

# Guidelines for Setting Up and Operating a Temporary Food Establishment



**Temporary food establishment refers to food service operations that sell food on-site, including food samples, generally in conjunction with an event or celebration, such as fairs, festivals, carnivals, and other community events.**

This guide will help you plan, set up, and operate your temporary food establishment.

This guide will also help you plan what types of foods you will be serving, what equipment you will need, and how you will safely operate.

The information in this guide is based on the 2022 FDA Food Code (<https://www.fda.gov/food/fda-food-code/food-code-2022>). **Check with your local health department for jurisdiction-specific requirements.**

## Definitions

**Temporary food establishment** means a food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration.

**Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food (TCS)** is food that requires time/ temperature control for safety to limit pathogenic microorganisms' growth or toxin formation. This category includes meats, seafood, cheese, milk, eggs, cooked plant foods, sprouts, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes, and cut melons.

The **danger zone** is the temperature range between 41 °F and 135 °F at which pathogenic microorganisms can grow. To prevent "germs" from growing, keep TCS foods out of these temperature ranges except during food preparation.

## Step 1 - Consult with your local health department.

Each local health department in Illinois follows its own permitting and enforcement procedures for temporary food service. In most counties, you must complete an application before the event. The local health department's food program staff will review your application and contact you for further action.

- To locate your local health department, refer to this [map](#) or check the **local health department directory** at <https://dph.illinois.gov/contact-us/regional-health-departments.html>.

## Step 2 - Obtain equipment.

Think about the equipment you will need to operate safely and efficiently. A list of equipment you may need is provided in **Appendix A**.

## Step 3 - Train workers and volunteers.

At least one **person in charge (PIC)** should **always** be present. The PIC will be responsible for the food operation during inspection. The PIC should ensure all workers and volunteers understand:

- a) When and where to wash hands.
  - **Handwashing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of bacteria and viruses, which cause foodborne illness.**
- b) Prevent bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods by wearing disposable gloves or using utensils, deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, or other dispensing equipment. Examples of ready-to-eat foods are baked cookies, cooked French fries, cooked meat, and hot dog buns.
- c) How to mix and test a sanitizer solution.
- d) How to wash, rinse, and sanitize food equipment and utensils.
- e) Where are the approved restrooms and hand sinks located?

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## Step 3 *continued* - Train workers and volunteers.

- f) When employees should be excluded from work due to illness with symptoms of diarrhea or vomiting, jaundice, a diagnosed infection, or a sore throat with a fever.
- g) That cuts or boils on hands **must** be covered with a bandage and a glove.

## Step 4 - Obtain food and beverage ingredients.

- a) Food, beverages, and ice must be obtained from an **approved source**.
  - Approved sources include retail food stores, wholesale food stores, restaurant suppliers, etc.
- b) Foods cannot be prepared or stored in a home.
- c) Water must be from an approved source. Some approved sources are a public water system or commercially bottled drinking water.
- d) Copies of receipts should be made available on-site.

## Step 5 - Store and prepare food in an approved food establishment.

All food preparation must be done at the approved temporary food location or in a kitchen approved by the local health department. **Home preparation or storage of food is not allowed.**

A restaurant or commissary kitchen approved/permitted by a local county health department is an example of an approved food establishment.

### When preparing food, be sure to:

- a) Wash your hands.
- b) Keep TCS foods in the proper temperature range (135°F or above for hot foods, 41°F or below for cold foods).
- c) Rinse produce under running water in a food preparation sink.
- d) Use clean equipment for storage.
- e) Prevent cross-contamination of ready-to-eat food from raw animal food or dirty equipment.
- f) Store raw meat, poultry, and fish below ready-to-eat food.
- g) Store and handle ice safely. Ice used to cool beverage containers must be drained. Do not re-use this ice in drinks or food preparation
- h) Cook foods to the proper temperatures.

