

Hello Everyone,

My name is Haiwei Ouyang and I am the owner of the Pagoda Smoothies food cart. I'm writing this letter to offer an explanation on why I missed 5 days of the food review and hopefully gain your understanding and recuperate the points I lost because of the missed days.

The food review points are very important to me as I am trying my best to keep my food cart placement. With a smoothie cart, there is only a short season throughout the year where I have good business. The farmer's market coincides with this season and if I lose my Saturday spot, my regular customers will have a harder time finding my food cart, making it also difficult for me to have good business earnings.

I know that some food carts only opened 2-3 days a week because they were short workers. Even though I don't have any employees, I tried to open every day for the food reviewers. However, I did run into some difficulties during the food review time period. I am a mother and have a 12-year-old daughter. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, schools have been much stricter with students being sick or being in contact with anyone who has been sick. Two of the days that I missed the food review was due to my daughter being sick or being in contact with a friend who was sick. I had to pick her up and bring her home. There was even one day where my daughter was sick and I brought her home, but still went to work, because I didn't want to miss another day of the food review. During this time, I had to unfortunately leave my daughter home alone.

The other 3 days that I missed was due to myself being sick. On one of these days, I talked to Erik. He told me that if I was sick or couldn't be present for the food review, I could email the manager. From September 25 - September 28, I was seriously sick. I was coughing with a sore throat and had a stomachache and headache as well. I was too sick to open my food cart and even if I could, I didn't want to serve beverages to customers while being so sick. This felt irresponsible to do. I emailed the manager to let them know that I was sick and to let the food reviewer know.

In summation, with the new policies surrounding the food review, I have had some challenges in adjusting and keeping up with the demerits. As a mother, I have to prioritize my daughter over my business. And with Covid-19, and the stricter policies surrounding sick students, it's been a challenge to juggle opening the food cart with keeping my daughter home with these stricter school guidelines. Similarly, I had to take some days off for myself when I was more seriously sick. With these reasons in mind, I would ask that you consider returning the docked points for my food review score.

Thank you,

Haiwei Ouyang