

TO: Temporary Event Coordinators and Food Vendors

FROM: M. David Lawrence  
Environmental Health Specialist III  
Temporary Event Coordinator

SUBJECT: Requirements and Applications for a Temporary Food Service Permit

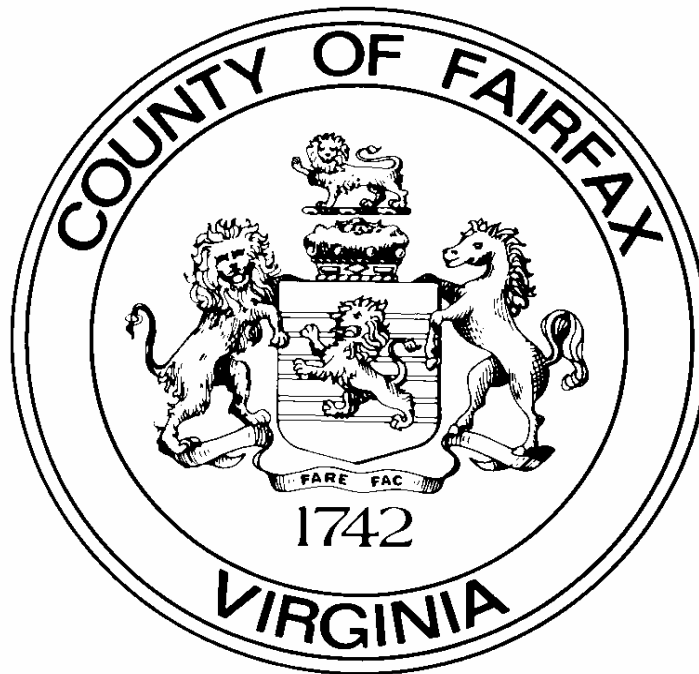
Enclosed is the Fairfax County Health Department's Temporary Food Service Packet.  
The packet includes the following:

- A) Requirements
- B) Coordinator's Application for a Temporary Event with Food Vendors
- C) Application for Permit to Operate a Temporary Food Establishment
- D) Temporary Food Establishment Operations Checklist

Please review these documents carefully. The completed food vendor application and **application fee of \$60.00** are to be submitted to the above address **at least ten (10) days in advance** of the event. Once the application is received, it shall be reviewed. If there are questions or concerns, a representative of the Health Department shall contact the applicant. Upon approval of the application, the Health Department will schedule an on-site inspection of your foodservice operation (i.e. stand, booth, mobile food unit, etc.).

The inspection will be conducted approximately one hour before the event opens to the public and/or service of food begins. Upon inspection and approval by the Environmental Health Specialist, a Temporary Food Service Permit will be issued (to be posted by the operator) and food service may begin. Food **may not** be served until the permit has been issued.

If you have further questions regarding these requirements of the permitting process, please contact the David Lawrence at (703) 246-8435 weekdays from 8:00a.m. to 4:30p.m.



COUNTY OF FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

# **TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE**

(CARNIVALS, FAIRS, FESTIVALS, AND OTHER EVENTS)  
REQUIREMENTS, APPLICATIONS, AND CHECKLIST

FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
FOOD SAFETY SECTION  
10777 MAIN STREET SUITE 111  
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA 22030  
TELEPHONE (703) 246-2444  
FAX (703) 385-9568

## **FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT (CARNIVALS, FAIRS, FESTIVALS, AND OTHER EVENTS)**

The following requirements are pursuant to Chapter 43.1, *Food and Food Establishments*, of the Fairfax County Code. These requirements address the safe handling, preparation, transportation, storage and protection of food items prepared and served to the public from temporary food establishments at such events as carnivals, fairs, festivals, and craft shows.

The purpose of the requirements is to reduce risk factors known to contribute to foodborne illnesses associated with temporary food establishments. Risk factors include improper personal hygiene, inadequate cooking temperatures, improper holding temperatures, and unapproved food and water source. Inspections of the temporary food establishments shall be conducted by the Health Department to ensure that the operator has implemented control measures to reduce and/or eliminate the conditions associated with these risk factors.

