

**Please enter your business name here as you would like it to appear on your trophy and any marketing materials**

Back on the Beach Cafe

**Business Logo**



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**Business Address**

445 Pacific Coast Hwy  
Santa Monica California 90402 US

**Business Website**

[www.backonthebeachcafe.com](http://www.backonthebeachcafe.com)

**Brief description of product(s) and/or services your company provides.**

restaurant, catering, beach rentals and sundries

**Number of years in operation**

30

**Santa Monica Chamber member?**

Yes

**Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees?**

24

**How did you hear about the SQA program?**

Sustainable Works

**Award**

Economic Development > Medium (16-99 Employees)

**Page: Economic Development****ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Describe Efforts that Demonstrate Your Organization's Commitment to the Long-term Economic Sustainability of its Operations and to Sustaining the Local and Regional Economy

Businesses that provide products and services are aware that customer needs change over time. A sustainable organization is able to accommodate these changing needs, maintain economic viability and encourage sustainable economic development by balancing profits with a consideration for long-term development. Your response should include your company's quality policy, your process for evaluating product and service performance, and your efforts for improvement. Your response should also encompass your company's contribution to the development of the local economy (creation of jobs and business opportunities), and/or company efforts to increase efficiency and reduce costs in operations.

**1. Please provide a copy of your business's mission statement, vision or core values.**

Our mission is simple: To make a life and livelihood for ourselves, which includes the staff, by providing healthy, delicious, sustainable and affordable food in a friendly and inviting environment to our local and visiting guest patrons at our particular spot on the iconic Santa Monica coastline. We believe that we have been largely successful in our efforts. Back on the Beach Cafe has been a staple for 30 years, since 1989. Even before this, Fred Deni operated The Oceanhouse Cafe, a dinner house, in the same spot, from 1979 - December 1981 and then opened Back on Broadway in Santa Monica from 1982 - present.

A devoted group of regular patrons use the cafe as a focal point to experience this coastal park. We are deeply familiar with the seasonal fluctuations of the beach, and the years have brought us site-specific knowledge about operating here at 445 Pacific Coast Highway, from knowledge of traffic patterns, to managing with limited parking, as well as being familiar with the coastal and city regulations and restrictions. We have nurtured a very good working relationship with the majority of our neighboring residents and have a strong working relationship with our site-partner the Annenberg Community Beach House.

**2. Please provide any supporting document regarding your business's mission statement, vision, or core values.**

[Download File](#)

**3. How has your business's operations and revenue contributes to the wealth of your employees and the surrounding community?**

Invest our profit in training/skilling our employees, Share your profit in the form of offering greater employee benefits for our employees, Invest profits into creating new jobs/ hiring local, Invest profit back into the community, The growth and expansion of our business benefits the employees, stakeholders and the community

**4. Tell us your business's story regarding revenue generation contributing to the wealth of your employees, stakeholders, or community.**

After three decades of being in business, we believe we are in tune with the pulse of much of the local community and what it takes to generate revenue for all involved in our business, as our gross sales have continued to increase annually (see attached). Our core identity is primarily as a beach cafe but, always looking for ways to generate additional revenue, we also have a thriving catering business and provide beach rentals and sundries. The cafe is open year-round for breakfast and lunch, and to capitalize on seasonal revenue opportunities, in the summers, we extend our hours to include dinner service, as well as open our short order takeaway window and our beach rentals cart. To maximize our revenue during the summer, we increase our staff (i.e., our staff is three to four times larger in July and August than it is in January and February). In addition to benefitting our employees and stakeholders, capitalizing on these revenue opportunities also benefit our community, from which much of our staff is hired. We hire and train many local kids from Santa Monica High School, Crossroads, Santa Monica City High School and the Police Activities League. California Restaurant Association's data (<https://www.calrest.org/wages/wages-0>) shows that, in regions with the highest minimum wages in California, there has been a drop in teen and youth employment in the restaurant community, because, as entry level wages shoot up, many restaurants simply cannot offer first-time employment opportunities to relatively untrained youth at such a high cost. However, at Back on the Beach, all of our non-tipped employees begin earning above the minimum wage. Additionally, many of these employees begin at a entry level position but climb earn higher pay and more responsibilities. Fortunately much of the seasonal staff returns summer after summer for several years. Working

with local staff is extremely rewarding and mutually beneficial, as their families and friends often become patrons as well.

