store sales require food handler certification and MDH ID number. No wholesale via brokers. Maryland only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state rules; home occupation may limit non-resident employees

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Harford County Zoning Ordinance (home occupation)

### RESEARCH NOTES

Harford County MD follows the Maryland state baseline (COMAR 10.15.03.27). \$50,000 cap. No Harford County Health Department cottage food page found in search. State program confirmed. Confidence medium — state law confirmed but no specific Harford County .gov cottage food source retrieved.

## SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.harfordcountymd.gov><https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx><https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 380 · FIPS 24013 · Westminster

## Carroll County

Population 173,225 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **HIGH**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual revenue cap \$50,000. Non-potentially hazardous foods only — no acidified foods, pickles, salsas, ketchup, mustard, or fermented foods. Inspections upon complaint only. Registration optional (free online ID number) unless selling at retail stores. Food handler cert recommended; required if selling at retail stores.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No explicit state restriction; MDH guidelines address sanitation standards.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing per MDH cottage food guidelines.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable storage; no refrigerated products allowed.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Inspections only upon consumer complaint or illness report.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	yes — Carroll County Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 158, approved December 2021) defines Home Occupation as accessory use in residential zones — max 500 sq ft, no retail sales from premises, no significant nonresidential traffic, no exterior indicators. Cottage Industry (manufacturing/assembly by residents) is a separate category requiring Zoning Administrator approval after public hearing. Home occupation requires Zoning Administrator approval after public hearing in residential zones. Carroll County zoning allows online/internet-based sales from home occupation. Westminster city has its own zoning division for properties within city limits.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

<b>ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP</b>	conditional
<b>ON-SITE SIGNAGE</b>	conditional
<b>DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES</b>	Direct sales at home (limited customer visits per zoning), online within Maryland, and limited indirect sales to retail stores with ANSI food safety training. No interstate sales.
<b>MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME</b>	Home Occupation: residents only (no retail sales from premises). Cottage Industry: up to 2 nonresident employees.

## Relevant county code

Carroll County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 158 (Home Occupation, Cottage Industry); MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

### RESEARCH NOTES

Carroll County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 158 directly retrieved from carrollcountymd.gov (approved December 2, 2021). Distinguishes Home Occupation (residents only, no retail, up to 500 sq ft, internet sales allowed) from Cottage Industry (up to 2 nonresident employees, manufactured goods). Both require Zoning Administrator approval after public hearing. Maryland DOH FAQ (September 2025) confirms no state license required but local rules may vary. Westminster city has separate zoning from county. Maryland prohibits acidified foods under the standard cottage food framework.

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### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.carrollcountymd.gov>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://www.carrollcountymd.gov/media/15330/chapter-158-bcc-approved-december-2-2021.pdf>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Copy%20of%20CF%20FAQs%20Updated%20Revised\\_September\\_2025\\_FINAL\\_SBed09242025.docx%20\(1\).pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Copy%20of%20CF%20FAQs%20Updated%20Revised_September_2025_FINAL_SBed09242025.docx%20(1).pdf)

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RANK 398 · FIPS 24017 · La Plata

## Charles County

Population 167,035 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual revenue cap \$50,000. Non-PHF foods only — no acidified foods, pickles, salsas, ketchup, mustard, or fermented foods. Inspections upon complaint only. Optional free registration unless selling at retail stores. Food handler cert recommended; required if selling at retail stores.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No explicit state restriction; MDH guidelines address sanitation.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing per MDH guidelines.
FOOD STORAGE	Shelf-stable storage; no refrigerated products.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Inspections only upon complaint or illness report.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Charles County may require home occupation permit for home-based businesses. Charles County government website confirmed at charlescountymd.gov. La Plata city has separate municipal zoning. Local zoning contact should be verified.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales at home, online within Maryland, limited retail store sales with food safety training.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Household members only for standard home occupation.

### Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Charles County zoning ordinance (home occupations)

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Charles County government website confirmed at charlescountymd.gov. No county-specific cottage food ordinance found beyond state baseline. Maryland DOH FAQ (September 2025) confirms no state license required. Maryland's \$50,000 cap and prohibition on acidified foods are key restrictions.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.charlescountymd.gov>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 432 · FIPS 24043 · Hagerstown

# Washington County

Population 154,645 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

## Home kitchen rules

<b>HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED</b>	conditional — Maryland allows cottage food from residential kitchens. Annual sales cap \$50,000 (per COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1)). Registration optional (free online ID number) unless selling at retail stores (food handler cert required for retail channel). Complaint-based inspection only. Allowed: non-PHF baked goods, non-PHF candy, acid-fruit jellies, jams, preserves, butters from enumerated fruits, dry goods (spice blends, coffee, teas), certain snacks (kettle corn, granola).
<b>SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN</b>	no
<b>PET RESTRICTIONS</b>	No specific state restriction on pets in home for standard cottage food sales.
<b>WATER SUPPLY</b>	No specific requirement under Maryland cottage food law.
<b>HANDWASHING</b>	Good manufacturing practices apply.
<b>FOOD STORAGE</b>	Non-PHF foods only. No pickles, salsas, acidified foods, pickled products, or fermented foods unless via separate On-Farm Home Processing License.

## Inspection & permitting

<b>INSPECTION REQUIRED</b>	upon-complaint — Maryland DOH may inspect upon complaint or suspected foodborne illness.
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**HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT** varies — Washington County may require a home occupation permit under local zoning for commercial activity at a residence. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified.

**LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE** varies

### Customer-facing rules

**ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP** yes

**ON-SITE SIGNAGE** conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Sales at farmers markets, from home, at events, at roadside stands, and to retail stores. Online sales and mail-order available for direct channel. Limited indirect retail sales allowed.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** Not specified by state law; local home occupation rules may apply.

### Relevant county code

Washington County Zoning Ordinance; MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Verified-large county. State baseline governs. Maryland's emergency rule (last amended November 2024) applies. Separate On-Farm Home Processing License available for pickles/dried fruit/hot sauces up to \$40,000. No Washington County-specific cottage food code identified. County URL verified.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.washco-md.net>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 536 · FIPS 24037 · Leonardtown

## St. Mary's County

Population 113,814 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; \$50,000 annual sales cap; food handler cert recommended; inspection upon complaint; registration depends on sales channel; limited indirect sales · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maryland allows non-PHF cottage foods from residential kitchen. \$50,000 annual revenue cap. Registration (free online ID) optional unless selling at retail stores. St. Mary's County follows state baseline.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state restriction; standard food safety sanitation practices apply.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required; private well users may require water quality testing per MDH inspection guidelines.
HANDWASHING	Food handler certification recommended (not mandatory for most channels). Required if selling at retail stores.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF shelf-stable products only. No refrigerated or TCS foods. Acidified foods, fermented foods, pickles, salsas prohibited. Separate On-Farm Home Processing License available for certain pickled goods.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — MDH may inspect upon consumer complaint. No routine inspections for standard cottage food track.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — No specific St. Mary's County home occupation permit requirements found for cottage food. Maryland state cottage food law does not require local permits. St. Mary's County zoning may require home occupation approval for home-based businesses. Contact St. Mary's County Department of Land Use and Growth Management.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Maryland allows direct sales and limited indirect retail sales (requires food handler cert for retail channel). Online and mail order prohibited. \$50,000 annual cap.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** No specific state limit; local zoning may apply.

### Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

**RESEARCH NOTES**

State baseline applied (MD tier Good). Maryland \$50,000 cap confirmed, most recently amended Nov 2024 (emergency rule). St. Mary's County is in southern MD near Naval Air Station Patuxent River. No county-specific URLs provided. Confidence medium.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 579 · FIPS 24015 · Elkton

## Cecil County

Population 103,876 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — Maryland residential kitchen permit allows non-PHF baked goods (non-refrigerated), non-PHF candy, acid-fruit jellies/jams/preserves/butters from enumerated fruits, dry goods (spice blends, coffee, teas), and certain snacks. Annual sales cap of \$50,000. Food handler cert recommended for retail store channel only. Complaint-based inspections. Registration (free online ID number) optional unless selling at retail stores.

