

## La Cocina Municipal Marketplace Food Accessibility Plan: EBT RMP

### **What**

In line with our mission to provide delicious and affordable food to the residents of San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood, La Cocina's Municipal Marketplace hopes to be approved as a vendor under the Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) within CalFresh.

### **Who**

With over 30,000 residents, the Tenderloin is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods in SF, as well as one of the city's most ethnically diverse areas. It is also burdened by some of the highest poverty rates of any SF neighborhoods, and 9% unemployment, which is double that of California and national rates. Additionally, about 70% of Tenderloin housing is Single Room Occupancy, with only 39% having access to a stove.

In 2013, 33% of RMP recipients resided in the Tenderloin, SOMA, and Polk Gulch neighborhoods. That said, 40% of recipients did not report zip codes, many assumed to be experiencing homelessness<sup>1</sup>. As almost half of SF's homeless population lives in District 6<sup>2</sup>, it is likely that the percentage of RMP recipients living in the Tenderloin is closer to 75%.

### **Why**

That said, the Tenderloin hosts only 3 RMP-authorized retailers, with an additional 6 on its periphery, 5 of which serve only pizza or fast food. A La Cocina RMP would add 7 additional vendors, each offering warm meals from a variety of cultures, flavors and nutrients that more fully represent the diversity within the Tenderloin. This includes Algerian (Halal), Senegalese, Creole, Salvadorian, Mexican and Nepalese cuisines. We have received support from our local HSA office, as well as numerous residents and non-profits within the Tenderloin.

Additionally, based on 2013 numbers, we expect an est. \$2,000 in revenue per month with the added RMP approval, which will further support the family-run businesses of the marketplace.

### **How**

#### ***Option A***

The RMP application provides a few options for indicating which "Meal Service Type" we fall into, however none of the listed choices align with our goal of applying as the non-profit owner of a foodhall that will host multiple (7) for-profit vendors. It is integral to La Cocina's mission to reduce barriers faced by low-income entrepreneurs, which is why we are pursuing a more non-traditional route in submitting 1 application as a single vendor under La Cocina. Within this design, the RMP would be awarded to "La Cocina". While each vendor will have their own POS system to process EBT, all EBT funds will be directed to La Cocina, which will pay out profits to each vendor at the end of the workday, similar to Market Match.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/files/mtgsGrps/FoodSecTaskFrc/docs/FSTFRestaurantMealsProgramReport.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2019HIRDReport\\_SanFrancisco\\_FinalDraft.pdf](http://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2019HIRDReport_SanFrancisco_FinalDraft.pdf)

This option puts the least burden on our vendors, all of whom are low-income family-run restaurants managed by women of color and immigrant women. La Cocina will dedicate a full-time staff member to the management and operation of the RMP system, including any compliance training and reporting. This option is also more dignified for our customers, who will be able to purchase their meals in the same manner as everyone else.

**Option B**

Should Option A not be feasible, Option B mimics the Market Match structure at farmers markets. Like Option A, La Cocina would submit one application and the RMP would be awarded to “La Cocina” as the owner. La Cocina would have one POS system to process EBT, which would be set up in a dedicated space/booth at the Marketplace and staffed by a dedicated employee. Like Market Match, RMP recipients would swipe their card at our POS and receive tokens that they can then use at our individual vendor kiosks.

This option still avoids the burden of having the vendors apply and manage their RMP approval, however it adds an extreme financial burden on La Cocina in having to pay for a full-time staff member to provide tokens and manage our POS.

**Option C**

This final design is the most traditional. Within this option, we would have each vendor (7 total) apply for RMP as a for-profit business owner. Assuming all are awarded the RMP approval, each vendor would have their own POS system to process EBT and would be responsible and liable for all RMP compliance.

This option puts a heavy burden on our entrepreneurs, many of whom are already taking a risk in starting their first brick and mortar location. This option will likely discourage many, if not all, of our vendors from applying, due to the overwhelming application process and difficulty with technical terms in non-native languages.

	Option A	Option B	Option C
POS required <sup>3</sup>	7 Combo (reg + EBT) or 7 reg and 7 EBT	1 EBT + 7 reg	7 Combo (reg + EBT) or 7 reg and 7 EBT
Additional LC Staff Cost	\$0	~\$50,000/yr (assuming \$20/hr, 6 days/week 9hrs/day)	\$0
Additional Vendor Staff Cost	\$0	\$0	~\$5,000/yr ( 20 hr up front, & 4/week).
Burden to Entrepreneur	Low	Medium	High
Burden to La Cocina	Low	High	Medium

<sup>3</sup> Taking into account the purchasing of a combo EBT system that takes both EBT and non-EBT transactions vs two separate systems