## Step 6 - Transport food and equipment.

- a) Check temperatures with a thermometer. **All TCS foods must kept out of the danger zone!**
- b) Wash, rinse, sanitize, and air-dry transporting equipment before using.
- c) Store raw animals' food in separate ice chests.
- d) Use plenty of ice to keep TCS foods cold during storage.
- e) Store drinking ice in separate ice chests. **Do not use food storage ice as drinking ice!**
- f) Preheat equipment used to transport hot foods.

## Step 7 - Construct a food booth.

- a) Construct a booth to minimize dust, mud, and other contamination.
- b) Provide overhead covers in all food service areas. If cooking with an open flame, check with the fire marshal about overhead covers.
- c) Provide barriers to prevent public access to the booth, food preparation, cooking, and storage areas.
- d) The floors should be concrete or asphalt. If these are not available, use washable mats or removable platforms.

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## Step 7 *continued* - Construct a food booth.

- e) Obtain water from an approved source. Construct a handwashing sink if a plumbed or self-contained hand sink is unavailable in the booth. **(See graphic under Appendix B.)**
- f) Ensure your handwashing sink is set up before preparing food. Make it easily accessible to all employees and use it only for handwashing.
  - Handwashing sinks need running water, soap, disposal towels, a waste receptacle, and a trash can. **(See Appendix B graphic.)**
- g) Set up a sanitizing station. **(See Appendix C graphic.)**
- h) Set up a 3 compartment sink station. **(See Appendix D graphic.)**
- i) Provide a sneeze guard to protect food items that will be near the public.
- j) Post your permit (if applicable) so it is visible to the public.

## Step 8 - Prepare and serve food at the event.

- a) Wash hands often. It is important to wash your hands:
  - Before working with food.
  - Before cleaning equipment and utensils.
  - After smoking, eating, drinking, or using toilet facilities.
  - After hands become contaminated at any time doing other tasks.
- b) Check the temperatures of TCS foods before starting and throughout the event. **(See Appendix E table.)**
  - Keep hot foods hot.
  - Keep cold foods cold.
  - Keep frozen foods frozen.
  - Take corrective action when foods are not maintaining proper temperature.
- c) Store all food, food containers, and single service articles (utensils, napkins, cups, etc.) at least 6 inches off the ground or in watertight containers.
- d) Replace soiled utensils, cutting boards, etc., at least every **4 hours** with clean ones.
- e) Wipe up messes using cloth from the sanitizing station.

## Step 9 - Clean up.

- a) Discard all prepared foods at the end of the event.
- b) Dispose of all trash properly.
- c) Dispose of all wastewater into an approved sewage system. **Do not dump on the ground or in a storm drain!**
- d) Clean and sanitize all utensils to be ready for next time. **Do not forget to clean and sanitize ice chests!**

## Food Safety Reminders

- **If you unable to safely operate your temporary food establishment, you must** close your booth until you can correct your issues.
- **If you are unable to wash your hands,** then under no circumstances should you handle open/unpackaged food.

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## Appendix A

### Equipment

The following is a list of equipment that you may need:

