

GUIDELINES FOR TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

These guidelines apply to temporary food establishments (TFEs) permitted by the UW Environmental Health & Safety Department (EH&S) to operate on University owned or leased property. TFEs serve, sell, or give away food at an event advertised to or attended by the UW community or general public. EH&S Environmental Public Health Program staff inspect TFEs for compliance with [Washington state food code requirements](#). The guidelines in this document address code requirements and best practices for food safety.

*TFEs must stop operations and notify EH&S when any of the following conditions occur that can introduce health hazards: foodborne illness outbreak, fire, flood, loss of electricity, lack of hot water, loss of water service, sewage backup, misuse of toxic or poisonous materials, or any other circumstance that may endanger public health. **TFEs found to be operating with one or more imminent health hazard will be closed.***

BOOTH SET UP

The [Temporary Food Service Permit](#) issued by EH&S must be visibly posted in each establishment or booth.

- Provide **overhead cover** to protect the booth from weather and dirt. You may be exempt from this requirement if only serving prepackaged foods.
- Foods prepared, cooked or displayed on the front counter must be protected with **sneeze guards**.
- Provide a **barrier** between hot surfaces (e.g., grills, steam tables, fryers) and the public.
- Store **food, utensils, and paper products** off the ground.
- All food storage, equipment, and preparation must fit **inside** the booth.

You must obtain [a local fire department permit](#) if you will have open flame cooking or bring fuel-powered equipment and/or fuel on site.

FOOD SERVICE WORKERS

Practice good hygiene: Wash hands often (refer to the Sanitation section for details). Long hair should be pulled back, short or covered with a hairnet. Gloves must be worn over painted or artificial nails while working with food.

Workers **must stay home and not work** if they have any of the following:

- Symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, jaundice; or
- A diagnosed infection of Hepatitis A, *Salmonella*, *Shigella*, *E.coli*, Norovirus; or
- A sore throat with fever and work in an establishment serving a highly susceptible population (i.e., immunocompromised individuals, young children, older adults).

Workers are **restricted from work with food and food contact surfaces** if they:

- Have an infected wound on body, hands or arms that cannot be covered; or

- Have a sore throat with fever; or
- Are sneezing, coughing, and/or have a runny nose; or
- Have been exposed (e.g., lives in same household, attended a setting where there is a confirmed outbreak, or ate food prepared by an ill person) to someone with a foodborne illness and work in an establishment serving a highly susceptible population.

Food worker cards: All individuals handling (i.e., cutting, washing, preparing, storing, serving, cooking) unwrapped or unpackaged food must have a current (non-expired) [food worker card](#). EH&S recommends that temporary establishments have staff with at least one food worker card per 50 people planned to be served at the event. Have copies of valid food worker cards onsite and available for review.

FOOD SOURCES

Food vendors and caterers must have a current operating permit issued from a local jurisdictional health department to serve at a UW event.

UW student groups preparing or handling foods must source all foods (including ice) from an establishment with a current local health department issued operating permit (e.g., grocery store, restaurant) or USDA/WSDA processing permit.

Foods that have been sourced from, prepared at, or stored in a personal home are never allowed to be served at a temporary food establishment. All foods to be sold/served must be **prepared onsite or in an inspected and approved commissary or kitchen permitted** by EH&S or a local health jurisdiction.

TRANSPORT & STORAGE

Safe hot (135°F or above) and cold (41°F or below) food temperatures must be maintained during food transport and storage.

Prepare temperature holding equipment prior to putting food in it.

- Warm insulated carriers (e.g., Cambro) with hot water 1 hour before use.
- Turn on electric warmers for service at least 30 minutes before use.
- Add ice to coolers ahead of placing food inside.

Food must be kept protected from potential environmental contamination (e.g., dust, flies, spills, sneezes) during transport, storage, and service.

TEMPERATURE

Thermometer: A digital stem thermometer is required onsite when cooking or holding temperature sensitive foods. Check temperatures of time/temperature control for safety (TCS) foods often during prep, cooking, storage, and service.



Food item	Final cook temperature
Vegetables, fruits, grains	135°F or greater
Eggs, seafood, and intact meat (e.g., beef steak)	145°F or greater (15 second hold time)
Ground/chopped/minced/pinned or injected meats (e.g., sausages, hamburger, chopped or ground fish)	158°F or greater (Instantaneous)
Poultry, casseroles, stuffed foods or stuffing, reheating cooked and cooled foods	165°F or greater (Instantaneous)

HOT HOLDING: Hold hot foods for service at 135°F or above.

