

## UNATTENDED FOOD RETAIL ESTABLISHMENTS (MICRO MARKETS)

# POLICY POSITION

### **ISSUE:**

Unattended Retail or “micro markets” are the fastest growing sector of the Convenience Services Industry. They are typically located in a secure building or workplace and offer an expanded selection of fresh foods, snacks and beverages for purchase. Unlike traditional vending machines, consumers can select products from an open rack display, reach-in refrigerated coolers, or freezers before checking out at an unattended payment kiosk. Micro markets usually operate in the same amount of floor space as a typical bank of vending machines but provide an enhanced consumer experience.

NAMA has been actively engaged at all levels of government to ensure that micro markets are safely operated with business tenable state and local registration fees and health inspection standards. To this end, NAMA has secured regulations and/or laws defining micro markets in ten states and attained a national definition in the US Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Food Code in December 2019.

Due to the very recent adoption of micro market defining language in the US Food Code, many state and local health departments are still struggling with how to define micro markets and how to properly set registration fees as well as health inspection standards.

### **NAMA POSITION:**

NAMA supports the definition of micro markets published in the US Food Code in 2019 and advocates for its adoption by all 50 states and local health departments.

Additionally, NAMA advocates:

- 1) For a streamlined micro market licensing process across all jurisdictions; and
- 2) Urges state and local health agencies to implement policies exempting micro market locations from burdensome processes including, but not limited to, pre-inspection licensing fees and plan and review submissions intended for restaurants and convenience stores.