**DEFINITION: “Temporary Food Establishment”** means a food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration. A temporary food establishment includes at least the following:

- A restaurant with a Permit to Operate a Food Establishment issued by the Fairfax County Health Department or other health jurisdiction that is participating as a food vendor (the restaurant permit does not extend to off-premises operation at a temporary event);
- A firm that is under an inspection program conducted by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) offering unpackaged samples of their product, including cutting or slicing produce items at a farmer's market;
- A mobile food unit without a permit issued by the Fairfax County Health Department;
- A gourmet food vendor who offers unpackaged samples of their product to the public;
- A demonstration cooking booth where samples are offered to the public; and
- A church, fraternal organization, social organization, or volunteer fire department (and the auxiliary organizations) that is not sponsoring the event and/or is not preparing all food items in its premises or in the homes of its members.

Please contact the Health Department if you are not sure your operation meets the definition of a temporary food establishment. For a list of exemptions to these requirements, please refer to Title 35.1-25 of the Code of Virginia.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

Please read the requirements carefully. They are intended to answer questions regarding the operation of a temporary food establishment. Furthermore, carefully follow the **checklist** provided in this packet. All criteria identified on the checklist must be met in order to obtain a Health Department Permit to operate your temporary food establishment.

**NOTE: THE APPLICANT SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIREMENTS OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT. IF VIOLATIONS ARE FOUND, THE OPERATOR MUST TAKE CORRECTIVE ACTION IMMEDIATELY OR AS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY THE HEALTH OFFICIAL. FAILURE TO CORRECT THE VIOLATION(S) WILL RESULT IN THE REVOCATION OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PERMIT AND IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF THE FOODSERVICE OPERATION. FAILURE TO COMPLY MAY ALSO AFFECT HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUANCE OF A PERMIT AT FUTURE EVENTS.**

### **1) PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS:**

#### **COORDINATOR(S):**

- a) The coordinator is responsible for organizing the event and shall provide the food vendors with the “**Requirements for Temporary Food Establishments**”, the “**Application for Permit to Operate a Temporary Food Establishment**”, and the “**Temporary Food Establishment Operations Checklist**”. You may obtain the requirements, applications and checklist from the Fairfax County Health Department and on the world-wide web at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd).
- b) The coordinator shall provide the Fairfax County Health Department with the completed “**Coordinator’s Application for a Temporary Event with Food Vendors**” and a completed “**Application for Permit to Operate a Temporary Food Establishment**” for every proposed food vendor at least ten (10) days prior to the event. There is no fee for the coordinator’s application.
- c) The coordinator will be responsible for contacting the Fairfax County Health Department to determine if there is a training requirement prior to the event. Advance notice of at least 2 weeks must be given to schedule training.

**NOTE: IF YOU HAVE A SMALL EVENT AND THERE IS NO COORDINATOR, THE FOOD VENDOR(S) MUST SUBMIT THE “APPLICATION FOR PERMIT TO OPERATE A TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENT” DIRECTLY TO THE FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT.**

## **PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS (continued):**

### **FOOD VENDOR(S):**

- a) Submit to the Fairfax County Health Department an “**Application for Permit to Operate a Temporary Food Establishment**” and the **application fee of \$60.00**.
- b) **The completed application and fee of \$60.00 must be received at least ten (10) days prior to the event.** Applications shall be signed acknowledging agreement to comply with applicable requirements.
- c) Permits are not transferable to another operator or event and are valid only for the period of time specified.
- d) Only those food items listed on the application may be offered for sale, sample, or service unless changes are approved in advance by the Health Department.
- e) Temporary food establishments shall not open for business until an inspection is conducted and a permit is issued.