In addition to providing jobs for the local community, Back on the Beach has been extremely active in supporting local charities and community programs. In order to contribute to the wealth of the community, we share both our time and our money. Owner Fred Deni has been sponsoring a free and noteworthy Thanksgiving dinner for Santa Monica seniors since 1979 at our sister restaurant Back on Broadway. The seniors themselves are organized and transported with the help of Santa Monica's WISE & Healthy Aging. This past year was typical, as we fed approximately 400 seniors with the help of many familiar volunteers who return year after year. Over the years, Fred has sponsored the Fred Deni Culinary Program at Santa Monica's Police Actives League, as well as Dancing Squirrel, a Christmas show for underprivileged children. We donate gift certificates to local silent auctions (i.e., Canyon School, Hill & Dale Family Learning Center, Mt Olive Lutheran Preschool) and donate leftover food to OPCC, as well as the Westside Ballet. Fred has also been an ongoing board member of Santa Monica's Ruskin Group Theatre and has sponsored their monthly "cafe plays" for several years. Fred has also been an ongoing board member on the Santa Monica College Advisory Board. In addition, he has been a board member for the Santa Monica Arts Foundation and was part of the working group for the Santa Monica Civic Center. In 1996, he spearheaded a teddy bear drive for Bosnian war orphans and personally delivered about 10,000 of them that were locally collected. Similarly, owner Jim Christel has been a longtime member of the Sierra Club (Angeles Chapter), WTC (Wilderness Travel Course), Tree People, The Los Angeles County Beekeepers Association, Planned Parenthood and KCRW (Santa Monica) & KCSN (Northridge) local public radio stations, and frequently participates in their programs and events. Back on the Beach is an active member of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and Buy Local Santa Monica.

**5. Please provide any supporting document regarding your business's plans for future revenue generation.**

[Download File](#)

**6. Which of the following is integrated in your business plan and operations regarding your long term commitment to implementation?**

Diversification strategy of products and services, Policies in place to promote product and service innovation, particularly in response to or in anticipation of changing customer needs, Strategies for remaining competitive in the areas of customer satisfaction with a focus on price, quality and service, Awareness of marketplace conditions and your commitment to providing high quality products and service at a fair price, Commitment to R +D on product development, supply chain development or other efforts to improve your products and services, Commitment to buying local

**7. Tell us your business's story regarding your near-term and long-term sustainable economic development strategy?**

Despite the ebbs and flows of changing trends and tastes in the restaurant industry, Back on the Beach Cafe and has remained a mainstay, and this is because of our near- and long-term sustainable economic development strategy: the ability to acclimate. We regularly evaluate which products are selling well and which are not and adjust accordingly.

Another strategy is conducting market testing and research. All current menu items were first tested as menu item specials. We incorporate several items and later drop them as their luster diminishes. This strategy has enabled us to gain valuable insight into market conditions in the restaurant industry. Rosé wine has risen in appeal while merlots have faded. Kale, crispy grilled Brussels sprouts, Avocado Toast have remained popular since their meteoric rise a few years ago while Acai juice has come and gone. Local craft beers, plant-based and sustainable items are likely to remain in the foreground.

Our economic success is at the mercy of customer tastes. Santa Monica is a relatively wealthy community. Its patrons expect a certain level of quality and want to know where their food comes from. Our offerings include Mary's Free-Range Chicken , local cage-free eggs, organic coffee and teas, grass-fed beef and sustainable fish guided by Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch buying guide.

An additional sustainable economic development strategy we employ is reputation management. Knowing how important a business' reputation is, we participate in programs that solidify our business' standing and then proudly advertise these achievements (i.e., placing stickers on our front door, etc.). These accolades include our status as a Santa Monica Certified Green Business, as well as receiving a Certificate of Excellence from TripAdvisor (#80 out of 542 restaurants; see attached) and a Google

rating of 4 out of 5 stars. We also participate in popular programs that gain us a following. These include Meatless Mondays, and Meatless March and Santa Monica's Buy Local campaign.

Lastly, an incredibly important near- and long-term sustainable economic development strategy of Back on the Beach's is keeping up with the times, putting money back into the business and investing in tools and updated technologies that are going to help us succeed. Years ago, sales representatives were regular visitors inside the office, yet, now, most ordering is done online. Because of this, our restaurant POS system is likely the most important factor to increasing efficiency and reducing costs. The POS system streamlines operations from server/patron to kitchen operations and is depended upon for financial and inventory evaluations, etc.

To stay current and ensure our near- and long-term sustainable economic development, approximately two years ago, we invested in a new Aloha brand POS system for \$40,000. (see attached). We expanded the system to include eight hand-held electronic devices, called the Orderman 7, for our servers to use at the tables for ordering and credit card payments. This has greatly helped efficiency. Another effective economic strategy of ours is to make educated decisions about the business that are backed up by research. Before landing on the Aloha POS system, we conducted research and considered many different brands and systems, most of which were much less expensive but not as well-suited to our particular needs. However, the Orderman 7 was the only mobile device we could find at the time whose screen could be clearly seen in outside bright daylight unlike many off-the-shelf computer tablets at the time. Simple electronic tablets are harder to read and therefore may create an emotional distance between server and patron. The Ordermans bumped up our cost an additional \$18,000 but the additional investment has been well worth it. Making decisions that are in line with our values and investing in our business are what has helped us and what will continue to help us safeguard our business' near-term and long-term economic development.

**8. Please provide any supporting document regarding your business economic development strategy**

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**9. How does your business improve the productivity of individual employees, groups of employees and operations?**

Employee skills development (Trainings, conferences, etc.), Team building (staff retreats, outings, celebrations, etc.), Work-life balance options (Daycare, Telecommuting, etc.), Positive Work Environment (Employee surveys/feedback, open-door policy, etc.)

