



Many local organizations count on the help that comes from fundraising events. Whether you are planning a chili cook-off, chicken barbecue, spaghetti supper or pancake breakfast, there is some

important information you need to know to make the event a healthy success.

## Plan Ahead

As soon as you start planning for your event, that's the time to involve the health department. You may need a food permit. The health department will need to know:

- The menu – what food do you plan to serve? About how many people do you expect?
- Where will the food be prepared? (for example, no food from home is allowed)
- Where will the event be held and what kind of facilities are available (sinks, cooking equipment, etc.)?

## Work Together

Your local health department wants to work with you to identify safe practices to serve food at a fundraising event. Talk to them early, so that together you can identify strategies for assuring community health and safety. For example, instead of home-cooked food, maybe there is a local restaurant, school, church, firehouse or hotel with a health department approved kitchen that is willing to host. Or, instead of serving a food that needs special handling to keep safe, maybe you can consider other choices. Together with the health department you can work on adjusting the menu or process you were planning to use for food preparation.

As with everything, it's all about being prepared! By the time you are ready to advertise your event, you will be confident that all the food safety issues have been addressed.

## Where can I get more information?

Some counties do not have environmental health programs, and are covered by State Health Department District offices.

To find the health department in your area that issues food permits, look in the blue pages of your phone book for the county health department or check this online map

[http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/water/drinking/doh\\_pub\\_contacts\\_map.htm](http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/water/drinking/doh_pub_contacts_map.htm)

To get a copy of the regulation for temporary food service establishments (Part 14, Subpart 14-2)

[http://www.nyhealth.gov/regulations/nycrr/title\\_10/part\\_14/subpart\\_14-2.htm](http://www.nyhealth.gov/regulations/nycrr/title_10/part_14/subpart_14-2.htm)

To learn more about food handling, preparation and storage

[http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/indoors/food\\_safety/](http://www.nyhealth.gov/environmental/indoors/food_safety/)

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State of New York  
Department of Health

# Planning a Fundraiser?

## Food Safety at Community Events



# Questions & Answers

## Do I always need a food permit?

If you will be serving food, in most cases you will be required to have a temporary food service permit. By checking with your local health department as soon as possible, you can find out whether you need one or not.

Some events do not require a permit. These include bake sales or covered dish suppers where people bring a dish to share with each other. A religious, fraternal or charitable organization that has its own facility and plans to prepare food at the facility and serve food at the facility does not need a permit for an occasional event (once a week or less often).

## Does this apply *only* to fundraising events?

No, fundraisers fall under the category of "temporary food service". NYS regulations cover any event lasting 1-14 days where food is served, including fairs, festivals, or community celebrations.

## What is the health basis for issuing temporary food service permits?

Both the fundraising planning committee and the health department share the common goal of a safe event. If food is not handled or cooked properly, it can get contaminated with salmonella, E. coli, hepatitis A, or other bacteria and viruses and people can get sick. It is in everyone's best interests to work together to prevent problems and avoid illness.

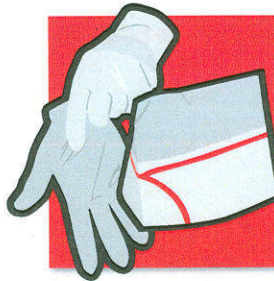
## What other steps do I need to take to keep food safe?

The health department will help you with your event when you contact them, but here are the basic ideas:



### Choose a food-safe menu.

- Keep it simple and bear in mind that some foods need special handling to avoid bacterial growth (such as meats, eggs, dairy products, cut fruits and vegetables).
- Use foods only from approved sources (for example, commercial foods or those cooked in permitted kitchens). Foods prepared or cooked at home would not be considered an approved source.



### Practice good health and hygiene.

- Don't prepare or serve food if you are ill, have open sores or infected cuts.
- Wear clean clothing or aprons.
- Restrain hair in a hat or net.
- Wash your hands before preparing and serving food.
- Wear gloves when working with ready-to-eat foods such as sandwiches and salads.



### Maintain good practices in the food area.

- Keep food at proper temperature. To control the growth of bacteria, you need to cook foods to the right temperature. If you are transporting food, reheating food, storing food, or serving foods hot or cold, you will need to make sure they stay at the right temperature. Your health department can provide advice based on your menu.
- Keep raw food preparation areas separate from areas with cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash pans, knives, spoons, cutting boards and other equipment in hot soapy water and rinse in hot clean water.
- Sanitize food contact surfaces with a solution of bleach and water (one tablespoon of unscented household bleach into one gallon of water).
- Empty and remove trash frequently.