

**REQUIREMENTS
FOR FOOD SERVICE**

at

**FESTIVALS
SPECIAL EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS**



**Food, Lodging & Institution Section
Division of Environmental Health
Craven County Health Department
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Despite continued progress in improving the quality and safety of foods produced in the United States, food-related illness remains a serious public health problem. Each year, as many as 9,000 deaths and between 6.5 million and 33 million illnesses are directly linked to foodborne pathogens. Increases in outbreaks of foodborne illnesses across the country have focused the public's attention on the causes and prevention of outbreaks at church suppers, street fairs, civic celebrations and other similar events that call for foodservice outlets to be set up out-of-doors or in locations where keeping foods safe and sanitary becomes a real challenge.

Our goal is to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness by educating festival planners and vendors in Craven County about the importance of time/temperature control, cross-contamination and proper handwashing/hygiene practices.

As Festival planners and vendors, your main responsibility is serving safe food. The document will assist you in assuring that all food is handled in a safe manner. The Division of Environmental Health, Food & Lodging section, teaches a basic eight (8) hour food safety course and a sixteen (16) hour Serving Safe Food Manager's Course. Workshops are available to address your specific needs. Please contact the Health Department for more information.

Now and in the coming years festival planners and vendors must be equipped with the training tools they will need to make FOOD SAFETY the rule.

Thank you,

Wanda Sandel

Ray Silverthorne, Jr., R.S.
Director of Environmental Health

The information in this document has been developed to assist Festival Planners and vendors set up and operate temporary foodservice establishment in a sanitary manner and to reduce the possibility of foodborne illness.

Since the staff at temporary foodservice events may not be professional food workers, it is important that they be trained in Food Safety Practices and be aware of the top six causes of Food Poisoning. Check through the list to make sure your event has covered these common causes of foodborne disease:

- 1. Inadequate cooling and cold holding*
- 2. Preparing food too far ahead of service*

3. *Poor Personal Hygiene (Handwashing)*
4. *Inadequate re-heating*
5. *Inadequate hot holding*
6. *Cross-contamination*

To avoid inconvenience, festival planners and vendors are encourage to contact the Craven County Health Department as early as possible when planning a food booth.

Our staff will be pleased to assist you in the steps that must be taken to help ensure a safe and sanitary operation that will protect our citizens and many visitors from foodborne illness.

Thank you,

Ray Silverthorne, Jr., R.S

REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD SERVICE AT FESTIVALS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS

The N.C. “Rules Governing the Sanitation of Restaurants and Other Foodhandling Establishments” requires that certain food service operations at festivals, special events and fundraisers obtain a **Permit to Operate** from the local health department before starting operation; exemptions and exceptions from these requirements are found below. The information in this document is intended to help you understand what is needed and what is expected of an operator while the festival or event is in progress.

EXEMPTIONS

- ã Establishments (i) that are incorporated as nonprofit corporation in accordance with Chapter 55A of the General Statutes or (ii) that are exempt from federal income tax under the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in G.S. 105-228.90, or (iii) that are political committees as defined in G.S. 163-278.6(14) and that prepare or serve food or drink for pay no more frequently than once a month for a period not to exceed two consecutive days, including establishments permitted pursuant to this Part when preparing or serving food or drink at a location other than the permitted locations.

- ǎ Facilities where only drinks are put together, portioned, set out, or handed out using single service containers that are not reused on the premises.
- ǎ Facilities where only items such as; dip ice-cream, popcorn, candy apples, cotton candy, funnel cakes, packaged items (chips or peanuts), or soft pretzels are served.

All foodservice operations shall use good foodhandling techniques whether exempt or not. The Health Department will monitor all operations and make recommendation when necessary.

Permit To Operate: Before the event starts, an Environmental Health Specialist will visit your site to determine compliance. If all requirements have been met, a permit to operate will be issued. No food service or food preparation is allowed on the site until you have received this permit. Your acceptance of this permit implies that you agree to keep the site as originally permitted throughout the duration of the event and that you agree to operate in accordance with all statutes, rules, regulation and specific conditions which may be included on the permit. Health Department personnel will be on duty during the event to monitor foodservice operations and to provide guidance where applicable. During operation you may be requested to remedy problems observed by the Environmental Health Specialist; prompt compliance is required. ***If a permit is not required, the following guidelines should still apply.***

Menu: Include a menu listing all foods and beverages to be served, with information describing exactly how items are prepared and/or served (pre-packaged, cooked on site, etc).

Tent: Temporary food establishments must be conducted in a tent or other approved enclosure with a roof that will keep out rain, dust, dirt, insects, and other contaminants.

Screening: The tent must be protected on at least three sides. Fine mesh or other screening which will allow air to pass can be used. (The Fire Department will require documentation that the screening material meets fire codes). There can be an opening in the screening only directly behind a stove or grill that presents a fire hazard or generates great amounts of heat. After approval, all screening must remain in place throughout the event. Fans may be required at the front serving counter or at other openings as needed to cut down on flies, and other insects.

Floor: Start with a clean space and keep it clean. Concrete, asphalt, and such street surfaces are accepted. If problems occur, such as grease spills, clean them up; do not wash such spills down storm drains.

Storage: Nothing is allowed on the “floor” except equipment with legs or non-absorbent empty crates. Stored items, wrapped or not, must be off the floor and under the tent at all times.

