

**University of Houston – Clear Lake**  
**Temporary Food & Special Events**  
**Quick Guide for Student Organizations**

The University of Houston – Clear Lake Risk Management Department has established required practices concerning food being served and consumed at the University. This quick guide is intended to assist Student Organizations in understanding the requirements and to successfully plan events such as bake sales and banquets.

Student Organizations hosting events with food will need to submit a **Temporary Food & Special Events Permit Request Form for Student Organizations** with the Student Life Office at least 14 calendar days prior to the event. The Temporary Food & Special Events Permit is valid for only the dates listed. Multiple dates on the same form will be approved only if the food items and practices are the same for all dates listed.

In addition to the Temporary Food & Special Events Permit Request, Student Organizations that plan to use any **open flame** including: barbecue pits, reheating, hot holding devices (including sterno fuels), or candles **will need to request an Open Flame Permit** from the Fire Marshall's Office.

Student Organizations that plan on using outside caterers or contractors shall only use establishments in possession of a **valid Health Permit** from an adjoining City, County, or the State of Texas and a **Certified Food Service Manager's Certification**. When purchasing food from a caterer/contractor using University funds, some restaurants may be required to complete a Certificate of Insurance.

Please see the Risk Management webpage for a complete list of all requirements included in the **Temporary Food & Special Events Procedures**.

**Low Risk Food Items:**

1. "Low Risk" foods are shelf stable, may not contain spoilable ingredients or those with high moisture content.
2. Examples include: chips, popcorn, candy, beverages (served from original, unopened containers), many bake sale items, whole fruit (uncut, not peeled).
3. Please see the **Temporary Food and Special Events Low Risk Food Items** guidance for more information.
4. Student Organizations are required to submit a **Temporary Food & Special Events Permit Request Form for Student Organizations** through Student Life when serving these items.

**Foods Requiring Temperature Control:**

1. Foods that are potentially hazardous (food of animal origin OR having >50% moisture; this includes rice, chicken, cut fruit, drinks containing syrup) must not be allowed to reach room temperature. To reduce the risk of food borne illness they must be kept hot at >140°F or cold at <40°F.
2. Student Organizations are required to submit a **Temporary Food & Special Events Permit Request Form for Student Organizations** through Student Life when serving these items for approval through the Risk Management Office.
3. The University may prohibit the sale of some or all potentially hazardous foods. Food items requiring temperature control **must be served within 4 hours** of original receipt or discarded.

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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 40 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.

Equipment:

1. Food shall be protected from contamination by consumers using **food covers, separating counters or tables, sneeze guards, etc.**
2. Provide only single-service articles (e.g. plastic knives, forks, and spoons) to consumers.
3. Extra utensils, including ice scoops, shall be provided to minimize handling of foods **or** the following set-up must be provided to clean and disinfect. 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 caps full of bleach to 1 gallon of water)

Personal Hygiene:

1. **Provide gloves and wash hands before reentering food area.**
2. Food servers 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 food area 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 or serving area.**

Offenders with repeated violations of the requirements outlined by Risk Management 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 approved permit request.