- Meet final cook temperatures (including reheating cooked and cooled foods to 165°F within 2 hours) before maintaining food at hot holding temperatures for service.
- Discard hot held foods at the end of the event food service period.

COLD HOLDING: Hold cold foods for service at 41°F or below.

NO COOLING of hot foods at an event.

- Cooling food in a mobile food unit or at a temporary food establishment is not allowed.
- Cooling of hot foods must always be done in an approved and permitted permanent food establishment kitchen (e.g., commissary) and in appropriate cooling equipment (e.g., walk in cooler, blast chiller).

A PERMITTED KITCHEN FACILITY IS REQUIRED WHEN:

- > Storing food for an event
- > Advance food preparation is needed
- > Preparing and serving fruits or vegetables that are *not* purchased prewashed or pre-cut
- > The event is longer than one day (requires mandatory access to a 3-compartment sink in a permitted kitchen or commissary for dishwashing)

HANDLING

Prevent bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods: Use barriers like tongs, ladles, bakery papers or gloves.

Use **food contact surfaces** (e.g., cutting boards, utensils) that are smooth, non-porous and easily cleanable.

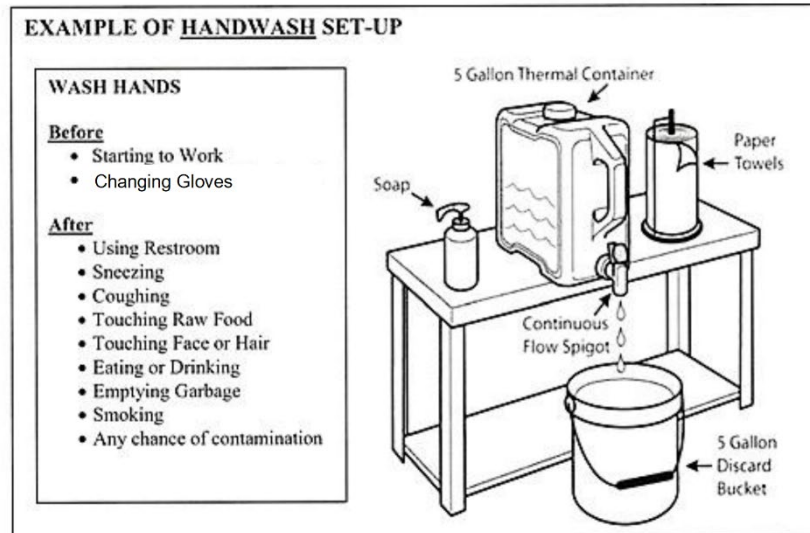
Serve into clean, **disposable, single service** items unless dishwashing facilities are available onsite.

No eating or drinking is allowed while engaged in food handling (e.g., prep, service). Engage in these activities outside the booth. Wash hands after eating and drinking and before resuming food handling.

SANITATION

Handwashing: Food prep and service areas must have adequate handwashing facilities.

- A 5 gallon or larger gravity flow, insulated container is required for handwashing in the booth.
- The container needs a **continuous flow spigot** that can lock in the open position to wash both hands.
- Fill the container with **hot water**; refill as needed.
- Provide pump soap, paper towels, a waste receptacle, and a large catch bucket (at least 6 gallons) for collecting wastewater.



Source: [Chemung County, NY](#)

Wash hands frequently, including between tasks, after breaks or using the restroom, and when entering/re-entering the booth.

Dishwashing: For one day events, bring extra utensils and food equipment to change out as needed. For events lasting two days or more, plumbed dishwashing facilities are required. Soap, sanitizer and sink drain plugs must also be provided. Dish tubs are not acceptable.

Employee restrooms: During operations, food workers must have access to restrooms with handwash sinks with warm running water. Handwashing is required at the restroom and again upon return to the booth. Portable toilets are allowed only if handwash sinks with hot water, soap and paper towels are provided next to the portable toilet.

Sanitizer: A sanitizer solution (e.g., 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach per gallon of water) bucket with wiping cloths must be prepared and in use on food contact surfaces prior to and during food service.

- Additional buckets are needed if working with raw meat and ready-to-eat foods.
- Use test strips to ensure sanitizer concentration is between 50 - 200 parts per million (ppm) available chlorine or between 200-400 ppm QUAT sanitizer.

Wastewater: Do not dump wastewater into storm drains or on the ground. Generated wastewater must be disposed of in an approved manner into a septic or sanitary system.

Please visit the [Temporary Food Service Permit](#) webpage on the EH&S website for more information.

Contact EH&S's Environmental Public Health Program at 206.543.7262 or phdept@uw.edu with questions.