

Kitchen Incubator Background/Policies/Procedures

BACKGROUND

The Denver Enterprise Center Kitchen Incubator was created to assist aspiring food entrepreneurs become established in the market. Many potential food producers are unable to enter the market because of the high cost of constructing a certified kitchen facility. The Kitchen Incubator offers an affordable, shared kitchen, assistance of experts, and a community of entrepreneurs who provide valuable advice. Our mission at the Denver Enterprise Kitchen Incubator is to stimulate small food service business growth and development in the metro Denver area and to assist entrepreneurs during the start-up phase of their organizational development.

The newly constructed, fully equipped \$1.4 million, 7,900 square foot certified kitchen facility adjoins the existing Business Incubator complex. Facilities in the kitchen area have been grouped by type of food product produced. Areas include sauces (salsa, salad dressings, jams, jellies, etc.) bulk item production, bakery/baked goods, and space for caterers and food cart vendors. Plans provide space for up to four producers using the facility simultaneously. Space will be rented to producers on an hourly basis. A tenant must rent at least 10 hours per month for the first six months and 20 hours per month after that.

Strong community support has been demonstrated for the D.E.C. Kitchen Incubator. The Denver Mayor's Office of Economic Development has provided the most significant share of project funding. Other large financial supporters include the Denver Community Development Agency, the US West, Boettcher and Norwest Foundations, and Bank One.

Significant in-kind assistance has been provided by System Design International (food service facility design consultants), the Colorado Center for Community Development and Nolte & Associates Engineering. ABO-Copeland Architects of Denver prepared the architectural plans and construction drawings. Empire Construction Services was the facility general contractor.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Food producers wishing to become tenant companies at the Kitchen Incubator must first complete an application similar—although considerably expanded to reflect the food processing/preparation aspects—to that required of Business Incubator tenants (**Addendum A**). Applicants must provide a business plan outlining their proposed operation in order to be approved to use the kitchen facilities. The proposed product or operation must be feasible to be produced in this facility. The selection process will include a careful review of prospective tenant's business plan, interviews with both the Business Incubator Executive Director and the Kitchen Facility Manager, and may include screening by the Kitchen Incubator Steering Committee. Prospective tenants must demonstrate

business and marketing plan skills, as well as the financial capacity needed to execute their plan.

KITCHEN ORIENTATION

All users must attend mandatory orientation session(s) to become acquainted with the Kitchen Incubator policies, operating procedures and admission requirements. A partial list of admission requirements includes:

1. A completed application.
2. A written approved business and marketing plan.
3. Food safety and equipment use and safety training—including a current City and County of Denver Food Handler Certificate.
4. City and County of Denver licenses needed to produce the desired product and operate a business.
5. Appropriate business and product liability insurance.

FOOD AND EQUIPMENT SAFETY AND SANITATION TRAINING

All users will be required to complete the Kitchen Incubator's training course on food and equipment safety and sanitation before using the facility. All kitchen users must have a current Denver Health and Hospitals "Food Handler's Certificate" indicating passage of basic food safety and handling awareness testing, as well as any other appropriate Health and Hospitals criteria.

KITCHEN SCHEDULING

Kitchen Incubator staff will schedule kitchen use based on space availability on a first come, first reserved basis. Space will be scheduled the last week of the month for the following month. Scheduling will reflect availability of space and time in the appropriate area. Please be sure to schedule your work needs in advance to assure that space (and time) is available.

REGULAR CLEANING

The Kitchen Checklist – Inspection/Cleanliness, **Addendum B**, will be used by all tenant companies/users to help monitor cleaning activities and success in the Kitchen Incubator. The Kitchen will also be subject to regular, invited and frequent inspections by the City and County of Denver Department of Health and Hospitals inspectors.

Commercial cleaning will be performed periodically. The Kitchen Center Manager will determine frequency. Commercial cleaning **does not substitute** for individual daily cleaning.