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** no

**PET RESTRICTIONS** No specific state pet restriction for cottage food operations, but standard sanitation applies.

**WATER SUPPLY** No specific state requirement, though private well and septic may have additional testing requirements.

HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required. Food handler cert recommended (required for retail channel).
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF foods only. Prohibited: meringue/cheesecake/cream/custard pies, baked goods with refrigerated cream cheese or buttercream icing, low-acid canned foods, acidified foods/pickled products (pickles, salsa, pepper jelly, mustard, BBQ sauce), garlic/vegetables in oil, raw sprouts, fish, shellfish, meat, poultry, milk/dairy products, beverages, fermented foods.

## Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint-based inspections only. No routine kitchen inspection for cottage food operations (separate from the pre-operational inspection required for formal Residential Kitchen Permit if seeking retail channel).
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Cecil County and Elkton may have home occupation zoning requirements. No specific Cecil County cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state residential kitchen framework.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer and some indirect sales permitted. Retail store sales require free optional registration and food handler cert. Online sales and delivery permitted within Maryland. \$50,000 annual cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

## Relevant county code

No specific Cecil County code section identified. State law governs: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Cecil County has no county URLs in the input. State baseline governs. Maryland's \$50,000 cap is confirmed from COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1). Cecil County is in the northeastern corner of Maryland near Delaware. No county-specific overrides found. Confidence medium.

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SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 580 · FIPS 24045 · Salisbury

## Wicomico County

Population 103,815 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maryland residential kitchen permit allows non-PHF baked goods, non-PHF candy, acid-fruit jellies/jams/preserves/butters, dry goods (spice blends, coffee, teas), and certain snacks. Annual sales cap of \$50,000. Food handler cert recommended (required for retail channel). Complaint-based inspections. Free optional registration unless selling at retail stores.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific state pet restriction, but standard sanitation applies.
WATER SUPPLY	Private well and septic may have additional testing requirements.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required. Food handler cert recommended (required for retail channel).
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF foods only. Prohibited: refrigerated baked goods, low-acid canned foods, acidified foods/pickled products (pickles, salsa, pepper jelly, mustard, BBQ sauce), garlic/vegetables in oil, raw sprouts, fish, shellfish, meat, poultry, milk/dairy products, beverages, fermented foods.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Complaint-based inspections only.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Wicomico County and the City of Salisbury may have home occupation zoning requirements. Salisbury is on the Delmarva Peninsula and serves as a regional hub. No specific Wicomico County cottage food ordinance identified.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer and some indirect sales permitted. Retail store sales require free optional registration and food handler cert. Online sales and delivery permitted within Maryland. \$50,000 annual cap.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state statute.

## Relevant county code

No specific Wicomico County code section identified. State law governs: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Wicomico County was flagged as 'verified-large' and has a county\_govt\_url. The county seat Salisbury is a major Delmarva Peninsula city with University of Maryland Eastern Shore nearby. Maryland's state rules govern with no county-specific deviations found. Confidence medium — county URL exists but no county-specific cottage food rules identified.

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### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.wicomicocounty.org>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

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RANK 637 · FIPS 24009 · Prince Frederick

## Calvert County

Population 93,244 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **HIGH**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Maryland cottage food law (COMAR 10.15.03.27): \$50,000 annual sales cap. No routine inspection (complaint-based only). Registration optional (free online ID number) unless selling at retail stores. Food safety training recommended. Allowed: non-PHF baked goods, candy, jams/jellies/preserves/fruit butters, dry goods, snacks, and other non-PHF foods produced by licensed entity. Prohibited: PHF foods requiring refrigeration, all acidified/pickled products (pickles, salsa, pepper jelly, mustard, BBQ sauce), fermented foods, garlic/vegetables in oil, dairy, meats.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific restriction under Maryland cottage food law.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific requirement for home operations under standard COMAR rules.
HANDWASHING	Food safety training recommended; no mandatory statutory requirement.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF shelf-stable foods only. Prohibited: acidified foods, fermented foods, TCS foods.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Maryland Department of Health may inspect upon consumer complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Calvert County has a Home Occupation permit process through Planning & Zoning ( <a href="http://www.calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation">www.calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation</a> ). Operators should review county home occupation permit requirements before beginning cottage food sales. Calvert County Planning & Zoning administers home occupation permits.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Direct and limited indirect sales. Retail stores allowed with optional registration. Online/mail order within Maryland. No out-of-state sales.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** No specific limit stated in COMAR 10.15.03.27.