## **2) PHYSICAL FACILITIES:**

- a) Food booths shall have overhead protection and a cleanable floor surface. The preferred floor surface is asphalt or concrete; however, plywood, tarp or a similar non-slip surface may be used if the booth is located on grass, loose gravel or dirt. Overhead protection where there is cooking must be approved by the Fire Department.
- b) An adequate supply of potable water must be available at each booth. Water must be from an approved source.
- c) Containers with tight-fitting lids shall be provided for liquid waste. Wastewater (i.e. wash water, rinse water, sanitizing water, drained ice water, etc.) may not be disposed of on the ground surface. Sewage connections shall be sanitary, non-leaking, inaccessible to insects and rodents, and approved by the health department prior to the event.
- d) Adequate and sanitary toilet facilities must be available and conveniently located for food employees.
- e) The person in charge is responsible for keeping the preparation and service areas and the surrounding grounds free of litter, trash and garbage. All garbage/refuse shall be containerized and properly disposed of during and after the event.

**3) PERSONAL HYGIENE:**

- a) Persons having open cuts or sores on his/her hands or arms may not prepare or serve food.
- b) Persons with acute respiratory infections such as colds or flu, or persons with communicable diseases involving organisms that can be transmitted by food are not allowed in food service operations and are subject to immediate exclusion if found handling food in a temporary food establishment.
- c) No eating, drinking, or smoking shall take place in the food preparation area, serving area, or cleaning and storing area of a temporary food establishment.
- d) Food handlers that use the toilet facilities, smoke, eat or drink must wash their hands before returning to work.
- e) Hands must be washed frequently and fingernails kept trimmed and cleaned. A plumbed sink or a clean container with a spigot, a container to catch wastewater, liquid hand soap, and paper towels must be provided at each booth. Gloves or chemically treated towelettes are not a substitute for handwashing.
- f) Hair restraints are required for all food handlers. Hair nets, caps, visors, etc. are acceptable means of hair restraint, but hairspray alone is not acceptable.
- g) The outer garments of food handling employees shall be clean. Jewelry should be limited. Excessive hand jewelry may not be worn.

**4) FOOD AND BEVERAGE:**

- a) All food products including beverages, ice and water shall come from an approved source. The use of HOME CANNED or HOME PREPARED FOOD is strictly prohibited.
- b) Food temperatures shall be maintained safe for perishable (potentially hazardous) foods as follows:
  - Cold foods - maintain food temperature of 41°F or below.
  - Hot foods - maintain food temperature of 135°F or above.
  - Food in transit must be protected from contamination and must meet the temperature requirements noted above.

**Note: Sufficient equipment is essential for cooking foods and maintaining temperatures of all perishable foods (i.e. steam tables, chafing dishes, refrigerators, ice chests, etc.)**

- c) Potentially hazardous foods that have been cooked, cooled and refrigerated must be reheated for hot holding to 165°F within 2 hours.
- d) Foods shall be stored at least six (6) inches off the floor.
- e) The manager, operator, or person in charge shall provide and use a properly calibrated metal stem bayonet thermometer or digital thermometer with a range of (0-220°F) in +/-2°F increments for checking internal food temperatures. The thermometer shall be properly sanitized prior to each use and periodically calibrated.
- f) Food and utensils must be protected from contamination.
- g) Ice for human consumption shall be stored in cleanable, covered, self draining containers and dispensed with handled scoops, tongs, or other approved methods.
- h) Food condiments such as mustard, catsup, relish, etc. must be served in individual packets, squeeze bottles, or pump type dispensers. Cream and sugar shall be served in individual packets only. Milk products or non-dairy creamers shall be refrigerated to 41°F or below. In instances where dispensers or individual packets are not available, food handlers must add condiments or ingredients requested by the patron.
- i) Foods that are contaminated, adulterated in any way or held at improper temperature are subject to immediate condemnation and discarding.

**5) FOOD PREPARATION, HANDLING, DISPLAY, AND SERVICE:**

- a) Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prohibited. Provide disposable gloves, tongs, spatula, tissue paper or other utensil(s) for use to prevent bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.
- b) Food preparation is to be kept to a minimum and prepared in small quantities.
- c) Holding of cooked food is not allowed unless proper hot holding equipment is available.
- d) Prepackaged food must be used where possible.
- e) Food preparation and cooking must be separated from public access.
- f) Adequate counter protection devices (sneeze guards or shielding) must be provided to protect non-packaged displayed foods from contamination.
- g) Food containers must be labeled to properly identify their contents.