**10. How does your business demonstrate commitment to creating quality jobs (jobs of dignity for individuals) as well as job growth in the community?**

Skill variety in job requirements, task significance, and participation in decision making, Training programs to create ongoing development and diversification of employee skill sets, Opportunities for employees to grow in business

**11. Tell us more about your business's effort to improve productivity and provide any additional details about programs and trainings.**

One way that we work to improve efficiency is by utilizing our POS system to streamline operations. It is essential for financial and inventory evaluations. To improve our productivity. Owners, Fred Deni and Jim Christel, and the core staff team members (GM, Catering Director, 2 chefs, and lead servers) consistently evaluate product and service performance during regularly scheduled meetings. We recently invested in a new POS which has increased productivity.

Decades ago we ordered virtually everything from one of a few mega distributors such as SE Rykoff (now US Foods) and/or Sysco. We are now more diversified (meaner & leaner!). Several times a week we drive to, and select, much of our fruits and vegetables ourselves at the LA wholesale Produce Market in downtown LA, or buy hand-picked items at the SM Farmer's Market. Now, also pick up a majority of our beverages, paper products, etc. from Restaurant Depot warehouse in Culver City with our cargo van. In this digital age it is much easier to 'shop around' online making us less dependent on these mega distributors as we once were, and can now negotiate better pricing should we choose to purchase from them.

Another effort that enables us to be more efficient is by investing time and money into our employees. Because of this effort, we have been able to maintain a high employee retention rate, including minimizing our employee turnover from season-to-season, thus improving productivity. We don't have to train all new people each season because have many re-hires for several summer seasons in row. We both grudgingly and happily accommodate to some seasonal staff members scheduling complications as we know they often have a primary year-round job and we are their

secondary seasonal job.

Productivity is enhanced by our mom & pop business perks such as a completely free meal each shift. Coffee, sodas, ice tea, lemonade are all free all the time while working. We have several team-building events each year, ie. December holiday parties, bowling nights about twice a year, and an end-of-summer beach party. We pay for all ServSafe Food handlers certificates (servsafe.com) for full time employees.

We recognize and foster good relationships. This is evidenced by the fact that 6 of our core staff team-members have each worked for us on average of 25 years each. Our bi-lingual GM began working as a short order cook in the summer-only Take Away Window 10 years ago and is now our GM. He put himself through business school and proved himself as extremely reliable and dependable. His brother is now co-chef at the restaurant. We foster these types of relationships and have built an atmosphere of trust.

Cross training in various departments is key mutually beneficial for both the business and for each employee to learn new and multiple skills and can thereby move into different areas of operations as needed. Hosts learn barista skills and cashier skills (ordering on a pos system and navigating through it's extensive data bases takes training and practice). All kitchen staff, aka back-of-the-house and/or heart-of-the-house staff, learn food prep skills, Safety and Sanitation skills, such as how to properly use the wall-mount (cleaning) chemical systems of Butler Chemicals Co that we've contracted with. We arrange for their field reps to provide group instruction and review in both English and Spanish. Time & Temperature testings are a group activity and responsibility, station by station.

We've had several decades of experience and truly understand our business to make it profitable and hopefully enjoyable to all those involved.

**12. Please provide any supporting document regarding your business's productivity.**

No File Uploaded

Please upload any additional supporting materials you wish the judges to also take into consideration when reviewing your application. You are able to upload any file type below.



**Supporting Material #1**

[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

No

**Page: Confirmation**

**Self-Certification**

I certify that I meet all above listed requirements

**To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is accurate.**

I agree

**By entering my name here, I acknowledge that this acts as my signature.**

Jim Christel

**Award**

Stewardship of the Natural Environment > Medium (16-99 Employees)

**Page: Stewardship of the Natural Environment**

**STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Describe the Efforts that Demonstrate Your Company’s Commitment to Sustaining the Natural Environment**

A healthy environment is essential to ensure the long-term economic viability of a business and community. Pollution and overuse of resources can impact everything from the availability of raw materials for manufacturing, to the number of tourists that visit your community and support the local economy. Your response should not only include efforts you have taken to comply with environmental regulations, but also voluntary measures to address waste reduction, pollution prevention and resource conservation. Examples of these measures may include company-wide purchasing policies specifying recycled content products or products with minimal packaging, operational changes that eliminate the use of toxic chemicals or reduce waste generation, or the implementation of an energy-efficiency, water conservation or recycling program.

**1. What energy conservation measures has your business implemented?**

Installation of energy efficient HVAC, Lighting Upgrades, Upgrading equipment, Modifying processes to reduce energy use, Policies and practices in place to support conserving energy, Education on energy conservation for staff

**2. What water saving measures has your business implemented?**

Installation of water conserving toilets and fixtures, Drought tolerant landscaping, Upgrading equipment to reduce water use, Policies and practices in place to support conserving water, Education on water conservation for staff

**3. What waste reduction measures has your business implemented?**

Policies to reduce paper use (i.e. double sided printing), Recycling program for mixed paper, cans, glass, and plastic, Modifying equipment or processes to reduce manufacturing waste, Efforts to reduce product packaging, Organics collections for food waste and soiled paper, Policies and practices in place to support reducing waste, Education on waste reduction for staff

**4. What pollution prevention measures has your business implemented?**

Proper storage and disposal of hazardous materials, Use of environmentally-preferred cleaning products, Efforts to reduce storm water runoff, Upgrading equipment or modifying processes to reduce hazardous materials use and waste generation, Sell products made with recycled content, Sell products made with organic or environmentally-preferred ingredients/materials

## **5. Tell us your business's story regarding natural resource conservation efforts.**

Environmental stewardship and natural resource conservation have always been of great concern to Back on the Beach. We are a City of Santa Monica Certified Green Business and also received an SQA Excellence Award in Stewardship of the Natural Environment in 2017.