### Relevant county code

Calvert County Home Occupation permit (Planning & Zoning); [calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation](http://calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation)

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Calvert County has a confirmed Home Occupation permit process at [calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation](http://calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation) (confirmed via Exa search). Calvert County also has a Licensing & Permits page at [calvertcountymd.gov/3365/Licensing-Permits](http://calvertcountymd.gov/3365/Licensing-Permits). Maryland's cottage food rules were last amended November 2024 (emergency rule). The prohibition on acidified/fermented/pickled products is a notable restriction — Maryland prohibits salsa, pepper jelly, BBQ sauce, etc. Calvert County is in Southern Maryland (Chesapeake Bay region).

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation>

<https://www.calvertcountymd.gov>

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

<https://www.calvertcountymd.gov/502/Home-Occupation>

<http://calvertcountymd.gov/3365/Licensing-Permits>

RANK 776 · FIPS 24001 · Cumberland

## Allegany County

Population 68,161 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — Annual sales cap \$50,000. Food handler certification recommended but not strictly required. Inspection upon complaint only. Registration required depending on operation type. Limited indirect sales allowed. Non-PHF foods only. Prohibited: PHF foods, pickled products, fermented foods, garlic in oil, seafood, meat, dairy, beverages.

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** no

PET RESTRICTIONS	No pets in kitchen during production (standard health code practice)
WATER SUPPLY	Approved potable water source
HANDWASHING	Proper handwashing required; recommended as part of food safety
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF shelf-stable products; appropriate storage required

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Consumer complaint or foodborne illness investigation
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — No county govt URL provided. Allegany County unincorporated areas follow county zoning. City of Cumberland has its own zoning and business licensing. No county-specific cottage food overlay identified.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Limited indirect sales at markets and events; direct delivery permitted
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

### Relevant county code

Not identified

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Maryland Good-tier state with \$50,000 cap. Allegany County is in western Maryland near WV border. No county-specific sources available. Pattern county.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

RANK 945 · FIPS 24047 · Snow Hill

## Worcester County

Population 52,827 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 (annual cap \$50,000) · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods from residential kitchen. Annual cap \$50,000. Complaint-based inspections. No routine inspection. Food handler cert recommended (required only for retail store channel). Registration optional unless selling at retail stores (free online ID number). Allowed: non-PHF baked goods, non-PHF candy, acid-fruit jellies/jams/preserves/butters, dry goods, snacks.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	No specific MD state or Worcester County restriction.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific requirement beyond standard sanitation. Private well or septic testing may apply under general sanitation rules.
HANDWASHING	Recommended; required if selling in retail stores.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-PHF shelf-stable products. Prohibited: items requiring refrigeration, acidified foods (pickles, salsa, ketchup, BBQ sauce), fermented foods, dairy, meats, beverages.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — Maryland Dept. of Health may inspect on complaint. No routine inspections under complaint-based framework.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Worcester County includes Ocean City (major beach resort). Ocean City area may have business licensing requirements. No specific Worcester County cottage food ordinance identified. Contact Worcester County government in Snow Hill. Separate On-Farm Home Processing License available for farmers to sell pickles, dried fruit, hot sauces up to \$40,000.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Direct and limited indirect sales. Retail store sales require food handler certification and free registration. Online and direct-to-consumer delivery permitted.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** Not specified in MD regulation.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; no Worcester County-specific ordinance identified

### RESEARCH NOTES

Worcester County is Maryland's eastern shore county including Ocean City (major resort), Assateague Island, and rural Eastern Shore communities. No county-specific cottage food rules found. State MD baseline: \$50,000 cap, complaint-based inspection, no registration unless selling at retail. Most recent amendment effective 11/27/2024 (Emergency rule exp. 5/26/2025).

