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Assembly Bill 671

Overview

On October 9, 2025, Assembly Bill 671 (Wicks) was enacted and becomes effective on **January 1, 2026**. This law is intended to expedite restaurant tenant improvement projects and streamline the plan review process by amending the Government Code, the Business & Professions Code, and the California Retail Food Code (CRFC).

This handout focuses solely on the changes to the **California Retail Food Code**, including a newly mandated turnaround time for reviewing **resubmitted plans** for restaurant tenant improvement projects.

Statutory Reference

Assembly Bill 671 amends **Section 114380 of the Health and Safety Code** by adding subsection (f). These provisions establish specific review timelines and deemed-approval requirements for restaurant tenant improvement plan reviews.

Scope of Application

AB 671 applies **only** to restaurant tenant improvement plans.

AB 671 does **not** apply to other food facilities such as convenience stores, commissaries, or mobile food facilities or to the construction of a new building.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. When does AB 671 take effect?

January 1, 2026

2. Does AB 671 remove Environmental Health Division oversight?

No. AB 671 does **not** remove oversight by the Environmental Health Division (EHD).

Local environmental health departments will continue to conduct plan reviews and inspections to ensure compliance with applicable health and safety regulations.

3. How is a “restaurant” defined under this law?

For purposes of AB 671, a *restaurant* is defined in **Government Code Section 66345.1** as a retail food establishment that prepares, serves, and sells food directly to consumers and **is not** a fast-food restaurant as defined in **Labor Code Section 1474**.

A *fast-food restaurant* is a limited-service restaurant that: - Is part of a chain with more than 60 national locations, and - Has standardized décor, marketing, and menus

Exceptions: Locations within airports, hotels, or grocery stores are not considered fast-food restaurants.

4. What is a tenant improvement?

A *tenant improvement* is a modification to the **interior of an existing building**.

5. Has the initial plan review timeframe changed?

No. Initial tenant improvement plan reviews must still be completed within **20 business days**.

6. What is considered a “complete plan”?

AB 671 does not define a complete plan; therefore, determination is made by each jurisdiction. A complete plan submission typically includes:

- A completed plan submittal application
- A menu consistent with what will be provided to the public
- Payment successfully submitted and processed
- A complete plan set, which may include:
 - Title sheet
 - Floor plan
 - Equipment plan and equipment schedule
 - Mechanical plan and schedule
 - Plumbing plan and schedule
 - Finish plan and schedule
 - Specification sheets

- Physical finish samples
- Standard Operating Procedures (if applicable)

Note: For minor remodel projects, only applicable items are required.

7. What is the required turnaround time for resubmittals?

Plan resubmittals must be reviewed within **10 business days**. Unlike initial plan reviews, AB 671 does **not** specify that resubmittals are deemed approved if the review timeframe is exceeded.

8. Do all resubmittals qualify for the 10-business-day review?

Yes, **provided that** the resubmittal includes **only changes directly related to corrections or comments previously issued** by the Environmental Health Division.

9. What is the difference between a “Resubmittal” and a “Change of Scope”?

Resubmittals - Address only corrections identified by the Environmental Health Division - Reviewed within **10 business days**

Examples include:

- Relocating or resizing sinks, floor sinks, or floor drains per correction comments
 - Changing finish materials that were previously disapproved
 - Adding missing compliance details (e.g., cove base, backsplash height, floor slope)
 - Providing missing equipment data sheets or sanitation listings
 - Correcting labeling errors on plan sheets
 - Adjusting lighting or ventilation details as requested
 - Revising plumbing or electrical layouts solely to address cited deficiencies
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Change of Scope - Includes changes outside the issued correction letter - Includes new or expanded work, equipment, or operational changes - Reviewed within **20 business days**

Examples include:

- Adding new rooms, bars, or food preparation areas not previously shown

- Changing the type or location of major equipment (e.g., new hood or walk-in cooler)
- Expanding plumbing or electrical systems beyond prior corrections
- Modifying construction scope (e.g., converting dry storage to food preparation)
- Introducing operational changes that affect facility classification
- Adding equipment requiring referral to other agencies (CDFA, FDA, USDA)
- Submitting partial plans that conflict with previous submittals
- Changing contractor notes, installation methods, or ceiling/floor systems not previously reviewed

10. What happens if revised plans include new information?

If revised plans contain information that was **not previously reviewed**, the submission will be classified as a **Change of Scope**. The applicant will be notified as soon as feasible that the review may take up to **20 business days**. Additional comments or corrections may be issued based on the new information provided.

Restaurant Tenant Improvement Plan Review Timeline

Type of Submittal	Requirement	Review Timeframe	Notes
Initial Review	Environmental Health Department (EHD) must approve or deny a complete tenant improvement plan.	Within 20 business days	Plans are deemed approved if no action is taken within 20 business days of a complete submittal.
Resubmittal (Plans addressing only changes directly linked to Environmental Health comments or corrections)	EHD review is limited to previously identified deficiencies.	Within 10 business days	The code does not explicitly state that deemed approval applies to resubmittals; this remains open to interpretation.
Change of Scope (Plans include changes or new information outside the scope of the correction letter)	EHD review includes new information and is not considered a resubmittal.	Within 20 business days	Plans are deemed approved if no action is taken within 20 business days of a complete submittal.