In regards to energy conservation, we maintain and refurbish our equipment and furniture and only replace items when they cannot be fixed. If we must purchase new appliances, we make sure to purchase Energy Star ones. We use thermal coffee pots, which retain their heat, instead of bottom-heated ones. Our walk-in refrigerator has inner door 'cool curtain' clear strips to help retain cold when the outer door is open. We prefer naturally cooling our restaurant, as we utilize ceiling fans, and our dining rooms are lined with screened windows we often keep open. We have never even utilized our air conditioning unit that was installed 10 years ago. Our windows have a solar-tinted film for heat rejection in the summer and are double-paned to aid heat retention in the winter. On those off-season chillier days, we have the heating system set to the low 70s and we make sure to turn it off before we close. We do not have outdoor heaters. In the summer of 2015, we replaced the majority of our already energy efficient, mercury-conscious, green-tipped fluorescent kitchen light tubes with LED fixtures. Our exterior lighting and restrooms are a mix of compact fluorescents and LEDs. The restroom appliances have motion sensor activation. We replaced our aged restroom doors, which are accessed from the outside, to include several inches of air gap at the tops and bases of the doors in order to improve ventilation and allow in natural exterior light. The few hot water pipes that briefly run exterior of the building are covered with "pipe wrap insulation." Our utility bills are regularly tracked with the help of Portfolio Manager at [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov). Our dishwasher is state of the art and low temperature. We installed an office vented-skylight which brings in natural light and keeps the office vented and cool.

Back at the Beach has put into place various water saving measures. Our restrooms are a great example of this: not only do we have stickers in our restrooms reminding people to use water wisely, we also have water efficient appliances in the restrooms. Our restroom sinks and staff hand-washing sinks have 0.5 GPM faucet aerators and we have a waterless urinal in the men's restroom. Similarly, our outside faucet can only be turned on with the use of a metal hand key because we found that many beach-goers were using it too liberally. In compliance with city ordinances, we only serve water to customers upon request. Our outdoor decks, walkways and cement areas are regularly swept clean instead of hose-cleaned. Biodegradable Simple Green degreaser is used in spot cleaning with a lot of elbow grease and a good brush broom. In regards to dishwashing, pots and pans are pre-soaked which lessens the need for several runs through the dishwasher. Our dishwasher is only run when its racks are full, after hand scraping. We switched from a water-cooled ice machine to an air cooled one several years ago. We are incredibly fortunate to live in a municipality that seriously encourages waste reduction. We have not only trash bins but mixed use recycle bins and food scraps/waste bins provided to us by the City of Santa Monica. We have three color coded plastic bins strategically placed at several places within our restaurant for employees to use: blue for mixed use recycling, black for trash and green for food scraps. Our office, front server area, dish washing area and several places in the kitchen area all have distinct color Slim Jim receptacles to assist in proper recycling facilitation. Of our three large (city-managed) bins outside the kitchen door, the mixed use recycle bin is always the first to fill up. I would estimate that, from years ago when there was only one [trash] dumpster, we have diverted 90% to mixed-use recycling and food waste for our restaurant.

We purchase all supplies possible (e.g., food stuffs, office supplies, janitorial) in bulk. Single use disposable containers are only used for takeaway orders. We offer a 25-cent discount to those ordering coffee to go if they bring their own reusable thermal coffee cup or sippy-type cup for soft drinks. If a customer or general beach-goer wants a glass of water to go, we let them know that it is free if they drink it from a non-disposable glass at the restaurant. However, if they want a disposable cup to go, we charge a 25-cent fee. Our servers use handheld ordering devices from our Aloha POS system. This has helped to minimize our paper waste, as, prior to investing in our Aloha POS system, our servers used to write down orders on (scrap) paper and then reenter them on the inside station terminals. Additionally, to conserve/minimize waste, we have our office printer set to print double-sided, and we all scrap paper is collected and reused in the form of note paper. Back on the Beach's owners propagate orchids behind the restaurant in the back garden and reuse them as decoration both in the restaurant and for catering.

