

FOOD SAFETY SPECIAL EVENT GUIDELINES

Special Events in York Region must comply with applicable regulations and best practice guidelines to prevent the risk of food-borne illness. The following requirements are intended to be used for special events where food is processed, prepared, stored, handled, displayed, distributed, transported, sold or offered for sale to the public.

General Requirements

FOOD PROTECTION

- All food served to the public must be from an inspected source. Inspected sources include food premises inspected by public health inspectors, such as restaurants, supermarkets, bakeries, inspected home-based businesses and food processing plants (e.g., federally or provincially inspected facilities)
- Food prepared from an uninspected home is not allowed
- Use only Grade A or B eggs. Never use Grade C or ungraded eggs
- Ensure water comes from a potable drinking water source
- All ice or steam must be made from potable drinking water source

FOOD PREPARATION

- All food preparation prior to the event must be done at an inspected facility. This includes cutting ingredients, marinating, mixing, baking and other forms of food preparation
- To prevent bacteria from growing rapidly, potentially hazardous foods should be kept out of the temperature danger zone (keep cold foods at 4°C/40°F or lower and hot food at 60°C/140°F or higher)
- Avoid cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods by having separate equipment, utensils, cutting boards and preparation areas for each
- Use utensils to handle food to minimize direct hand contact (e.g., utensils for prepping, cooking, and serving)

TRANSPORTATION

- Cold food must be kept at 4°C/40°F or lower and hot food must be 60°C/140°F or higher
- Transport food in coolers with ice or ice packs to ensure that all food is maintained at proper temperatures
- Storage thermometers are required in all cold/hot holding units to ensure food is not in the temperature danger zone
- Keep cooler(s) away from direct sunlight with the lid closed
- Never leave potentially hazardous foods in a hot vehicle

PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/FoodSafety



TEMPERATURES AND THERMOMETERS

- A probe thermometer is required to check the [internal temperatures](#) of hazardous food
- Do not use heat lamps for holding hot food items
- Covered chafing dishes can be used with fuel source (warming gel)

PROTECTING FOOD

- Cover food to protect it from contamination using food grade materials (e.g., aluminum trays with lids, etc.)
- Condiment containers must have self-closing lids and separate dispensing utensils
- Disposable utensils must be stored in a clean container and in a manner to prevent contamination

PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Food handlers must follow good personal hygiene practices by washing hands often, wearing clean clothing and taking precautions that the food is not contaminated by hair
- Proper handwashing is preferred over glove use unless the food handler has a minor cut or burn
- Gloves should be used once and discarded after each task. When changing tasks, remove and dispose of the gloves and wash your hands
- Hand sanitizers may be used but not as a replacement for proper handwashing

HAND WASHING STATIONS

- A handwashing station is required in the food preparation area. This includes potable water, liquid soap, and paper towel
- Temporary handwashing stations, at a minimum, must consist of an insulated container with a spigot, providing a continuous flow of running water, liquid soap, paper towels and a bucket to collect wastewater
 - The temporary handwashing station must be set up on an elevated surface (e.g., table or shelf)
 - Wastewater from the handwashing sink must be disposed of in a sanitary manner, not on the ground or in recreational waters

DISHWASHING EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

- A [two-compartment sink](#) is highly recommended and should be used for washing and sanitizing cooking and serving utensils used on-site
- Detergent soap supplies and approved sanitizer must be available. An approved sanitizer for the second sink can be made with approximately 2 ml (1/2 teaspoon) of unscented household bleach mixed with 1 litre (4 cups) of water. An alternative to household bleach is quaternary ammonium, following manufacturer's directions
- If dishwashing is not possible, ensure multiple sets of equipment and utensils are available.
- Ensure clean and dirty equipment and utensils are kept separate

CLEANING AND SANITIZING

- All food contact surfaces should be cleaned and sanitized between use
- Cleaning chemicals and sanitizers must be properly labelled and stored away from food

SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO ACT

- Special Event Organizer shall ensure that all staff, volunteers, and visitors adhere to the requirements under the [Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017](#). For more information, visit [Smoke-Free and Vape-Free Spaces](#)

IMPORTANT TIPS

- Keep all food off the ground, including fruits and vegetables
- Use sunshades or umbrellas to protect food from the sun and animal droppings
- Adequate, durable, leak-proof garbage storage bins with lids must be readily available
- Have washroom facilities available, equipped with water, liquid soap, and paper towels
- If the event continues after sundown, adequate lighting is required