

UNIVERSITY of
HOUSTON

FIRE & LIFE SAFETY

Email requests to foodsafety@uh.edu

TEMPORARY FOOD DEALER'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Any properly registered student organization, faculty or staff who will temporarily sell or serve food at the University of Houston requires a Temporary Food Dealer's Permit. Permits are issued by the University of Houston Fire and Life Safety Office. The following list identifies guidelines that must be met while operating a temporary food establishment. If you have any questions, contact the Fire and Life Safety Office at 713-743-5595 or email the Food Safety Team at foodsafety@uh.edu.

1. Properly registered student organizations may conduct events where food is catered, sold, or distributed as part of their fundraising efforts. Faculty and staff may conduct catered events. The University has an exclusive agreement with Chartwells to manage the campus food service program. Questions concerning the use of food vendors should be directed to UH Auxiliary Services at auxiliaryservices@uh.edu.
 - a. **Policy Addendum (Effective August 1, 2025):**
 - i. No food trucks or external food vendors are allowed on campus without prior written approval from Chartwells, the University's exclusive dining provider. This approval must be obtained through UH Auxiliary Services. For questions or requests regarding this policy, please contact auxiliaryservices@uh.edu
 - ii. Outside vendors are no longer permitted to serve food directly on campus. If an event includes food from an outside licensed establishment, the individual or organization must:
 1. Personally pick up and transport the food to campus.
 2. Provide a copy of the food establishment's valid permit.
 3. Provide a copy of the food manager's certificate from the establishment.
 4. Ensure food is from a licensed facility—homemade food is strictly prohibited.
 - iii. For large-scale events (involving food from more than three vendors), all required documents, including the Temporary Food Dealer's Permit, must be submitted no fewer than 20 business days prior to the date of the event. **Events that fail to meet this timeline will be denied a permit.**
 - b. All students, faculty, or staff selling or serving outside food at the University of Houston **must** be in possession of a valid Food Establishment (Dealer's) Permit. All food that is brought in from an outside food vendor **must** be in possession of a Food Service Manager's Certification.
 2. Faculty, staff, or students serving food at an event and/or intending to use a caterer/outside contractor to cater an event on campus must follow all rules and regulations mandated by the Fire and Life Safety Office. The individual who obtains the Temporary Food Dealer's Permit is responsible for ensuring all participants of the event adhere to all policies and procedures.

3. Faculty, staff, or students shall submit a request for a Temporary Food Dealer's Permit at least **three** business days prior to the proposed event, unless it is a large-scale event. Any organization or individual who does not submit their permit and any additional paperwork at least three business days prior to the date of their event will receive a time violation. Please see the Violations section below for more information.
4. Before submitting a Temporary Food Dealer's Permit, a site reservation must be confirmed.
 - a. If obtaining a Temporary Food Dealer's Permit in person or by email, proof of site reservation request must be provided.
 - b. If your organization is registered with Get Involved and obtaining a Temporary Food Dealer's permit through that system, the reservation number must be provided.
5. Temporary Food Dealer's Permits expire upon completion of the event except when a variance is granted. If the event is forced to be postponed, please contact the Fire and Life Safety Office for a permit extension before the original permit is set to expire. Otherwise, a new permit will need to be submitted.
6. If there are any changes to the items listed on the approved food permit, then those changes must be approved by the Fire and Life Safety Office prior to the event. Food that is served but not listed on the food permit could result in restriction from serving food at the event and a temporary suspension.
7. Faculty, staff, and students serving or selling food on campus shall comply with the requirements of the Texas Food Establishment Rules, Section 228.222. Food shall be obtained from approved sources (i.e., grocery stores) and be in sound condition. Food shall be prepared only in permitted or licensed establishments. **Food prepared in a private home is not allowed.** Failure to comply with these rules and regulations listed in the Requirements for Temporary Food Dealer's Permit section below will result in the revocation of the Temporary Food Dealer's Permit, and appropriate University disciplinary action.
8. There are some restricted operations where the University may impose additional requirements to protect against health hazards.
9. The University may prohibit the sale of some or all foods that require time or temperature control for safety. Hot ready-to-eat food items (e.g., pizza, doughnuts, etc.) may be sold or served within four hours of the original receipt. All hot ready-to-eat food that requires time or temperature controls must be discarded after the four hours have passed if it was not under any temperature control.
10. Any foods that require time and temperature control for safety (TCS foods) that are sold or served must be prepared on-site by members of the organization (except for delivered pizza/carry-out pizza). TCS foods are foods that if they are handled or prepared improperly can cause a foodborne illness.
11. Anyone planning to use barbecue pits, sterno, reheating or any other hot holding devices that require an open flame must obtain an Open Flame Permit from the Fire and Life Safety Office. An Open Flame Permit can be obtained by:
 - a. Completing the form found on our website under [Special Event Permit Requests](#).
 - b. Creating an event through Get Involved and selecting yes to “*Will an open flame be used? (i.e. sterno, charcoal, propane, candles)*” under the Event Registration Form.

