

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

Bureau of Community Hygiene  
Food Safety & Hygiene Services Inspections Division

**FOOD SERVICES GUIDELINES  
FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

**A SUCCESSFUL VENTURE IN FOOD SERVICE AT SPECIAL EVENTS CAN BE ASSURED WHEN YOU DILIGENTLY FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS LISTED BELOW:**

1. The processing and preparation, including cooking, of any food that is to be served or sold at the event must begin no earlier than four (4) hours before the time of sale or serving.
2. If packaged-precooked foods prepared commercially for reheating prior to serving are used, the reheating should take place as close to the time of sale or serving as is reasonably possible, but under no circumstances should it be more than four (4) hours.
3. The food should be of good quality and fresh in the sense of being outdated or in a deteriorating condition.
4. The internal temperature of those foods that are reheated or cooked should reach 165°F during the reheating or cooking process.
5. The food held in storage or on the serving line must at a temperature either above 135°F or below 41°F.
6. Protect the food from dust, flies and contamination by either you or the customer. Must provide sneeze guard.
7. Unpackaged-prepared food remaining at the end of the day should be discarded to waste.
8. Provide adequate supply of water for food handlers to wash their hands, also soap and paper towels. No cloth towels permitted.
9. If you must handle the food, wear disposable gloves and change them frequently- IT LOOKS GOOD IN THE EYES OF THE PUBLIC.
10. All food handlers must wear hair restraints.
11. Use only single service containers and utensils in your food-service to the customer.
12. All foods and single service items must be stored off the ground at least four (4) to six (6) inches.

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13. Do not let melting ice, leaking cartons or dropped food make a nuisance condition on the ground in your area of operation.
14. Provide adequate waste containers with lids.
15. Equipment/utensil washing facilities must be provided. Washing facilities must consist of the three containers: 1) for detergent wash, 2) for clean/rinse, and 3) for a sanitizing rinse. One (1) capful of bleach per gals of water can be used to formulate a sanitizing rinse solution.
16. Utensils and containers used in the preparation or storage of food, which includes crushed ice for drinks, must be designed and constructed for that intended use and they must be designed and constructed for that intended use and they must be kept as clean as possible during such use.
17. Each booth must have thermometer for routine checking of temperatures.
18. It is advisable that each both have a Certified Food Protection Manager's (CFPM) Photo ID card.
19. Each vendor/booth should have or have access ( no more than two vendor/booths can use one facility ) to hand washing facilities that are equipped with dispensed soap ( no bar soap ) and single use, disposable paper towels.

Finally, if you are not sure of how to protect yourself and those you serve from possible illness or injury; call the Food Safety Division at (202) 535-2180 for advice.

NOTE: If we find during our inspections that your food or your operation threatens the health or safety of your patrons, you will be required to dispose of the food or discontinue the operation.

**ALL FOOD SERVICE OPERATORS MUST BE INSPECTED PRIOR TO CONDUCTING ANY SALE.**