Temporary Food Dealer’s Quick Guide

The University of Houston Fire Marshal’s Office has established a policy concerning food being served and consumed at the University. This quick guide is to assist RSOs better understand the policy and to successfully plan events such as bake sales and banquets.

RSOs that are hosting events with food will need to complete an Event Registration with the Center for Student Involvement. However, RSOs that are conducting a bake sale do not need to complete an Event Registration. Following that, RSOs will need to make a reservation with the UC Conference and Reservations Office (CARS) to reserve space. After successful completion of reservations, the RSO will need to obtain a Temporary Food Dealer’s Permit from the UH Fire Marshal’s Office, located at the Department of Public Safety off Wheeler Street. The Temporary Food Dealer’s Permit is valid for only the 1 event.

In addition to the Temporary Food Dealer’s Permit, RSOs that plan on using barbecue pits, reheating, or hot holding devices that require an open flame will need to request an Open Flame Permit.

RSOs that plan on using outside caterers or contractors must be in possession of a valid Health Permit from the City of Houston, Harris County, or the State of Texas and a Certified Food Service Manager’s Certification. Depending on the caterer/contractor, some restaurants may be required to complete a Certificate of Insurance for the University.

The University may prohibit the sale of some or all potentially hazardous foods. Hot ready to eat food items (e.g. pizza, doughnuts, etc.) must be sold within four hours of original receipt or discarded.

The Fire Marshal’s Office has some requirements for a Temporary Food Dealer’s Permit. Please see the policy for a complete list of all requirements.

Food Preparation:
1. Food shall be obtained from approved sources and be in sound condition. Ice use for human consumption must be from an approved source, and held in bags until used and dispensed properly.
2. Meat and poultry products shall be cooked to the following minimum internal temperatures: Poultry = 165 degrees F; Ground Meats and Pork = 155 degrees F; and Other Meats = 145 degrees F.
3. Potentially hazardous foods (e.g. foods which consist of meat; poultry; seafood; dairy; cooked beans; rice; potatoes; or pasta; etc.) must be maintained at 140 degrees F or above for hot foods, or 41 degrees F or below for cold foods.
4. Potentially hazardous foods needing to be reheated prior to the start of the event; must be done rapidly to 165 degrees F or above for at least 15 seconds. A microwave oven, conventional oven, stove, or electrical skillet may be used. Crock pots, chafing dishes, or food warmers CANNOT be used to rapidly reheat foods.
5. Store all food, utensils, plates, cups, and napkins at least 6 inches above the ground.
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Equipment:
1. Food contact with surfaces of equipment shall be protected from contamination by consumers using **separating counters, tables, sneeze guards, etc.**
2. Provide only single-service articles (e.g. plastic knives, forks, and spoons) to consumers.
3. Provide three containers (large enough to completely immerse the largest knife, fork, or spoon) for utensil washing with the following contents:
   - Container #1 – Potable water and soap mixture
   - Container #2 – Clean potable water
   - Container #3 – Sanitation solution (2 caps full of bleach to 1 gallon of water)
4. Utensils, including ice scoops, shall be provided to minimize handling of foods.
5. Provide a sign for homemade items

Personal Hygiene:
1. **Provide gloves and hand sanitizer.**
2. Personnel shall maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness, and conform to good hygienic practices. They shall be free of infections which may transmit food borne illnesses.
3. All individuals working in the booth shall **wear an effective hair restraint** (e.g. ball cap, hairnet, scarf, etc.). In addition, those individuals with hair past their shoulders shall pull it back, or wear it up under the hair restraint.
4. **DO NOT eat, drink, or smoke inside the food prep area.**

Offenders with repeated violations of the requirements, policies and procedures on three separate events will be subject to a temporary suspension of applying for the temporary food dealer’s permit. Any organization operating without a temporary food dealer’s permit will be immediately placed on suspension. All members planning on participating in the next event shall undergo a food safety re-training prior to receiving their next temporary food dealer’s permit.