



**CONTRA COSTA
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIVISION**
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CATERER CHECKLIST

Definitions:

- **Catering Business** means a person, business, or food facility that is permitted and regulated by this division to prepare, transport, and serve food, beverages, and/or related food services to the public. The food is stored and prepared in an approved, permitted, food facility and regulated under the California Retail Food Code (CRFC) through an annual permit.
- **Consumer** means a person who is a member of the public, takes possession of food, is not functioning in the capacity of an operator of a food facility, and does not offer the food for resale.
- **Cook-for-Hire** means a person who is hired to prepare and/or serve food at a private residence. All food prepared by the cook-for-hire is handled at the private residence and not open or advertised to the public. A cook-for-hire is not a food service/catering operation. It is not regulated by this division and does not require a health permit to operate. ***A cook-for-hire must purchase/obtain the food immediately prior to the start of the event. Storage or handling at any location other than the private home requires a retail food or caterer permit.**
- **Retail** means the storing, preparing, serving, manufacturing, packaging, transporting, salvaging, or otherwise handling food for dispensing or sale directly to the consumer or indirectly through a delivery service.

Application Checklist:

1. Prior to receiving a permitting inspection to obtain a Catering Permit, the following items are required:
Initial each box-
 - Catering Business Permit to Operate Application** (with required documents to verify ownership)
 - Health Permit to Operate fee payment (submit with application)
 - Caterer Checklist** (submit with application)
 - Production Kitchen Agreement** form (submit with application)
 - Catering Menu** (submit with application)
 - Valid **Food Safety Certification** and **food handler cards** (receipt of enrollment is acceptable)
 - Proposed production calendar
 - Verification of permit fee exemption (if applicable)

Caterer Checklist – Food Safety Requirements

1. Food, Equipment, and Utensils: Protection from Contamination:

- No home-prepared food may be served (Note: use of cottage food products must be approved with our division before use). All food, utensils and equipment must be stored and cleaned at the designated permitted food facility (production kitchen).
- The caterer must maintain control over the food (including periods of storage, preparation, and transportation). All food must be adequately protected so as to be maintained pure and free of contamination, adulteration, and spoilage.
- Utensils, supplies and equipment must be of adequate construction and design (smooth, non-absorbent, easily cleanable) and protected from contamination.
- Sufficient equipment must be provided to properly store food and utensils during transport, storage, and service (hot holding units, ice chests, shelves, totes with lids, pallets, crates, chafing dishes, etc.).
- Sneeze protection and barbecue protection must be provided during the food service/catering operation.

2. Prevent cross-contamination during periods of transportation, storage, preparation, holding, service and display:

- Keep raw foods of animal origin separate and away from ready-to-eat foods; including raw food of animal origin (sushi), produce, and cooked ready-to-eat food.
- Wrap food and use covers on all containers.
- Use separate equipment, containers, cutting boards, etc; for meats, produce and ready-to-eat foods.
- Separate different types of raw foods of animal origin from each other in the following order from top to bottom. (top) fish/seafood [lowest cooking temperature required], then whole/cut pork/beef, then ground pork/beef; (bottom) poultry [highest cooking temperature required].
- Prepare each type of food at different times or in different areas; always prepare foods requiring a higher cooking temperature after those requiring a lower cooking temperature
- Pre-wash all fruits and vegetables.
- Clean hermetically sealed bags and cans with visible soil prior to opening.
- Store all food 6 inches off of the floor/ground.
- Store all open dry goods inside a tightly sealed container.
- During pauses in food preparation or dispensing, store in-use utensils used for potentially hazardous foods:
 - ✓ In the food with their handles above the top of the food

- ✓ On a clean portion of the food preparation table or cooking equipment, ensuring that the utensils and surfaces are cleaned and sanitized at least every 4 hours
- ✓ In running water with sufficient velocity to flush food particles to the drain
- ✓ In a container of water 135°F/higher or in ice water at 41°F/below
- For utensils used with non-potentially hazardous foods (ice, flour, sugar, etc.):
 - ✓ Keep stored in a clean, covered and protected location when not in use
- Use scoops with handles.
- Keep handles out of the contact with the food being dispensed.
- Transportation vehicles must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition where food is stored.
- Ice used for refrigeration or cold holding purposes cannot be served for consumption.
- Condiments must be in pump, squeeze type containers, or single-service packets.

