

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Cook County

Illinois · Chicago · FIPS 17031 · Population 5,225,367 ·
Crosodo Index #1324*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
410 ILCS 625/4	Great	—	HIGH	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.

ILLINOIS: COOK COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1324* · FIPS 17031 · Chicago

Cook County

Population 5,225,367 · State baseline: 410 ILCS 625/4 · **HIGH****QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY****HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?**

Yes (In unincorporated Cook County, operators register with the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH). Chicago residents must register with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and obtain a CDPH food service sanitation certificate in addition to the ANSI-accredited CFPM certification required statewide. Many incorporated cities within Cook County (Arlington Heights, Chicago, Evanston, Oak Lawn, Oak Park, Orland Park, Schaumburg, Skokie, Tinley Park, Des Plaines) have their own cottage food rules.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

State baseline applies

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Unincorporated Cook County requires that home occupations be incidental to residential use. Home-rule cities within Cook County set their own rules; some require a home occupation permit. No specific Cook County cottage food home occupation permit requirement found for unincorporated areas.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Consumer complaint or foodborne illness investigation; applicant must consent to inspection access upon registration.)

Home kitchen rules**HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED**

Yes — In unincorporated Cook County, operators register with the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH). Chicago residents must register with the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) and obtain a CDPH food service sanitation certificate in addition to the ANSI-accredited CFPM certification required statewide. Many incorporated cities within Cook County (Arlington Heights, Chicago, Evanston, Oak Lawn, Oak Park, Orland Park, Schaumburg, Skokie, Tinley Park, Des Plaines) have their own cottage food rules.

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 — Consumer complaint or foodborne illness investigation; applicant must consent to inspection access upon registration.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

Conditional — Unincorporated Cook County requires that home occupations be incidental to residential use. Home-rule cities within Cook County set their own rules; some require a home occupation permit. No specific Cook County cottage food home occupation permit requirement found for unincorporated areas.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

Varies by city

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	State law allows direct-to-consumer sales. CCDPH registration limits sales to direct consumer channels; retail walk-in customers to home are effectively prohibited by Cook County home occupation rules in unincorporated areas.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	State baseline applies

Relevant county code

Cook County Code of Ordinances (home occupation provisions); CCDPH registration required under 410 ILCS 625/4

RESEARCH NOTES

Cook County has two distinct registration tracks: Chicago residents register with CDPH (additional sanitation certificate required); suburban Cook County residents register with CCDPH. Chicago's DCASE-sponsored farmers markets prohibit cottage food sales; independent Chicago farmers markets (CIFM) allow them. CCDPH application form requires Food Service Sanitation Manager Certificate (ANSI CFPM level). Some products not on standard list require lab testing to confirm non-PHF status. Note that state law was updated in 2022 (PA 102-0633) and 2025 (PA 103-0903) with broader allowed foods, but CCDPH application form from 2021/2022 vintage may not reflect all 2025 expansions.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://cookcountypublichealth.org>

<https://www.cookcountyil.gov/agency/planning-and-development>

<https://www.cookcountyil.gov>

<https://cookcountypublichealth.org/environmental-health/food-safety-resources/food-safety-forms/>

<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

<http://www.extension.illinois.edu/cottage-food/chicago-cottage-food-operation-limitations>

Questions? Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss your county's specific zoning rules at <https://crosodo.com/nb/illinois/cook-county-discuss>

State context — Illinois cottage food law

Cook County's rules sit on top of Illinois's state cottage food framework. The state law sets the floor — counties can add but cannot remove protections.

STATUTE 410 ILCS 625/4 (Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act, §4)	ANNUAL SALES CAP —
REGISTRATION REQUIRED Yes	FOOD HANDLER CERT Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION Upon-complaint	DIRECT SALES ONLY Yes
INDIRECT SALES No — Illinois prohibits sales to restaurants, retail stores, and wholesale; direct in-state sales are allowed anywhere including home, online, farmers markets, events, and roadside stands; non-perishable items may be shipped within Illinois only.	

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Illinois cottage food law report](#).

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2625&ChapterID=35>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/illinois/>

Questions?

Join the Crosodo Forum to discuss Cook County's specific zoning rules, permits, and what other home bakers are seeing locally.

<https://crosodo.com/nb/illinois/cook-county-discuss>
