



Washington County Health Department

1302 Pennsylvania Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21742

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For Immediate Release:

April 22, 2020

Re: Food Protection in Washington County- Protecting Public Health

Recently, our Environmental Health Division has received complaints regarding entrepreneurs preparing and selling food products from their home kitchens. In order to protect public health, this process must stop. Food may only be sold as carry out, delivery, or drive-through from licensed food facilities. Licensed food facilities are routinely inspected by the Washington County Health Department in order to protect public health*.

As our local health care system is currently preparing and planning for increased COVID-19 cases, it is important that we refrain from behaviors that may directly or indirectly increase strain on our hospital and its resources. Preparing and selling food products from your home can cause others to develop gastrointestinal issues (or worse) that may result from food poisoning and cause an influx of patients going to the emergency room. Our health care professionals need this time to concentrate on saving lives - yours and mine. Please help us by understanding the importance of protecting our food supply and public health.

Thank you for your kind consideration. Stay safe and remember to practice social distancing to "slow the spread."

If you have any questions or concerns please contact our Environmental Health Division at wchd.eh@maryland.gov

* An individual preparing food and selling to the public from their home kitchen is in violation of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 10.15.03 and subject to penalties, fines, and imprisonment as set forth in Health-General Article, §§21-1214 and 21-1215, Annotated Code of Maryland; and penalties and fines as provided by local law, ordinance, or regulation in

accordance with Health-General Article, §21-309.2(e)(3), Annotated Code of Maryland.Maryland. Under COMAR 10.15.03 “Food Service Facilities” the definition of a food service facility is a place where food or drink is prepared for sale or service on the premises or elsewhere. Also, a person shall obtain a food service facility license before the person operates a food service facility; and may not operate a food service facility if the person does not have a current and valid license issued by the approving authority.

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