Special Temporary Food Service Facilities Guideline and Common Questions

Special Temporary Food Service facilities operate in a fixed location for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in association with a fair, carnival, public exhibition, construction project, recreational facility, or other similar gathering. These facilities must operate with all applicable regulations including the Code of Maryland Regulations (C.O.M.A.R.) 10.15.03. The following are guidelines for special temporary food service facilities and are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all of the regulatory requirements or to represent all these requirements. A copy of COMAR 10.15.03, which specifies the requirements for food service facilities, can be obtained at the Environmental Health Division of the Washington County Health Department, located at 13332 Pennsylvania Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21742. A copy can also be obtained online at our website: www.washhealth.org.

Question: When do I need a Special Temporary License?

Answer: If you are serving food items to the public which are not exclusively of the pre-packaged, non-potentially hazardous variety (potentially hazardous food: any perishable food which consists in whole or in part of milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, or other ingredients of animal or plant origin capable of supporting rapid and progressive growth of infectious and/or toxigenic microorganisms) anywhere within the confines of Washington County, then you are required to obtain a license from the Washington County Health Department.

Question: If I'm giving free samples of food to the public do I still need a license?

Answer: Yes. If you are serving food, i.e., selling it or giving it away to the public, then you must obtain a license.

Question: Can I prepare food at home and sell it at a special event?

Answer: Only non-potentially hazardous baked goods (cookies, candy, brownies, etc.) may be prepared in the home for service to the public, and these must be labeled with the following: common name of the food or a descriptive identity statement, list of ingredients in descending order of prominence by weight, packaged weight of product in both metric and English units, name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor, and nutrition labeling.

Question: How do I wash my hands if there is no sink available?

Answer: Each facility must provide a means to supply potable hot and cold or tempered running water for handwashing. Handwashing facilities must be adequate and conveniently located. A closed container or coffee urn with a spigot and a catch basin placed beneath it is one acceptable method to meet this

requirement. Handwashing stations shall be supplied with soap, disposable paper towels, and a trash can.

Question: If I have a method of handwashing present do I need to wear gloves?

Answer: Yes. Gloves, tongs, spatulas, deli tissue, or automatic dispensing equipment must be used to prevent contact of bare hands with ready-to-eat foods.

Question: Will hand sanitizer work as a substitute for antibacterial hand soap?

Answer: No. Antibacterial hand soap and proper handwashing techniques must be followed.

Question: How do I sanitize a food contact item if it gets dirty?

Answer: Each facility needs a means to properly clean and sanitize all dishes, utensils, cookware, and equipment used in the operation. A minimum of three cleanable and adequately sized basins must be supplied to **WASH - RINSE - SANITIZE** the food contact equipment with a detergent and an approved sanitizing agent, such as bleach, using approved procedures. A sanitizing solution of at least 50 ppm available chlorine (bleach may be used) or equivalent sanitizing solution must be provided (if using quaternary ammonia, 200 ppm is required). Each facility must also have chemical test strips, which are used to check these concentrations of sanitizer. Following the sanitizing step, the utensils, etc., must then air dry.

Question: At what temperatures am I supposed to cold hold, cook, hot hold, reheat, and cool potentially hazardous foods?

Answer: Potentially hazardous foods must be maintained at the following required temperatures:

Frozen foods:	0ºF or below
Refrigerated foods and Cold Holding foods:	41ºF or below
Hot foods and Hot Holding foods:	135ºF or above

Potentially hazardous foods shall be cooked to heat all parts of the food to an internal temperature that meets or exceeds the cooking temperature requirements. The following are some minimum internal cooking temperature requirements for cooking some potentially hazardous foods:

Poultry (chicken, turkey, etc.); stuffed meat, pasta or poultry ; exotic bird species, wild game animals, and stuffing containing fish, meat, or poultry	165ºF for at least 15 seconds

Shell eggs not prepared for immediate service, ratites, comminuted fish and meats (such as hamburgers), game animals commercially raised for food, and injected meats	155ºF for at least 15 seconds
Shell eggs prepared for immediate service, fish, Meat, and any other potentially hazardous foods	145ºF for at least 15 seconds
Fruits and vegetables cooked for hot holding, ready-to-eat commercially processed foods (such as hot dogs), and hot holding	135ºF for at least 15 seconds

When cooling hot foods, the temperature of a food item must be cooled from 135ºF to 70ºF or below in 2 hours or less, and from 70ºF to 41ºF or below in an additional 4 hours or less. Therefore, the food must be cooled from 135ºF to 41ºF or below within a total of 6 hours.