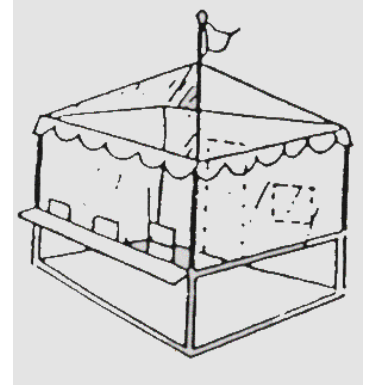
- h) Canned or bottled drinks and packaged food shall not be stored in contact with water or undrained ice.
- i) Toxic items such as cleaners must be labeled and stored away from food and food preparation surfaces. The use of pesticides is prohibited without prior approval from the health department.
- j) An adequate number of leakproof and flyproof garbage containers shall be provided and serviced as needed. Plastic garbage bags should be used to line the garbage containers. Arrangements must be made for clean up and final disposal of all solid waste.

**6) EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS:**

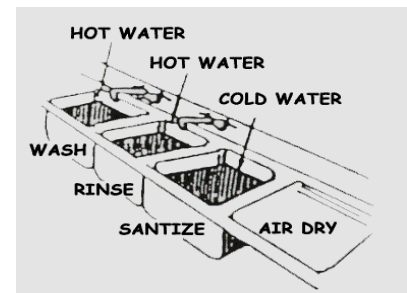
- a) Sufficient refrigeration and/or hot holding facilities shall be provided which are capable of maintaining potentially hazardous food at proper temperature of 41°F or below and 135°F or above. Ice chest with adequate ice may be used for keeping foods cold.
- b) Storage containers, single service items, equipment and utensils shall be stored at least six (6) inches off the floor.
- c) Only single service utensils may be provided for use by the consumer. If wrapped single service utensils are not provided, then the utensils must either be handed to each consumer by the food worker, or stored in a manner where the food contact surface is not exposed and handles are presented to the consumer.
- d) Hoses used for potable water must be food grade and labeled to indicate that they are commercial grade or NSF approved. Back-flow prevention devices must be provided also if deemed necessary.
- e) Metal banded paint-type brushes are prohibited. Plastic banded brushes are approved. Trash bags are not acceptable for food storage. Lead, lead glazed, cadmium (plating on gray enamelware) or enameled utensils / equipment are prohibited.
- f) If slicing, chopping, cutting, mixing, or any other type of food handling at the event site, a properly plumbed three-compartment sink with hot and cold running water or three containers of adequate size (i.e. 5-gallon buckets or 3-gallon dish pans) shall be provided for washing, rinsing and sanitizing food contact surfaces of equipment and utensils.
- g) Equipment and utensils shall be cleaned and sanitized after each possible contamination (i.e. dropped on ground, working with different products, etc.).
- h) Appropriate chemical test kit or strips shall be provided by the operator or person in charge and used to check sanitizing concentration strengths.

## TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENT

**Booth:** Design your booth with food safety in mind. The ideal booth will have an overhead covering, be entirely enclosed except for the serving window, and have only one door or flap for entry. Clear plastic or light-colored screening on side walls will aid visibility. Only food workers may be permitted inside the food preparation area; animals must be excluded.



**Dish Washing:** Wash equipment and utensils in a 4-step sanitizing process: washing in hot, soapy water; rinsing in hot water, chemical sanitizing; and air drying. In use equipment and utensils must be cleaned and sanitized at least once every 4 hours.



**Hand Washing:** Provision must be made for an adequate hand washing facility. If a sink is not available, an insulated water cooler or large coffee/tea urn with a spigot can be used for water storage and dispensing. A waste bucket must be provided to catch the waste water. Liquid soap and paper towels must be provided for proper hand washing. Gloves and chemically-treated towelettes are not a substitute for hand washing.