**6. Please provide any supporting documentation.**

No File Uploaded

**7. Does your business maintain procurement policies for the environmentally preferred version of the following products:**

Paper and office supplies, Food, Cleaning supplies, Food Ware (i.e. plates, cups, utensils), Building materials, Furnishings, Energy efficient equipment, Water efficient equipment, Renewable energy, Previously used furniture supplies or materials

## **8. Tell us your business's story regarding procurement policies and practices.**

Back on the Beach Cafe has streamlined much of our purchasing to include more environmentally friendly products. Our paper and office supplies meet the requirements of a City of Santa Monica Green-Certified business. Our take away paper bags and multifold paper towels have a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content and are unbleached. Our paper dinner napkins have a minimum 30% Post Consumer Recycled Content (PCRC) and are unbleached. The toilet paper has 20% PCRC. We

utilize Neenah brand office white envelopes, which are 30% PCRC, as well as Neenah's multipurpose paper, which is 30% PCRC. Our menus are printed on Neenah's "ENVIRONMENT® Paper," premium post consumer fiber papers manufactured under sustainable practices. Additionally, because the IRS requires us keep several years of paperwork and because we need to retain proof of potentially disputed credit card chargebacks, we keep manila envelopes of daily paperwork (guest checks with credit card copies, etc.) and after a few years, we shred and recycle the contents but we keep the manila envelopes and document boxes for future use. We've been reusing these envelopes and cardboard document for many years.

As far as procurement policies for our food, we consistently procure high-quality sustainable foods for our business. Back on the Beach's offerings include Mary's Free-Range Chicken, local cage-free eggs and grass-fed beef. We procure organic coffee from Intelligentsia, which is the first business to adopt Direct Trade practices in the industry. Similarly, we procure organic teas from Shangri La Tea Company which "grows and harvests [its] teas in accordance with the strictest internationally recognized environmental standards." Teas from Shangri La Tea Company are certified by The Rainforest Alliance™ and USDA's National Organic Program (NOP), among other reputable organizations. We purchase sustainable fish guided by Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch, Monterey Bay Aquarium's sustainable seafood buying guide. We order our fish and seafood from Santa Monica Seafood and its partner FishChoice, which is always rated by Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch as either a "best choice" or a "good alternative." Our tuna salad is wild albacore tuna which is caught using the sustainable "poll and troll" method. Additionally, we procure our produce, beef, chicken and dairy all come locally from the state of California.

For cleaning supplies, we largely procure Butler Chemicals' janitorial products. Butler Chemicals' glass cleaner is non-toxic, and its no-rinse floor cleaner is enzyme-based instead of detergent-based. We utilize non-chlorinated powdered cleanser. We employ Simple Green's biodegradable industrial degreaser for the spot-cleaning of our outdoor area, and, for our catering, we use Blaze's bio-based chafing fuel made from ethanol.

We prefer refurbishing existing office and dining room, when possible, to buying new. For example, when the height adjustment air spring broke on Jim's office desk chair, we repaired it instead of purchasing a new one. Although the chair is no longer able to adjust to various heights, it is sufficient for our modest needs. Additionally, we have two sets of indoor wooden chairs. We have been using one set of chairs for approximately 20 years old and the other for 10 years. Instead of purchasing new chairs, we had our maintenance man sand and refinish the older ones so that we could get more mileage out of them. Our outside in-the-sand plastic chairs were purchased 10 years ago and we re-sand and re-paint them about every two years. (We love these outdoor plastic chairs, which are virtually indestructible and stackable and whose legs lean outward for more safety in the sand. They are not manufactured anymore, so we have bought additional used ones found on Ebay.)

As far as "energy and water efficient equipment" is concerned, we have a monthly maintenance contract with Nadine Refrigeration who maintains our coolers and other equipment. If Nadine is unable to repair a piece of our equipment, we have a policy of replacing it with Energy Star-certified equipment. Additionally, we procure and utilize thermal coffee pots, which retain heat, instead of glass flasks, which require ongoing heating. Our ice machine is air/fan-cooled instead of our previous one, which was water-cooled. Our walk-in refrigerator has an inner plastic flap cool curtain to help keep cold air inside.

## **9. Please provide any supporting documentation.**

[Download File](#)

**10. What measures has your business implemented to reduce traffic congestion and the pollution associated with transportation?**

Provide information on alternative transportation in employee manual or to new hires, Encourage non-vehicle trips to meetings and lunches, Flexible schedules

**11. Is your business an employer with 30+ full-time employees?**

No

**12. Tell us your business's story regarding carbon emissions reduction.**

We encourage reduction of carbon emissions in every way we can. We encourage our employees to take public transport, ride their bikes or rideshare. To incentivize employees to do this, every day that an employee uses one of these modes of transportation both to and from work, his/her name is put into a raffle for a monthly drawing, resulting in a prize (i.e., prizes include a little cash attached to a fun gift such as theater tickets, box of See's chocolates, etc.). At our WTP kiosk, we stock helpful public transport information, and these materials are also included in our new employee orientations. We keep a bicycle air pump on site for anyone, including beach-goers and customers to use as needed. There are several public bike racks around our restaurant, as well as on-site at the Annenberg Community Beach House. The Santa Monica Breeze Bike Share docking station is located next to our café, and several employees utilize these bikes to ride to the Ocean Avenue Big Blue Bus stops. The public bikes are also a convenient and popular option with many customers, especially since beach parking and congestion is can be so challenging. Although electric (assist) bikes and electric scooters are currently not allowed on Santa Monica's beach bike path, we have been making it known to various Santa Monica City Counsel members that, once the planned second pedestrian-only path is built alongside the current one, we are in support of these electric scooters, etc. being allowed on the bike path.

