

# In a boost for home cooks with small-business hopes, Boston will soon allow ‘retail residential kitchens’

City Councilor at Large Julia Mejia hopes the measure fosters entrepreneurial growth for chefs who can't afford brick-and-mortar rents.

By [Kara Baskin](#) Globe Correspondent, Updated April 27, 2021, 1 hour ago



City Councilor at Large Julia Mejia. ERIN CLARK / GLOBE STAFF/THE BOSTON GLOBE

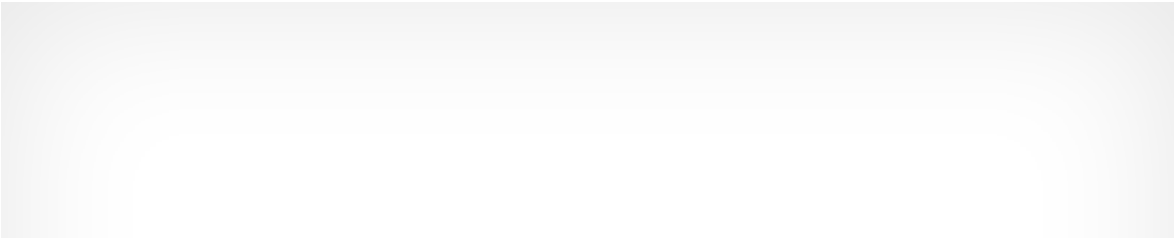
Boston food entrepreneurs will get a boost beginning on Friday, April 30, when a retail residential kitchens ordinance goes into effect. This allows home cooks to prepare shelf-stable foods in their homes for resale at farmers' markets, online, and through the mail. They can make up to \$25,000 per year.

Boston City Councilor at Large Julia Mejia introduced the ordinance after a conversation with Andree Entezari, who had relocated to Boston from Los Angeles, where he ran a fruit leather business from home. He wanted to do the same here.

“This is a way to test products that aren't cost-prohibitive,” he said. “Working out of your home reduces start-up costs and engages you in your local community. It allows you to meet others in a special way, through food.”

The ordinance passed on March 31. Residents can apply to prepare shelf-stable food (which doesn't require refrigerating or heating) from their personal kitchens; however, they can't sell products at home. Mejia said she's already heard from people who hope to make teas, tortillas, and bagels.

“This is a way to support immigrants and entrepreneurs, removing some barriers to create revenue. I also see this as a violence prevention strategy, where people can cook and watch over [their] kids at the same time. I'm trying to tackle as many issues as I can with this,” she said.



Mejia sees this as a crucial way to test recipes and build followings at farmers' markets or by selling to restaurants. Commissary kitchens and brick-and-mortar shops are often cost-prohibitive, she said. This is an easier, low-barrier route to experiment and perhaps generate supplemental income.

“This would impact small, immigrant business owners who don't have access to capital. They can't rent space or go into a commercial kitchen. This is to see if you have what it takes. We hope this will reduce the burden,” she said.

Entrepreneurs can apply [here](#).

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Kara Baskin can be reached at [kara.baskin@globe.com](mailto:kara.baskin@globe.com). Follow her on Twitter [@kcbaskin](https://twitter.com/kcbaskin).

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