

Food Service

To the licensee:

If you are licensed as a bona fide eating place (license Type 41, 47, or 49), you must operate and maintain your licensed premises as a bona fide eating place. You must make actual and substantial sales of meals, during the normal meal hours that you are open, at least five days a week. Normal meal hours are: Breakfast 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.; lunch 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.; and dinner 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Premises that are not open five days a week must serve meals on the days they are open.

The premises must be equipped and maintained in good faith. This means the premises must possess working refrigeration and cooking devices, pots, pans, utensils, table service, condiment dispensers, menus, posters, signs, and enough goods to make substantial meals. The premises must comply with all regulations of the local health department.

Incidental, sporadic or infrequent sales of meals or a mere offering of meals without actual sales is not compliance. "Meals" means the usual assortment of food commonly ordered at various hours of the day. The service of only sandwiches or salads is not considered compliance. However, certain specialty entrees, such as pizza, fish, ribs, etc., and an assortment of other foods, such as soups, salads or desserts, may be considered a meal.

The Department will presume that a licensee is operating as a bona fide eating place if the gross sales of food prepared and sold to guests on the premises exceeds the gross sales of alcoholic beverages. "Prepared" means any processing preliminary to the final serving of food. (Note: Some licensees have a "conditional" license that requires food sales to be 50% or more of the total gross sales.)

Source: Instructions, Interpretations and Procedures, L-24.1 - L-24.2, April 1, 1975

23038. "Bona fide public eating place," "meals."

"Bona fide public eating place" means a place which is regularly and in a bona fide manner used and kept open for the serving of meals to guests for compensation and which has suitable kitchen facilities connected therewith, containing conveniences for cooking an assortment of foods which may be required for ordinary meals, the kitchen of which must be kept in a sanitary condition with the proper amount of refrigeration for keeping of food on said premises and must comply with all the regulations of the local department of health.

"Meals" means the usual assortment of foods commonly ordered at various hours of the day; the service of such food and victuals only as sandwiches or salads shall not be deemed a compliance with this requirement. "Guests" shall mean persons who, during the hours when meals are regularly served therein, come to a bona fide public eating place for the purpose of obtaining, and actually order and obtain at such time, in good faith, a meal therein. Nothing in this section, however, shall be construed to require that any food be sold or purchased with any beverage.

Source: California Business and Professions Code