Buying local is another way we do our part to help reduce carbon emissions. Our produce, beef, chicken and dairy all come locally from the state of California. Additionally, we buy California peeled garlic instead of the cheaper Asian-grown one which requires being shipped from far away.

In order to be carbon emission-conscious, we purchase Energy Star equipment and vocally support the local city and state to impose higher environmental standards. We also participate in Meatless Mondays and procure many of our ingredients locally, which minimizes the carbon emissions associated with the transportation of these supplies.

**13. Please provide any supporting documentation.**

No File Uploaded

**14. How does your company integrate environmental practices and policies into employee manuals and staff meetings?**

Participated in the City's Green Business Program, Green Business Certified by City of Santa Monica, Training and education on environmental topics, Discussion or presentations on environmental topics at regular staff meetings, Other

**Please explain:**

**15. What additional environmental efforts has your business implemented?**

Planted outdoor trees or greenery, Purchased plants for indoor air quality

**16. What measures has your business taken to support environmental organizations?**

Financial donations, In-kind contributions, Participating in local green programs or environmental campaigns

**Annual donation amount:**

\$2,000

**Annual in-kin hours/donation value:**

\$2,000.

## **17. Tell us your business's story regarding environmental policies and training.**

As a Santa Monica Certified Green Business, and stewards of the natural environment, we are mindful of our policies and protocols. Proper recycling is a main protocol at Back on the Beach, and we train our staff accordingly. Our internal plastic bins are uniformly color coded in both the kitchen and front of the house service area. Blue is for mixed use recycling of paper, (appropriate) plastic, glass, and metal, Green is for food scraps including soiled paper, and the smaller black receptacles are for trash . It is our policy to purchase all supplies possible (e.g., food stuffs, office supplies, janitorial) in bulk. It is protocol for us to print double-sided, and we collect and utilize scrap paper. In an effort to incentivize conservation and stewardship of the natural environment, it is our policy to offer a 25-cent discount to those ordering coffee to go if they bring their own reusable thermal coffee cup or sippy-type cup for soft drinks, and, conversely, to charge 25-cents for disposable to go cup.

It is protocol for us to use an old fashion broom to regularly sweep our outdoor decks, walkways and cement areas instead of hose-cleaning them. Similarly, prior regards to running pots and pans through the dishwasher over and over, our policy is to pre-soak these.

It is our policy to minimize pollution as much as possible, and we train our staff on ways to do this. It is our protocol to appropriately store chemicals in their original containers and well away from food. We procure non-toxic cleaning supplies. All of our dishwasher chemicals, as well as the majority of our janitorial chemicals come from a company called Butler. A benefit of procuring Butler products is that its concentrated chemicals are mechanically mixed to proper concentrations in automated wall-mount systems, instead of mixed by employees based on estimates.

Butler also provided contracted company field personnel to come out on a regular basis for testing, service and maintenance as well as periodic bilingual group training presentation on how to use their chemicals and their wall-mount dispenser system station. To make sure our staff is well-trained on these practices, we have our managers shadow Butler's personnel in order to learn but also scrutinize Butler's service reports. Butler provides us with printed, bilingual, peel-off, adhesive labels for secondary containers (i.e., refillable spray bottles). As per protocol, we store these reusable – therefore more sustainable – containers on a designated shelf by the mop sink.

Rather than constantly purchasing new equipment, it is our policy to regularly perform maintenance on and – when possible – refurbish existing equipment and furniture. Regarding pest control, rather than use fumigation, it is our practice to use a bait and trap system. It is our practice to collect light bulbs, printer cartridges and batteries in specific receptacles in the office and dispose of them appropriately.

It is Back on the Beach's practice to participate in programs that promote stewardship of the natural environment. For example, we take part in "Meatless Mondays" and were also involved in "Meatless in March 2018."

It is also Back on the Beach's practice to volunteer with environmental organizations. Back on the Beach's owners have been longtime members of Angles Sierra Club and TreePeople ([treepeople.org](http://treepeople.org)), Los Angeles County Beekeepers Association, as well as Wildernes Travel Course ([wildernesstravelcourse.org](http://wildernesstravelcourse.org)). We have periodically volunteered with TreePeople on the Urban Forestry Tree Plantings that take place along West L.A.'s sidewalks and its Mountain Forestry Tree Plantings that take place around Malibu and Topanga. We periodically donate food to Sustainable Works' and Heal the Bay's events. Additionally, although it is not primarily an environmental group, we are longtime contributors to Planned Parenthood, as we believe that the exponential growth of human population may be the biggest threat to the planet's ecosystem.

## **18. Please provide any supporting documentation.**

No File Uploaded

Please upload any additional supporting materials you wish the judges to also take into consideration when reviewing your application. You are able to upload any file type below.