FOOD RISK CATEGORIES

Low Risk:

Low-risk foods are items deemed as shelf stable, or non-TCS foods. It is required that commercially prepared baked goods (if not originally individually packaged) must be individually wrapped. The following Low Risk food items may be sold or served if they are prepackaged as individual servings:

Candy	Soda	Chips
Cake	Cookies	Brownies

1. To be classified as a low-risk category, no food which requires refrigeration or hot hold can be sold or served. This includes cream filled pastries, eclairs, cream pies, etc.
2. Beverages are permitted only if they are served in their original, unopened containers. All open beverages (punch, 2-liter bottles, etc.) are prohibited. Exceptions may be made by the Fire and Life Safety Office.
3. All low-risk food items shall be individually wrapped at the original point of preparation.
4. Items shall be transported in a covered, dustproof container.

Medium Risk:

Food items requiring special handling, such as refrigeration or heating, may be sold as Medium Risk food sales. To be classified as medium-risk category, food items may require special handling, such as refrigeration or heating, but should not require excessive preparation. Food requiring preparation by charcoal, wood burning, or propane device will be allowed in designated campus locations (Lynn Eusan Park and Butler Plaza) with an approved Open Flame Permit.

Medium-risk items include, but not limited to:

Hot dogs (with no chili)	Sandwiches
Nachos (with no chili)	Pizza

High Risk:

Selling or serving any High-Risk food items, whether hot or cold, will be allowed by university policy only for those who first obtain a food handler's certificate. The food handler's certificate can be obtained through any ANSI approved food handler's course. If you are not sure if your food handler's certificate is from an approved course, please contact the Food Safety Team. Fees are associated with obtaining these certificates. Once the certificate is obtained, include a copy of it with your Temporary Food Dealer's Permit.

All events serving or selling high-risk food must have a food handler's certificate on site and must be able to show proper identification of the food handler when asked. If serving high-risk/TCS foods on campus, then a certified food handler must be on site at all times throughout the duration of the event.

High-risk items include, but not limited to:

Milk and milk products	Shell eggs	Baked or boiled potatoes
Poultry (Chicken, Turkey)	Fish	Cooked rice
Tofu	Meats: Beef, Pork, Lamb	Head treated plant food
Soy – protein foods	Shellfish and Crustacea	Garlic and oil mixtures

Raw sprouts and seeds	Cut melons	Cooked beans
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REQUIREMENTS FOR TEMPORARY FOOD DEALER'S OPERATIONS DURING EVENTS

Food and Food Preparation:

1. Food shall be obtained from approved sources (i.e., grocery stores) and be in sound condition.
2. Meat and poultry products shall be cooked to the following minimum internal temperatures:
 - a. Poultry = 165°F
 - b. Ground meats and pork = 155°F
 - c. Other meats = 145°F
3. TCS foods (e.g., foods which consist whole, or in part of meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, cooked beans, rice, potatoes, pasta etc.) after being properly cooked **must** be maintained at 135°F or hotter for *hot foods*, or 41°F or colder for *cold foods*. A calibrated thermometer must be on site when TCS foods are sold or served.
4. A properly scaled metal stem-type thermometer shall be used to monitor the proper internal cooking and holding temperatures of potentially hazardous foods.
5. All food, regardless of risk level, must be properly covered at all times to prevent exposure or possible contamination.
6. All food, regardless of risk level, must be properly labeled with any of the following food allergens:

Milk	Eggs	Fish
Crustacean shellfish	Tree nuts	Peanuts
Wheat	Soybeans	Sesame

Any food containing any of these allergens must have a label that states: "Food contains _____" or "Food was made in a facility that process this allergen."