Sneeze Guards: Food and food contact surfaces near customers must be protected from customer exposure or sneeze by glass or something equal on the top, front, and ends. Sneeze guards are not required if the cooking surfaces are placed so that customers do not get near them.

Cleaning: All equipment must be cleaned thoroughly and maintained in a sanitary condition throughout the event. A single vat sink equipped with running water (this may be achieved by positioning a cooler or beverage urn with a stop cock nozzle above the sink basin) which is capable of holding the largest utensil used during operation must be provided. You must have one drainboard or some specific counter space to use along with the washing operation.

Hot Water: Heated water must be provided for the handwashing basin and utensil sink. The minimum equipment acceptable for this provision would be a pot of water on a stove, or a separate coffee maker.

Handwashing: Provide employees with a convenient way to wash their hands. This can consist of a handwashing lavatory with warm water through a combination supply faucet or could, at minimum, be a wash pan or bucket. You must have available soap and single-use towels.

Toilets: Convenient and approved toilets shall be provided for employees. Temporary public toilet facilities provided on the grounds are accepted if they are reasonably convenient, adequate, and kept clean.

Refrigeration: Mechanical refrigeration units are required for holding potentially hazardous foods. They must have thermometers and be able to maintain a temperature of 45°F or below. Temperatures must be monitored throughout the event. Styrofoam coolers and other non-mechanical refrigeration will not be accepted for storage of food.

Garbage: Watertight garbage cans with tight-fitting lids must be provided by each stand. Garbage and refuse must be removed daily and disposed of in an approved, sanitary manner. The city is responsible for the collection of all garbage throughout events in parks, uptown etc.

Wastewater and Sewage: In order for a temporary food establishment to qualify for a permit to operate in conjunction with a fair, carnival, circus, public exhibition or other similar gathering it must meet the requirements of **Rule .2635. That rule requires that the establishment have running water and that sewage be disposed of in an approved manner.**

The wastewater resulting from the operation of “TFS”s may be collected by a septage hauler from holding tank(s) and transported to a publicly owned treatment works (POTW) for treatment and disposal.

Approval of this manner of disposal requires 1) a contact between the sponsor of the gathering and a hauler for the collection of the wastewater and its transport to a designated POTW and 2) a written agreement from the owner of the designated POTW (or owner’s representative) and the sponsor of the gathering that establishes the conditions under which the wastewater will be accepted, treated, and disposed.. Copies of the contract with the hauler and the written agreement with the POTW must be provided to the Local Health Department (LHD) prior to the inspection of the “TFS” to be operated at the subject gathering.

Transport of foods: All foods must be protected while in transit between the source and the stand. Transport containers must be able to maintain proper temperatures for a reasonable amount of time, keep out potential contamination, and be non-absorbent and cleanable.

Source of foods: All foods shall be clean, wholesome, free from adulteration and obtained from an approved source.

Hamburgers and poultry: Hamburgers which are formed into patties separated by clean paper or other wrapping materials, and ready to cook are permitted within the stand. Additionally, poultry which has been cut into individual portions, must be prepared in an approved market, plant, or restaurant. In other words, you can not make patties and/or cut chicken at the stand.

Prohibited foods: Potentially hazardous foods such as cream-filled pastries and pies, or salads such as potato, chicken, ham, crab, etc.) cannot be prepared or served from a temporary food stand.

Hot foods: Holding units (i.e. steam tables) must keep foods at or above 140°F until served.

Stem thermometer: All stands must provide a stem-type thermometer (0°-220°F scale). Workers should monitor food temperatures frequently. Use the thermometer to be sure that all hot and cold foods are held at approved temperatures.

Drinks: Bottled or canned drinks, single-portion containers of milk, and coffee can be served. Lemonade or tea cannot be made in the stand but can be brought already prepared from an approved source (approved by the Health Department) and served from an approved dispensing device.

Diseases: No person who has a contagious or infectious disease which can be transmitted through food or drink is allowed to work in a foodstand.

Hair restraints: Hair nets and/or caps must be worn at all times by Foodservice employees.

Tobacco: No tobacco is to be used in any form while handling, preparing, or serving food or while in the foodservice area.

Worker information: Each vendor should keep a list of names and phone numbers of people involved in food preparation and serving, including persons handling the food back at the restaurant.

Self-service: Self-service of food is not allowed by the counter. This applies to condiments such as lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and onions. Enclosed or other types of protected single-service packages of condiments may be used. These include foods such as mustard or ketchup that can be dispensed through devices with pumps which have been pre-approved.

Sanitizer Solution: A mild sanitizer solution (one teaspoon of bleach per quart of water) shall be mixed in a spray bottle or bucket for sanitizing surfaces, utensils and equipment.

Other Permitting Conditions

- ă A Temporary Food Establishment must operate in conjunction with a public event such as a fair, festival, or carnival.
- ă The Temporary Food Establishment must operate on the property of the public exhibition.

Mobile Food Units and Pushcarts

These units already have permits to operate, but **they must comply with all the requirements of their permit** when operating at the event. This means that:

- ă the permit must be posted so that it can be read by customers.
- ă food must come from the restaurant identified on the permit.

ã the whole unit must return daily to its restaurant for supplies, cleaning, and servicing.

Questions?

If you have any questions the above comments and recommendations you may contact this Department at (252) 636-4936. You may also fax questions or information to (252) 636-1474. The staff of this Department looks forward to working with you as we attempt to collectively provide a safe, fun and healthy atmosphere for all the citizens of Craven County to enjoy.