## Supporting Material



[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

Yes

**Supporting Material #2**

[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

**Page: Confirmation**

**Self-Certification**

I certify that I meet all above listed requirements

**To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is accurate.**

I agree

**Award**

Social Responsibility > Medium (16-99 Employees)

**Page: Social Responsibility**

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

**Describe Efforts that Demonstrate Your Organization’s Commitment to Sustain Human Resources**

Sustainable businesses recognize that the long-term viability of a business is dependent on the quality of jobs and the personal and professional development of the people who make up the community. Good business citizenship also necessitates the continuing involvement with and support of activities that contribute to the quality of life in the community.

When answering each question, remember to highlight how your business stands out as an innovator in terms of social responsibility compared to others in your industry. Explain how your company goes above and beyond in each area. The judges encourage applicants to attach supporting documentation for each item where applicable. (i.e. employee manual, policy and procedures, employee survey form, training description/flyer, employee evaluation form, internship job description, list of charity/community support)

**1. What work-life options does your company provide to employees?**

Flextime, Sick Time, Family Leave, Bereavement Leave, Extended Leave Provisions, Overtime Compensation, Recognition of Contemporary Family Services

**2. What benefits does your company provide to employees beyond standard medical benefits?**

Medical Insurance

**3. What programs does your company offer to develop skills and employability?**

On-The-Job Skills

**4. What training and educational opportunities beyond job-related do you offer your employees?**

Work-Life Balance

**5. How do you solicit employees' feedback in designing benefit plans that are flexible?**

Open Door Policy

## **6. Tell us your story about the work-life options your business provides**

Back on the Beach has been in operation for 30 years. We are primarily thought of as a beach cafe but we also have a thriving catering business and we extend our hours in the summers to include dinner service and open our takeaway window and beach rentals cart. Our staff triples each summer.

We are committed to social responsibility in the workplace and sustain human resources. Several staff team-members have worked for us on average of 25 years each. (their initials, for privacy reasons: A.M, R.A, A.F, L.A. H.G., S.J. and our retired former bookkeeper M.L) Our bi-lingual GM began working as a short order cook in the summer Take Away window 10 years ago and is now our GM. He put himself through business school and proved himself as extremely reliable and dependable. His brother is now co-chef at the restaurant. We recognize and foster these types of relationships and have built an atmosphere of trust.

It is not typical for small to medium independent restaurants to offer health insurance (see attached) but we offer it to our year-round, full-time staff (30+ hours). We pay half of their health insurance policy sold through our agent at Good Circle Insurance who offers a variety of types of health insurance. We began this a few years ago and approximately half of the qualified employees joined or switched over to our coverage. We pay for all ServSafe Food handlers certificates (servsafe.com) for full time employees. Each employee gets 72 hours sick pay. For our seasonal staff, both full or part time, we both grudgingly and happily accommodate to their scheduling complications, as we know they often already have a primary year-round job and we are their secondary job, or are students with internships, family (ie vacation) and summer school needs. Students can be particularly challenging as many leave in early August, which is our busiest month. Regardless, we are committed to hiring locally and do not use H2B temporary visa staff who don't need to be accommodated to (like Trump's Mar-a-Lago in FL. according to the LA Times). Many local kids are from Samohi, Crossroads, SMCI and the Police Activities League. California Restaurant Association's data (<https://www.calrest.org/wages/wages-0>) shows that, in regions with the highest minimum wages in California, there has been a drop in teen and youth employment in the restaurant community, because, as entry level wages shoot up, many restaurants simply cannot offer first-time employment opportunities to relatively untrained youth at such a high cost. All of our non-tipped employees begin earning above the minimum wage. Several begin at an entry level but climb, earn higher pay and more responsibilities. Fortunately much of the seasonal staff returns summer after summer for several years in a row..

Cross training is very important. Each learns new and multiple skills and can thereby move into different areas of operations as needed. Hosts learn barista skills and cashier skills (ordering on a pos system and navigating through it's extensive data bases takes training and practice). All kitchen staff learn food prep skills, Safety and Sanitation skills, such as how to properly use the chemical cleaning system of Butler Chemicals Co that we've contracted with. We arrange for the company's field reps to provide group instruction and review in both English and Spanish. Additionally, Time & Temperature testings are a group activity and responsibility, station by station.

Although the year-round staff contribute the most to having a say in operations. Problem solving is absolutely a group effort. Questions, comments, concerns are discussed in regular periodic staff meetings as a group, in addition to individualized orientation, training, and evaluations. When there is a problem, management does not say 'there is a problem, this is how we are going to fix it..', but rather 'there is a problem, how are we going to fix it...?'.

## **7. Please include any supporting documents regarding work-life options**

[Download File](#)

## **8. How does your business create a positive work environment?**

Paying fair wages , Promoting diversity/equitability employing minorities, Encouraging initiatives and free-thinking during meetings, Providing a platform for employees to submit ideas in writing, Celebrate staff (birthdays, work anniversaries, staff outings), Having an open door policy

**9. Does your company ensure that performance evaluations of employees and superiors are regularly conducted, fair and authentic?**

Yes

**10. How often do you perform staff evaluations?**

Biannually

**11. Check all types of employment opportunities programs that apply:**

Students, Summer Jobs, At Risk Youth, Previously Incarcerated

**12. Tell us your business's story regarding a positive workplace environment.**

Undoubtedly, the majority of staff greatly enjoy the more relaxed atmosphere of an independent operation with a mom & pop-style feeling. Many staff members who come to us, and/or return to us, usually bring unflattering tales about their previous more rigidly bureaucratic or corporate style jobs. We strive to strike a balance between personal & professional. This is sometimes challenging during our busiest times such as Sunday brunch in the summer when the whole place is buzzing like a bee hive.