All reheated foods shall be rapidly reheated to an internal temperature of at least 165ºF or higher for at least 15 seconds. A hot hold food item that has fallen below 135ºF may only be reheated once. If that food item drops below 135ºF a second time, it should be discarded.

Question: Are there any other regulations I should know?

Answer: Yes!!! Read On!

FOOD PROTECTION:

> **All food, drink, and water supplies must be obtained from an approved source, and shall be clean, wholesome, free of spoilage or contamination, and safe for human consumption. With the exception of a bake sale, food prepared or stored in a home kitchen is prohibited. Only foods prepared in approved or licensed kitchens or prepared on-site are acceptable.**

Raw foods (such as raw meats, etc.) must be stored separately and away from ready-to-eat foods (such as lettuce, bread, etc.) in a manner which prevents cross-contamination.

Ice shall be from an approved source, clean, and free from contamination. Do not store food or other items in ice which is to be dispensed in drinks served to the public. Ice containers must drain continuously to prevent the accumulation of melt water.

Condiments such as salt and pepper must be protected from contamination. Individual packets are preferred.

FACILITY:

Precautions must be taken to minimize dust, dirt, and mud in and around the food service operation.

Effective measures shall be in place to prevent the exposure of foods to flies and other vermin. This may include 16 mesh screening, service windows, or other measures acceptable to the approving authority. Foods must be kept covered or wrapped in a manner to prevent contamination or cross-contamination.

Toilet facilities must be available, conveniently located, and properly supplied with toilet paper and refuse containers during all hours of operation.

EQUIPMENT:

Each facility handling, holding, or serving potentially hazardous foods shall have a metal stem–type thermometer which is numerically scaled and accurate to ± 2ºF for checking food temperatures. Refrigerated units shall be supplied with an indicating thermometer inside the unit for measuring the ambient air temperature.

All food contact equipment shall be constructed so as to be smooth, cleanable, and non-toxic, and shall be kept clean and in good repair. Enameled cookware, lead glazed ceramics, and Styrofoam picnic coolers are some examples of unapproved equipment.

Scoops with handles, tongs, ladles, etc. must be provided to dispense ice and other foods to minimize hand contact and protect foods from contamination.

Adequate waste receptacles shall be provided which are conveniently located, impervious and cleanable, or entirely disposable.

Disposal of waste water shall be in a manner in accordance with regulations and code requirements and in a manner acceptable to the approving authority.

OPERATIONS AND HYGENIC PRACTICES

All food workers must be free of any communicable diseases and also free of any cuts, boils, or other lesions on exposed parts of their bodies. Persons who are not involved in the preparation or service of food are not to enter the facility.

All food workers must wear clean outer garments and wear effective hair restraints. Hand jewelry should be removed before working in food preparation and hanging jewelry should be removed or covered.

Food workers shall wash their hands before handling any foods, after visiting or using toilet facilities, and otherwise as often as necessary to prevent contamination.

Food workers may not engage in eating, drinking, or using tobacco products while preparing or serving food.

Separate cutting boards shall be provided for operations involving the preparation of raw and cooked foods or shall be effectively cleaned and sanitized between uses.

Wiping cloths used in the operation shall be stored in a sanitizing solution between uses or shall be of the readily disposable variety.

Note: The above list of guidelines and regulations does not encompass all of the current regulations. A complete copy of the Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR) 10.15.03, which specifies the requirements for food service facilities may be obtained at the Environmental Health Division of the Washington County Health Department, or found as a link on our online website at: www.washhealth.org

IF YOU STILL HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR NEED ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL THE WASHINGTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT AT 240-313-3400.