



# County of Yolo

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

### Environmental Health Division

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## Catering Guidelines

### Definitions

**Caterer-** a person (or entity) who supplies food and beverages and/or related services to any off premise private function. Caterers are required to obtain a permit to operate from Yolo County Environmental Health (YCEH). Per the California Retail Food Code (CalCode), caterers are required to have a valid health permit.

**Commissary-** a permitted food facility in which a caterer operates out of and where the following occurs:

1. Food, containers, or supplies are stored.
2. Food is prepared or prepackaged for service at other locations.
3. Utensils are cleaned.
4. Liquid and solid wastes are disposed of and potable water is obtained.

### Permit Requirements

Catering operations must submit the following to obtain a health permit:

1. Permit application and applicable fee.
2. A commissary agreement. Catering operations may only take place from a permitted food establishment (private homes cannot be permitted).
3. A sample menu.
4. A current Food Safety Certification.

### Catering Requirements

#### **A. Food Preparation**

1. Use of food prepared or stored at a home is prohibited at a catering function (unless that food is prepared under a Cottage Food Permit).
2. All food handling and preparation related to the catering operation shall take place within the approved commissary, unless otherwise approved by YCEH.
3. Commissary locations and catering operations are subject to and must be in compliance with all pertinent section of CalCode.

#### **B. Temperature Control-** adequate temperature control shall be provided for all perishable (potentially hazardous) foods.

1. Provide a metal probe thermometer to check temperatures during the catered event.
2. Cold foods- maintain food temperatures at 41° F or below.
3. Hot foods- maintain food temperatures at 135° F or below.
4. Cooking Temperatures- minimum internal cooking temperature of potentially hazardous foods are:

Eggs, Pork, Fish	145° F
Ground beef	155° F
Poultry, stuffed meats	165° F

#### **C. Food Transportation-** food in transit must be protected from contamination and must meet the temperature requirements noted above. Catering vehicles must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

**D. Food Handlers**

1. Food Handlers must be clean and in good health.
2. Food Handlers shall wash their hands and arms with soap and warm water prior to the start of food preparation activities, after handling raw meats, after using the restroom and as necessary to prevent food contamination. If the catered event is held at a site where no hand wash facilities are available, the caterer is responsible for bringing their own.
3. Clean aprons and outer garments must be worn and hair must be restrained.
4. Sanitary food handling techniques must be practiced at all times. Whenever practical, food handlers shall use tongs, disposable plastic gloves or single use tissue when handling food.

**E. Food Service**

1. Food served during the event must be displayed in a safe, sanitary manner and protected from contamination. Sneeze guards may be required.
2. Self-service displays shall be monitored by catering staff.

**F. Ice-** ice used for refrigeration at a catering event cannot be used for consumption.

**G. Condiments-** condiment containers used at a catering event shall be the pump types, squeeze containers, or have self-closing covers or lids for content protection. Single service packets are recommended.

**H. Toilet Facilities-** at least one toilet facility, with available handwashing, for every 15 employees shall be provided within 200 feet of each catering site.

**I. Storage/Service**

1. All food, beverage, utensils, and related equipment shall be stored displayed and served so as to be protected from contamination.
2. All foods, beverages, utensils and related equipment must be stored at least 6 inches off of the floor.
3. During the catered event, an area separated from food preparation and food storage must be provided for the storage of employee clothing or personal belongings.

**J. Open-Air BBQ Facilities-** an open-air BBQ may be used in conjunction with a catered event. The BBQ may be used for cooking roasting or broiling over live coals (wood, charcoal, or gas heated). The BBQ may not be used for warming foods or maintaining food temperatures in pots or other containers.