Periodic staff celebrations are always enjoyable and good for team building. We have an end-of-summer staff party at the cafe complete with three-legged sack races, tug-of-war, egg toss, etc. Twice a year we have a bowling night where we reserve and rent various lanes. We rotate between a few bowling alleys between Santa Monica and downtown LA to be equitable because staff resides in various parts of town and the closest-to-work alley is not necessarily convenient. We have a holiday party during the December holidays. Food & drinks are always provided. Birthdays are celebrated if the info is public knowledge, or leaked. When an employee has a new baby in the family there is always a group contribution/gift. If a staff member marches for breast cancer, for example, the 2 owners and several other co-workers always sponsor them.

Each receives a complementary meal per shift and unlimited beverages (coffee, sodas, iced tea & lemonade) throughout their shift. Pay advances are considered on a case-by-case basis and rarely denied in cases of hardship.

Hiring local for seasonal staff really helps make us a community-based business which really helps with creating a positive work environment. They often bring in family and friends, and the whole table gets a discount, generally 20%, or some complimentary food is sent out to the group.

When someone wants a their shift covered, it overwhelmingly is approved without resistance. We are very accommodating to those who've shown they possess a good and professional work ethic. Covering one's own shift is particularly common among the wait staff, if they've come to LA to become actors and have auditions.

Each's opinions and suggestions are solicited and respected. Even recent hires have valuable insights, especially when articulating how their other or previous jobs operated.

**13. Please include any supporting documents regarding a positive workplace environment.**

[Download File](#)

**14. Does your company support local charities and community programs?**

Yes

**aliasa49258806d0940b4a1b4a495f43911e5**

Financial Donations, In-Kind Contributions, Regular involvement with cultural or environmental organizations

**Enter annual donation amount:**

estimated at \$3,500.

**Enter annual in-kind hours:**

estimated \$10,000.

**15. Tell us your business's story regarding involvement in charities and community programs.**

In addition to providing jobs for the local community, Back on the Beach has been extremely active in supporting local charities and community programs. In order to contribute to the wealth of the community, we share both our time and our money.

Owner Fred Deni has been sponsoring a free and noteworthy Thanksgiving dinner for Santa Monica seniors since 1979 at our sister restaurant Back on Broadway. The seniors themselves are organized and transported with the help of Santa Monica's WISE & Healthy Aging. This past year was typical, as we fed approximately 400 seniors with the help of many familiar volunteers who return year after year. Over the years, Fred has sponsored the Fred Deni Culinary Program at Santa Monica's Police Actives League, as well as Dancing Squirrel, a Christmas show for underprivileged children. We donate gift certificates to local silent auctions (i.e., Canyon School, Hill & Dale Family Learning Center, Mt Olive Lutheran Preschool), Westside Ballet, and donate leftover food to OPCC. Fred has also been an ongoing board member of Santa Monica's Ruskin Group Theatre and has sponsored their monthly "cafe plays" for several years. Fred has also been an ongoing board member on the Santa Monica College Advisory Board. In addition, he has been a board member for the Santa Monica Arts Foundation and was part of the working group for the Santa Monica Civic Center. In 1996, he spearheaded a teddy bear drive for Bosnian war orphans and personally delivered about 10,000 of them that were locally collected.

Similarly, owner Jim Christel has been a longtime member of the Sierra Club (Angeles Chapter), is currently involved in a 3 month course in the WTC (Wilderness Travel Course), does periodic urban & SM mountain tree planting and removal of non-native evasive plant species with Tree People, is a member of and participating in an 8 month program with The Los Angeles County Beekeepers Association, and member of other various local organizations such as Planned Parenthood and KCRW (Santa Monica) & KCSN (Northridge) local public radio stations, and frequently participates in their programs and events.

Back on the Beach frequently donates food and/or beverages to many local functions. As a site-partner with the Annenberg Community Beach House, we regularly provide lemonade, hot chocolate, smore bar, etc to annual events such as Marion Davies Birthday , Polar Bear winter plunges, special community swim nights, the pool's annual Regatta, architect Julia Morgan commemoration events, etc.

Back on the Beach is an active member of the Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce and Buy Local Santa Monica.

**16. Please include any supporting documents regarding charities and community programs.**

[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

Yes

**Supporting Material #2**

[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

Yes

**Supporting Material #3**

[Download File](#)

**Do you have additional supporting materials to upload?**

**Page: Confirmation**

**Self-Certification**

I certify that I meet all above listed requirements

**To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this application is accurate.**

I agree

**By entering my name here, I acknowledge that this acts as my signature.**

Jim Christel