

Port & airport FBOs with DO-issued licenses can operate till validity

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E-Paper

In a major relief to food business operators (FBOs) having establishments at seaports and airports and whose licenses have been issued by the state designated officers (DOs), they can now continue to function till their licenses expire. This was stated by FSSAI, the country's apex food regulator, in its recently-issued letter.

“The food authority has granted one-time relaxation to the FBOs having premises at seaports and airports who have obtained their licenses from state DOs and continue to run their business,” it added.



The letter stated that in the future, FBOs who have establishments within seaports or airport terminals, for which DOs have been notified under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, need to obtain licenses from the respective DOs. In case the DOs have not been notified, such FBOs need to obtain licenses from the respective

Central Licensing Authorities (CLAs).”

The latest letter issued by the apex regulator was in line with the earlier order dated June 17, 2018, and also with those issued in 2016 and 2015. The apex food authority, in its previously-issued letter, had directed the FBOs to meet the following criteria to get themselves licensed:

Licenses for FBOs having establishments within seaports and airports, for which DOs have been notified under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, would be issued by the respective Dos.

Licenses for FBOs having establishments within the seaports and airports, for which DOs have not been notified under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, would be issued by the respective CLAs.

All licenses already issued by the state DOs at seaports and airports will be modified by notified PHOs/APHOs as the DOs of seaports and airports and the licensing authorities at the time of renewal of existing licenses with a renewal fee but without charging any fees for modification.

Licenses for FBOs having establishments outside the seaport and airport premises would be issued by the respective DOs or CLAs as per the capacity or turnover of the food business.

However, it had come to FSSAI's notice that although the above office orders were in existence, licenses for FBOs having establishments within the seaports and airports, for which DOs have not been notified under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, have been either issued or renewed by the state DOs instead of PHOs/APHOs and CLAs. Thus, the apex food regulator, through various letters, directed that the licenses of all such FBOs whose licenses were issued or

renewed inadvertently by the state DOs need to be modified immediately.

Also, such FBOs were advised to surrender their existing licenses and apply afresh for FSSAI licenses to the concerned PHO/APHO notified as DO of seaports and airports or CLAs in cases where DOs have not been notified under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, by depositing the fee prescribed for the Central license.

Giving details on the matter, an FSSAI official handling the western region informed that in Mumbai, the food vendors inside the passenger terminals are covered by DOs for licenses under the jurisdiction of the Airport authorities. There are five establishments at JNPT, whereas about 76 at airports. Meanwhile, FSSAI has also issued report consisting a list of rejected food consignments for the month of May. There were around 16 consignments that were rejected as they didn't meet the packaging and labelling criteria and were of a sub-standard quality along with the presence of insecticide residue. The rejected consignments originated from Thailand, Korea, China, the United Kingdom, Jordan, Italy, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Australia and the United States. The products rejected included cocktail sauce, freeze chips, Omega-3 gelatine capsules, dates, apples, cinnamon, cloves, in-shell almonds and pistachios.



The official said, “In a month, less than 0.5 per cent of the consignments were rejected in testing. Rejections also happen on basis of visual inspection, if they do not comply with labelling and packaging standards. The United States, the United Kingdom, France, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, the United

Arab Emirates and China were some of the countries whose consignment were rejected.”

He added, “The sub-standard and bad-quality products are identified through visual inspection of the label and testing of the content through laboratory testing methods, and the rejected products are either reexported or destroyed in the Customs’ hold area. The product list include pulses, oil, fresh fruits, confectionery, bakery, dairy and frozen foods.”