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 983 · FIPS 24035 · Centreville

## Queen Anne's County

Population 50,316 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — Non-potentially hazardous foods only. Annual revenue cap \$50,000. Non-PHF baked goods, candy, acid-fruit jellies/jams, dry goods, snacks permitted. Complaint-based inspection only. Registration optional unless selling through retail stores (free online ID number).

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** no

**PET RESTRICTIONS** Not specified in state cottage food regulations.

**WATER SUPPLY** Not specified in state cottage food regulations.

**HANDWASHING** Standard sanitation practices; no specific requirement in state cottage food rules.

**FOOD STORAGE** Products must not require refrigeration; non-PHF only.

## Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine inspection. Maryland DOH may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	conditional — Queen Anne's County may require a home occupation permit for home-based businesses in residential zoning districts. County is largely rural/suburban on the Eastern Shore. Recommend verifying with Queen Anne's County Planning and Zoning.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer and some indirect sales allowed. Retail store sales permitted with food handler certification; online/mail permitted. No out-of-state sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified in state cottage food regulations.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Queen Anne's County Zoning Code (home occupation provisions)

### RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland's cottage food program has a \$50,000 annual cap (COMAR 10.15.03.02B(17-1)). Emergency rule effective 11/27/2024, exp. 5/26/2025. On-Farm Home Processing License also available for farmers to sell pickles, dried fruit, hot sauces up to \$40,000. Queen Anne's County is on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. No county-specific cottage food ordinances found.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx>

<https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24011 · Denton

## Caroline County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint. Retail store sales require MDH plan review and written approval before sales begin.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Caroline County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Caroline County planning/zoning for home occupation permit requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional

**DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES** Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Food safety training recommended but not required for standard sales; required for retail store channel.

**MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME** Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Caroline County zoning ordinance (contact county for specifics).

### RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, no license required but must comply with county/municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Caroline County is a small Eastern Shore county. The MDH guidelines (Updated\_CF\_Guidelines\_2025.pdf) confirm cottage food businesses must contact local permits, licensing, and zoning departments. No Caroline County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24019 · Cambridge

## Dorchester County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED** yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.

**SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN** no

**PET RESTRICTIONS** Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.

**WATER SUPPLY** Potable water required.

HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint. Retail store sales require MDH plan review and written approval before sales begin.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Dorchester County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Dorchester County planning/permits for home occupation requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Food safety training recommended but not required for standard sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

### Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Dorchester County zoning ordinance.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Dorchester County is a rural Eastern Shore county. No Dorchester County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

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**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24023 · Oakland

## Garrett County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · MEDIUM

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required. Private well users may face additional requirements.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint. Retail store sales require MDH plan review and written approval.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Garrett County (western Maryland mountains) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Garrett County planning for home occupation requirements. The county is rural and mountainous; many operations may be on farm properties eligible for on-farm home processing license for additional products. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Farmers operating on agriculturally zoned land may be eligible for an on-farm home processing license for products not allowed under standard cottage food.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Garrett County zoning ordinance.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Garrett County is Maryland's westernmost, most rural county in the Appalachian Mountains. The MDH guidelines note that farm owners on agriculturally zoned land may qualify for on-farm home processing licenses. No Garrett County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

[https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated\\_CF\\_Guidelines\\_2025.pdf](https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Documents/Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf)

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24029 · Chestertown

## Kent County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

## Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
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SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Kent County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Kent County planning for home occupation requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

### Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

### Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Kent County zoning ordinance.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Kent County is a small rural Eastern Shore county. No Kent County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

## SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24039 · Princess Anne

## Somerset County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

### Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

### Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Somerset County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Somerset County for home occupation permit requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Somerset County zoning ordinance.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Somerset County is a small, rural Eastern Shore county with high poverty rates. No Somerset County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf>

RANK 9999 · FIPS 24041 · Easton

## Talbot County

Population 0 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · **MEDIUM**

## Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	yes — Annual gross sales capped at \$50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	no
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.

WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

## Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	varies — Talbot County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning for home occupation requirements. Talbot County is a higher-income Eastern Shore county with active zoning. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	varies

## Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

## Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Talbot County zoning ordinance.

### RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Talbot County is a prosperous Eastern Shore county centered on Easton. No Talbot County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

### SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx>

<http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf>

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