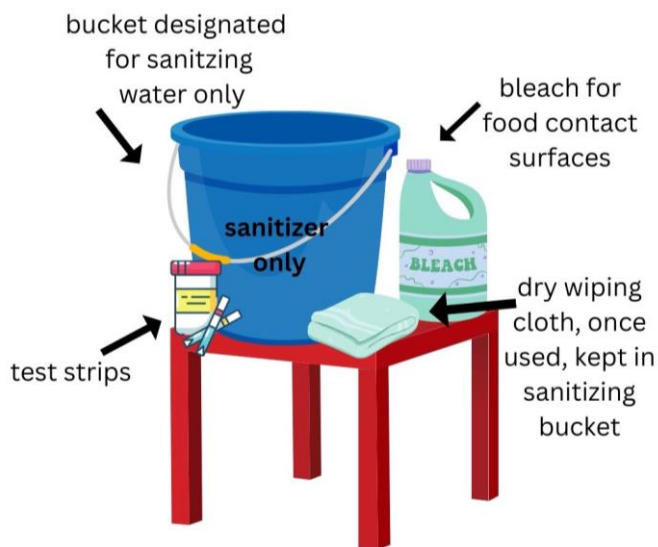
- a) Overhead cover, such as a pop-up tent and tent weights
- b) Ground cover
- c) Tables
- d) Handwashing station
  - Container with continuous flowing spigot
  - Waste water container
  - Soap
  - Dispensable paper towels
- e) Sanitizing station
  - 4 containers with 3 of the containers big enough to submerge your largest piece of equipment.
  - Sanitizer – Any sanitizer should be USEPA registered.
  - Sanitizer test kit/test strips.
- f) Food thermometers
- g) Refrigeration thermometers (placed inside refrigerator and/or ice chests.)
- h) Utensils, such as knives, ice scoops, tongs, and spatulas. **Bring extra so you don't need to wash dishes during the event!**
- i) Cooking equipment
- j) Fire extinguisher. **Check with the local fire marshal!**
- k) Cold holding equipment, such as refrigerators or hard-sided, cleanable, insulated ice chests.
- l) Hot holding equipment, such as a steam table or hot holding cabinet.
- m) Extension cords and power strips. **Make sure that you have adequate power for all electrical equipment.**
- n) Extension cord protectors/covers to prevent trips and falls.
- o) Single-use gloves.
- p) Condiment serving containers.
  - Condiment containers **must** be covered to keep food protected from contamination.
- q) Food-grade hoses, if connected with a water supply consider appropriate **backflow prevention**.
- r) Tarps
- s) Single-use articles such as paper plates, napkins, and utensils. **Check with the event organizer regarding rules for using compostable and recyclable items!**
- t) Trash cans, including separate trash cans for used paper towels at your hand washing station and other trash needs.
- u) Trash bags
- v) Rope
- w) Tape
- x) Zip ties

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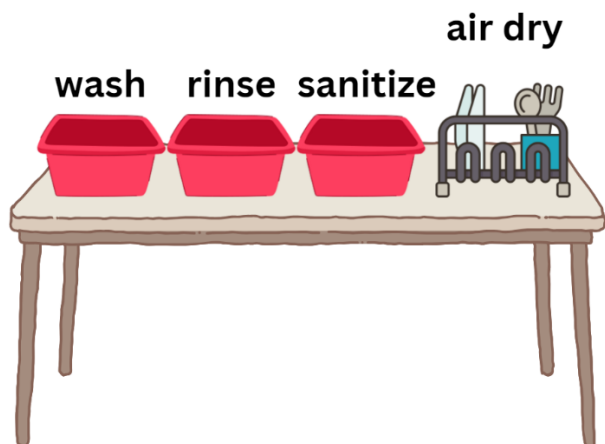
## Appendix B Handwashing Station Set Up



## Appendix C Sanitizing Station



## Appendix D 3 Compartment Sink Station



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## Appendix E

### Cooking/ Holding Temperatures

Product	Minimum Internal Temperature & Rest Time
Beef, Pork, Veal & Lamb Steaks, chops, roasts	145 °F (62.8 °C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
Ground Meats	160 °F (71.1 °C)
Ground Poultry	165 °F
Ham, fresh or smoked (uncooked)	145 °F (62.8 °C) and allow to rest for at least 3 minutes
Fully Cooked Ham (to reheat)	Reheat cooked hams packaged in USDA-inspected plants to 140 °F (60 °C) and all others to 165 °F (73.9 °C).
All Poultry (breasts, whole bird, legs, thighs, wings, ground poultry, giblets, and stuffing)	165 °F (73.9 °C)
Eggs	160 °F (71.1 °C)
Fish & Shellfish	145 °F (62.8 °C)
Leftovers	165 °F (73.9 °C)
Casseroles	165 °F (73.9 °C)

Safe Minimum Internal Temperature Chart | Food Safety and Inspection Service

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/safe-temperature-chart>