EQUIPMENT

Equipment located in the kitchen incubator is the finest available and has been designed and equipped to provide maximize efficiency in food production. A full equipment list is attached.

STORAGE

Individual secured storage space is available for rent for walk-in freezer, cooler and dry storage. Tenant companies will be allowed to affix their own locks on each rented storage unit. The Denver Enterprise center will assume no responsibility for the security of any user items stored at the Kitchen Incubator.

Bulk dry and pallet storage space immediately adjacent to the kitchen is available for rent to tenant companies on first come, first served basis.

OFFICE SPACE

Office space is available for lease from time to time at the Center – available on a first come, first serve basis to incubator tenants. The offices are located mainly on the second floor. A common shared office will be available for kitchen users. Individual offices may be available. Rent varies depending on the size of the office. Contact the main office for more information at 303-296-9400.

ENTRANCE/ACCESS TO THE KITCHEN INCUBATOR

Tenant companies will access the facility through the main front Kitchen Center entrance/reception area. Access is monitored by an electronic keypad entry/exit system, is monitored at all times by video camera/recorders, and is connected to the Center's alarm system. Tenant Companies must punch in and punch out each time upon entering or leaving the facility.

INSURANCE & LICENSES

Each Kitchen Incubator tenant company must maintain a minimum of \$500,000 of product liability insurance and general liability insurance – with the D.E.C. listed as an additional insured in each case. Proof of such insurance must be provided to the Kitchen Manager before use of the facility will be permitted.

Each tenant must maintain at all times a current excise license (“Business Professional License”) issued by the City and County of Denver.

MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS

Only those items that will be used for human consumption will be deemed appropriate for manufacturing at D.E.C. Kitchen Incubator.

UTENSILS

The D.E.C. will provide commercial kitchen equipment for use in the manufacturing of your food products. The Center will not provide all of the equipment that may be required for production. Users must provide their own common utensils and equipment including stirring spoons, measuring cups, mixing bowl, cooking trays, etc., and any specialized equipment required.

OTHER REGULATIONS/POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ALL TENANTS MUST COMPLY:

1. Must have Food Handler's card in possession while using kitchen.
2. Wear protective hair restraints at all times. (Hair covers, beard covers).
3. Wear clean outer garments and shoes. Use disposable aprons. (No street clothes, no open toed shoes or sandals, no ball caps, and shirts or blouses must be worn).
4. Wash hands frequently with soap before starting work, and after each absence from the work area, after use of the restroom and any time hands become soiled or contaminated. Dry hands with paper towels.
5. Remove all chains or loose jewelry that might fall into food or equipment.
6. Remove all hand jewelry before manipulating or handling food.
7. No person afflicted with an open cut, infected wound, boil or communicable disease may work in any capacity in the kitchen.
8. No smoking is allowed in the kitchen, storage rooms, walk-in refrigerators, dock areas or any other part of the building.
9. No animals are permitted anywhere on the premises.
10. Wipe up spills right away and sanitize surfaces as needed during use and when production is completed.
11. No pesticides, hazardous materials or detergents may be used when preparing food products.
12. Clean up floors and mop up floor spills as needed during use and when production is completed. Kitchen must be left clean and ready for next use.
13. Dispose of empty containers, boxes and wrappers.
14. Turn off, clean and return equipment to storage position when no longer needed.
15. Wash dirty dishes, pans, pots, and utensils in the ware washing room using the furnished cleaning products and final rinse sanitizer.
16. Secure dock area, properly close doors and checkout by the proscribed procedure when leaving the kitchen facility.

The Denver Enterprise Center Kitchen Incubator was created to assist aspiring food entrepreneurs become established in the market. The successful operation of this facility requires cooperation from all tenant companies.

I have read the terms, conditions and policies as outlined above and agree to abide by. I have received a copy of the terms, conditions and policies.

SIGNED:

Name

Business Name

Date