7. Ice used for human consumption must be from an approved source (homemade not allowed) and stored in food-grade bags until used and dispensed properly. DO NOT store any food in water or ice that is intended for human consumption. Use a metal ice scoop or disposable gloves to handle ice.

Do not use bare hands.

8. TCS foods needing to be reheated prior to the start of the event must be done rapidly to 165°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.
9. Store all food, utensils, plates, cups, napkins, or any other food-contact surface at least 6 inches above the ground.

Equipment:

1. Food contact with surfaces of equipment shall be protected from contamination by consumers using separating containers, tables, sneeze guards, etc.
2. Provide only single-service articles (i.e., plastic knives, forks, spoons) to consumers.

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3. Utensils, including ice scoops, shall be provided to minimize handling of foods.
4. Provide three containers (large enough to completely immerse the largest knife, fork, or spoon) for utensil washing with the following contents:
 - a. Container #1 – Potable water and soap mixture
 - b. Container #2 – Clean potable water
 - c. Container #3 – Sanitation solution (2 cap full of bleach to 1 gallon of water)

Personal Hygiene:

1. Provide enough gloves, hand sanitizer, and hair restraints for ALL individuals handling food at your event. Pocket sized bottles of hand sanitizer will not be allowed.
2. Individuals/personnel shall maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and conform to good hygienic practices. They shall be excluded from food preparations if one possesses known infections which may transmit food borne illnesses. **Individuals who are feeling ill may not participate in the food sale. If any individual is experiencing the following symptoms, they must be excluded from the event: vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, or a fever.**
3. All individuals working in the booth shall wear effective hair restraints (i.e., ball cap, hair net, scarf, etc.). In addition, those individuals with hair longer than shoulder length shall tie it back or wear it up under the hair restraint.
4. DO NOT eat, drink, or smoke inside the food prep area.

Toilet Facilities and Waste Disposal:

1. Conveniently located toilet facilities shall be provided. Facilities in immediately adjacent UH buildings are acceptable if such buildings are unlocked and available for use.
2. Covered containers for refuse and garbage shall be provided.
3. Dispose of all liquid and solid waste properly according to university regulations.

Booth Construction:

1. Provide a ceiling in food preparation and service areas (wood, canvas, or other material that protects the interior of the establishment from weather and other potential contaminating agents). Please note: Cooking is prohibited directly below a booth ceiling. If you are cooking at your event, please contact the FLS team for assistance.
2. Dust shall be controlled. Floors shall be constructed of concrete, asphalt, tight wood, tarps, outdoor carpet, or the cleanable material approved by the health authority.
3. Pests (flies, roaches, or rodents) shall be controlled. Doors, walls, screening, and other measures may be required when necessary to restrict the entrance of flying insects.

Violations:

All events where food items will be sold or served are subject to inspection. Any organization that accumulates three or more violations during the academic year will be immediately placed on suspension. 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. See the length of suspension below. Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting a permit request less than 3 business days prior to an event.
- Submitting a permit request less than 20 business days prior to a large-scale event.
- Serving food items or beverages that are not listed on an approved Temporary Food Dealer's Permit.
- Storing food items and beverages improperly during an inspection.

Any organization or individual operating without an approved Temporary Food Dealer's Permit will be immediately placed on suspension. Organizations or individuals placed on immediate suspension will need to attend a food safety training class administered by the Fire and Life Safety Office prior to receiving their next Temporary Food Dealer's Permit. The length of the suspension will fall into one of the two categories listed below:

Length of Suspension

1. Organizations or individuals found selling or serving food without an approved Temporary Food Dealer's Permit prior to the semester midterms will be suspended until the end of the academic semester.
2. Organizations or individuals found selling or serving food without an approved Temporary Food Dealer's Permit after the semester midterms will be suspended until the end of the next academic semester.

Link to Permit:

<https://www.uh.edu/sugarland/campus-services/campus-safety/forms-permits/>