

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Dauphin County

Pennsylvania · Harrisburg · FIPS 42043 · Population 286,108
· Crosodo Index #2392*

STATE BASELINE

3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737; Limited Food Establishment license required; kitchen inspection required; no sales cap

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Good	—	MEDIUM	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.

PENNSYLVANIA: DAUPHIN COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2392* · FIPS 42043 · Harrisburg

Dauphin County

Population 286,108 · State baseline: 3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737; Limited Food Establishment license required; kitchen inspection required; no sales cap · **MEDIUM**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (PA LFE registration and initial kitchen inspection required; non-TCS foods only; labeling required)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Pets excluded from food production areas

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (No county-specific home occupation permit identified. Harrisburg and other municipalities in Dauphin County may have home occupation zoning requirements. Operator should verify with local municipality)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Yes (Initial inspection before license; annual renewal)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — PA LFE registration and initial kitchen inspection required; non-TCS foods only; labeling required
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets excluded from food production areas
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required
HANDWASHING	Handwashing sink required
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored in sanitary conditions

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes — Initial inspection before license; annual renewal
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — No county-specific home occupation permit identified. Harrisburg and other municipalities in Dauphin County may have home occupation zoning requirements. Operator should verify with local municipality
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct and limited indirect sales; farmers markets and retail allowed
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Not specified

Relevant county code

Not identified

RESEARCH NOTES

Same PA LFE baseline. Dauphin County contains Harrisburg (PA state capital). No county-specific overlay found.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.dauphincounty.gov>

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Dauphin County	Cumberland County	York County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Conditional
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Pets excluded from food production areas	Not specified in statute; home kitchen must meet sanitation requirements during inspection	Standard food safety GMP requirements apply during production.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct and limited indirect sales; farmers markets and retail allowed	Direct and some indirect sales allowed via Limited Food Establishment registration; markets, home sales, online, and some retail channels.	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted; some limited indirect sales allowed. Cannot sell in Philadelphia County. Online sales and in-state deli...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Conditional	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	PA LFE registration and initial kitchen inspection required; non-TCS foods only; labeling required	Non-TCS foods only; registration required (\$35 for 2-year term); initial on-site kitchen inspection required before registration issued; su...	Pennsylvania requires a Limited Food Establishment (LFE) registration from PA Dept. of Agriculture (\$35 fee, 2-year registration). An initi...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS foods stored in sanitary conditions	Non-TCS shelf-stable; no refrigerated finished products	Non-TCS, non-refrigerated finished products only. No foods requiring temperature control.
POPULATION	286,108	261,269	457,051

State context — Pennsylvania cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
3 Pa.C.S. §§5721–5737	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Yes	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Yes	No

INDIRECT SALES

Limited (see notes) — Registration includes sales direct from the production site including internet sales. However, a separate Retail Food Facility License may be required for sales at events or Farmers Markets. Businesses aiming to sell across state lines might also need FDA registration. The registration covers home-based operations in residential kitchens as well as residential-style kitchens in alternate locations such as churches, fire halls, or remodeled garages. Not available in Philadelphia County.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/consCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&t1=03&div=0&chpt=57>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pda/food/limited-food-establishment.html>

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

Questions?

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

<https://crosodo.com/nb/pennsylvania/dauphin-county-discuss>
