



TOMÁS J. ARAGÓN, MD, DrPH
Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor

Frequently Asked Questions for Processed Pet Food License

Q1. What is a processed pet food?

A: Processed pet foods include a variety of foods such as treats, candies, jerky, dry/moist/wet foods, special diet foods, health foods, canned food, gravies, broths, dietary supplements, milk supplements for consumption by pets.

Q2. Do I need a license to make processed pet food?

A: Yes. Any person manufacturing, packaging, labeling, or re-packaging/re-labeling pet food in California or manufacturing pet foods out-of-state and distributing in California, needs to obtain a Processed Pet Food License from the California Department of Public Health, Food and Drug Branch (FDB), prior to manufacturing pet food.

Q3. Can I make pet treats from home?

A: No. A processed pet food, including treats, cannot be made in a residential home. All processed pet foods must be made in an approved facility. Acceptable types of facilities include: private or shared commercial kitchens, restaurant/church/school kitchens, commercial facilities. Please check with your local health department for additional restrictions.

Q3. Do I need a license if I am only warehousing pet food?

A: A Processed Pet Food License applies only to any person who is manufacturing, packaging, labeling (repackaging/relabeling) pet food. A person engaged in only warehousing pet food within California will **need to obtain a Processed Food Registration** from FDB.

Q4. How much does a Processed Pet Food License cost?

A: The cost for a Processed Pet Food License is \$290.



Q5. What must I do to obtain a license?

A: To obtain a Processed Pet Food License, you must:

1. Submit completed Pet Food Processor License/Registration application with fee
2. Submit pet food labels with the application (for large volume labels, or digital files, please contact us by email for further instructions)
3. For out of state manufacturers only: Submit with your application, a health certificate issued by a local, county, or state health department that has jurisdiction to regulate food.

License application and information can be found in the link below:

[Pet Food Processor/Registration Application](#)

[Procedures for Obtaining a Pet Food License \(ca.gov\)](#)

Q6. Can I label my processed pet food “human grade”?

A: No. Per section 19025(g) of the California Code of Regulations for Processed Pet Food:

“The terms “fit for human food,” “fit for human consumption,” or any similar terms are prohibited on the labels or in advertisements of a processed pet food”.

This includes the term “human grade”.

Q7. Where can I find more information on labeling processed pet food?

Pertinent laws and regulations can be found on our website. A pet food manufacturer must comply with all state and federal laws and regulations. Additional sources can be found at:

[Pet Food Labels - General | FDA](#)

[The Association of American Feed Control Officials \(AAFCO\) >Startups](#)

[Eight Required Labeling Items \(AAFCO\)](#)