

Temporary Food Service Guidelines

A food service establishment that operates for a period of not more than fourteen (14) consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration is the focus of this pamphlet. Fairs and festivals or similar celebrations, as well as dinners or other events sponsored by organizations, serving food and open to the public, are all examples of temporary events.

Food service operators should have a basic understanding of how improper handling of Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs) and poor hygiene can cause a food borne illness. PHFs are foods (such as meat or dairy products) that must be kept hot or cold because they are capable of supporting the rapid growth of bacteria that cause food borne illnesses. By following these guidelines, temporary food service operators can minimize the possibility of a food borne illness occurrence.

Temporary operations often require that the food service is set up out-of-doors or in locations where keeping foods safe and sanitary is challenging. The following actions and equipment are recommended for all temporary food operations.

BOOTH. The stand or booth should have overhead protection and in most cases, be fully enclosed. There may be openings for a serving window and a door for entry; however, the door is to be kept closed during operation. Screening material may be used for the walls, doors and serving window. The floor of the stand should be hard, smooth, and constructed of easily cleanable materials. All food preparation, food storage and service are to be done within this enclosed area.

Screening may not be necessary if flying insects or other pests are absent due to the location of the food stand, the weather, or other limiting factors. Asphalt, concrete, or plywood may be acceptable floor surfaces in temporary food stands.



HAND SINK. Adequate hand washing facilities consist of a hand sink equipped with hot and cold running water, soap and paper towels. A temporary sink set-up can be made that consists of a vessel full of water with a spigot type dispenser, soap, paper towels, a wastebasket and a bucket to collect wastewater. *Remember to wash hands: before starting or returning to work, after eating, smoking, or using the restroom, when changing duties, before putting on gloves and whenever hands become soiled. The use of gloves or hand sanitizers is not a substitute for hand washing.*

BARE HAND CONTACT. A food employee's bare hands may not touch ready-to-eat-foods. Tongs, spatulas, deli tissues, or gloves must be used.

FOOD. All foods and beverages are to be prepared on-site or at a food establishment currently under inspection. It is a good idea to have a recent inspection document on hand. There are exceptions in place for religious, non-profit, and charitable groups, and small food processors allowing them to serve home prepared foods that are not, potentially hazardous. *Check with the local health authority for specific rules.*

COOKING. An essential part of food safety is assuring that proper final cooking temperatures are met. Proper cooking temperatures for some common foods are:

Chicken: 165° degrees, Hamburgers: 155° degrees, Pork: 145° degrees, Fish/seafood: 145° degrees

The carry over or reuse of foods from one day to the next is strongly discouraged.

HOT AND COLD HOLDING. Sufficient equipment that is capable of keeping foods hot and/or cold must be provided. Mechanical refrigeration or ice is needed for cold foods. Refrigerators and freezers should be clean and contain thermometers. Coolers must be cleanable and have a drain. Hot holding units must be clean and contain a thermometer.

Hot foods are kept at 135° F or hotter and cold foods are kept at 41° F or colder.

THERMOMETERS. A metal-stemmed thermometer, which has a temperature range of 0°F to 220°F with increments no greater than 2°F, should be on hand to monitor cooking and holding temperatures. Glass-stemmed thermometers or mercury filled thermometers are not permitted.

ICE. Ice for use in beverages and as an ingredient is to be kept in a separate cooler, with no other food items. An ice scoop with a handle should be used to scoop ice to prevent bare hand contact with the ice. Ice shall be from a commercial source.

WAREWASHING. Ware washing may be done in a three-bin sink or temporary set-up using bus tubs. First, items should be washed in hot, soapy water. Second, they should be rinsed in clean, warm water. Third, they should be chemically sanitized in warm water with an approved sanitizer

WATER. Sufficient potable water needs to be on hand. If the unit is a mobile temporary stand, the tank is to be constructed of a durable, corrosion resistant material that is easily cleanable. Vents, inlets and outlets should be screened, or positioned so that they are protected from contaminants.

WASTEWATER. Wastewater needs to be disposed of through an approved sanitary sewage system. Do not dump wastewater on the ground or in the street. Mobile units equipped with a holding tank, must be sized fifteen (15) percent larger than the water supply tank.

CONDIMENTS. It is best to have condiments or other consumer food toppings in individual packets, squeeze bottles or bulk dispensers with plungers.

STORAGE. All foods and single-use or service articles—paper plates, cups and lids—should be stored at least six (6) inches above the floor or ground and protected from contamination.

SANITIZER AND WIPING CLOTHS. An approved sanitizer should be provided (chlorine or quaternary ammonium compounds, or iodine). Wiping cloths should be stored in the sanitizer when not in use.

When using bleach to sanitize, mix one teaspoon of unscented bleach to each gallon of water.

HAIR RESTRAINT. Food vendors should wear hats, scarves, visors or hairnets that are designed and worn to effectively keep hair from contacting exposed food.

LIGHTS. Lighting in the stand must be adequate in the food preparation, storage, and serviced areas. Lights need to be plastic coated or shielded to guard against breakage into open food.

TRASH. Trash must be handled in a manner so that it does not create a nuisance or acts as an attractant to pests. The container should be covered when full or not in constant use. Solid waste is to be disposed of properly.

TOXICS. Cleaning solutions, sanitizers or other toxic items must be stored separately from foods, single-use and service items, and food contact surfaces. These same items need to be properly labeled. Over-the-counter insecticides not rated for use in or around a food establishment should not be used.

EATING, DRINKING AND SMOKING. Eating and tobacco use are not allowed in food stands. A closed drink cup with a lid and a straw is allowed, if spilling or dripping onto exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, and linens, or single-use articles will not occur.

FOOD AND NON-FOOD CONTACT SURFACES. Food preparation and equipment surfaces should be smooth, easily cleanable and durable.

ILLNESS RESTRICTIONS. An individual who has any type of wound infection, or who has a communicable illness that could be transmitted through food shall not be allowed to work in the food stand.

AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL. Only those individuals working as booth vendors, food handlers, or those who have duties directly related to the operation are allowed in the food booth.

FOODS STORED IN ICE. Packaged and unpackaged foods and bottled or canned beverages may not be stored in direct contact with undrained ice or water.

TRANSPORTATION. When food needs to be transported from one location to another, keep it well covered and provide adequate temperature controls. Use refrigerated trucks or insulated containers to keep foods hot and/or cold.

REMEMBER TO WASH YOUR HANDS PROPERLY.

Use soap and water. **R**ub your hands vigorously as you wash them. **R**inse your hands well. **D**ry hands with a paper towel. **T**urn off the water using paper towel instead of your hands

The preceding guidelines can be found and are more thoroughly referenced in the 1999 Missouri Food Code, 19 CSR 20-1.025 Sanitation of Food Establishments. They are also available at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/FoodSafety/>. Click on the “Missouri Food Code”