3. Equipment and Utensil Sanitation:

- All utensils and equipment must be pre-rinsed, washed, rinsed, sanitized, and air-dried.
- Manual warewashing must be completed as follows:
 - ✓ Pre-scrape utensils and equipment; clean and sanitize warewash areas
 - ✓ First compartment wash using hot soapy water (above 100°F)
 - ✓ Second compartment, rinse in clear water
 - ✓ Third compartment, sanitize; manual sanitation may be performed by immersion in a 100-ppm chlorine solution for at least 30 seconds (1 tbl spoon bleach/1 gal water) or immersion in a 200-ppm quaternary ammonium solution for at least 60 seconds (follow instructions on label)
 - ✓ Final step is air dry
- A mechanical dish machine must be capable of providing both of the following:
 - ✓ 120°F wash water
 - ✓ A minimum chlorine residual of 50 ppm, or 160°F utensil surface temperature water for effective sanitizing
- Equipment, food-contact surfaces and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized:
 - ✓ Before use and between uses when working with different types of raw food of animal origin
 - ✓ Each time there is a change from working with raw foods to working with ready-to-eat foods

- ✓ Between uses with raw produce and with potentially hazardous food
- ✓ Before using or storing a food temperature measuring device
- ✓ At any time during the operation when contamination may have occurred
- ✓ At least every four hours when in use

4. Temperature Control

- Cold holding of potentially hazardous food must be held at or below 41°F.
- Hot holding of potentially hazardous food must be held at or above 135°F.
- All foods remaining unserved at the end of an event must be discarded.
- Sufficient equipment must be provided to maintain required temperatures or all perishable food during transport, storage and service (refrigerators, ice chests, steam tables, chafing dishes, etc.).
- All potentially hazardous food must be cooked to the required minimum cooking temperatures:
 - ✓ Cooked Vegetables for hot holding – 135°F
 - ✓ Seafood, beef or pork steaks, eggs – 145°F
 - ✓ Ground beef or pork -155°F
 - ✓ Poultry, stuffed foods, reheated/microwaved foods – 165°F
- When preparation includes cooling of cooked foods, foods must be quickly cooled from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours, and from 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours. The cooling process can be accomplished by:
 - ✓ Placing foods in shallow metal pans, such as stainless steel, with product 2 inches deep
 - ✓ Separate the food into smaller or thinner portions
 - ✓ Use rapid cooling equipment, such as an ice paddle
 - ✓ Insert appropriately designed containers in an ice bath, stirring frequently
- Reheat foods quickly, within 2 hours to a minimum temperature of 165°F.
- A probe thermometer must be provided during preparation and event operation for measuring the internal temperature of food products during cold and hot holding, cooking, cooling, and reheating.

5. Food Handlers:

- All food handlers must be in good health.
- Hands and arms must be washed with soap and warm water before commencing work, after using toilet facilities, after eating or drinking, after coughing or sneezing, after touching face or hair, as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross-contamination when changing tasks, or when contamination may have occurred. NOTE: Glove use does not substitute hand washing; hand sanitizer may be used in conjunction with, but not in place of, hand washing.

- Hair must be restrained at all times when working with unpackaged food.
- Outer garments and aprons must be clean.

6. Remote Facilities/Event Locations:

- One toilet for every 15 employees with adequate handwashing facilities must be available within 200 feet of the catering operation event site.
- Garbage and wastewater receptacles sufficient to contain all waste pending disposal must be provided during each operation. Wastewater must be discarded in an approved sewer system only.
- To ensure food safety and protection from cross-contamination at remote locations where no indoor kitchen facility or indoor fully enclosed structure is available, it is strongly recommended to operate within a temporary food facility booth, supplied with all necessary washing facilities and operational equipment.
 - ✓ The Temporary Food Facility booth should be fully enclosed consisting of overhead protection, walls of mesh or tarp, and washable flooring
 - ✓ Portable handwashing facilities consisting of water container with a hands-free spigot, warm water (100°F), a catch basin, pump soap, paper towels, and a trash receptacle should be conveniently located.
- Portable warewashing facilities should be provided through one of the following methods:
 - ✓ Three compartment sink with two integral metal drain boards
 - ✓ Utensil washing station consisting of three tubs; one with hot soapy water, one with hot rinse water, and one with sanitizer

The undersigned has read and understands the information provided in the Caterer Checklist and agrees to operate and function in accordance with all applicable state and local regulations, laws, and such inspection procedures needed to ensure compliance.

The Caterer Permit to Operate is valid until the end of February each year. Submittal of a complete application packet and current fee, including outstanding balances, if any, are required on a yearly basis to secure a valid permit before continuing operations in Contra Costa County.

Applicant Name: (Please print) _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date _____