



## Outdoor Food Preparation at Shelters

The chance of people, pests, and the environment contaminating food and equipment is greater when food is prepared outdoors. Special attention must be given to the setup and management of outdoor cooking. The requirements listed below are necessary to providing safe food to the public. The City of Houston Health Officer may require additional measures to protect against health hazards related to the operation of temporary food booths and may prohibit the sale of all time and temperature control for safety (TCS) foods. There may also be additional requirements from other City of Houston departments.

### CERTIFIED FOOD MANAGER

- ☐ Each booth/tent/mobile food unit must have a person in charge (PIC) with food service experience and a knowledge of food safety. Preferably, the PIC is a certified food manager (CFM) with the City of Houston or its Texas accredited/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited equivalent.
- ☐ A PIC/CFM is responsible for ensuring that City of Houston food code requirements are followed and must be onsite during all hours of operation.
- ☐ Each booth/tent/mobile food unit should maintain a roster of workers' names, shifts worked, contact information, and COVID-19 test results, if available, to provide public health staff if requested.
  - o Maintain the roster for 14 days.

### GENERAL FACILITY

- ☐ Provide enough space to allow staff to work 6 feet apart, if possible.
- ☐ Provide easy to clean floors in food preparation and service areas (ex., wood, concrete, asphalt).
- ☐ Provide a ceiling in food preparation and warewashing areas (ex., wood, canvas, or other material that protects the inside of the establishment from the weather).
- ☐ Provide an adequate number of easily cleanable garbage containers inside and outside of the food operation.
- ☐ Keep the food operation free of insects, rodents, and other pests.

### INDIVIDUAL PREPARATION AREAS

#### Handwashing Facilities

- ☐ Use a gravity-type water dispenser filled with water for employee handwashing (ex., drink dispenser with a spigot).
- ☐ Place a container underneath the spigot to catch wastewater and provide handwashing soap, paper towels, and a waste receptacle.

#### Employee Hygiene

- ☐ Do not eat, drink, or smoke inside the food operation.
- ☐ Cover the head and all hair with a cap, scarf, or hair net. Hair spray, visors, and long pony tails are not

acceptable.

- ☐ Maintain a distance of 6 feet from other people while preparing and serving food.

## Water and Ice

- ☐ Use only water and ice from an approved source.
- ☐ Keep ice in the original bag until use. Dispense ice using an approved scoop with handle.
- ☐ Provide a heating device to heat water for cleaning equipment.
- ☐ Offer only prepackaged food if water is unavailable.

## Food and Equipment Protection

- ☐ Restrict non-working, unauthorized persons from food preparation and service areas.
- ☐ Protect food at all times from potential contamination by dust, insects, rodents, unclean equipment and utensils, unnecessary handling, coughs and sneezes, flooding, draining, and overhead leakage or overhead drippage from condensation.
- ☐ Do not store any food in contact with water or undrained ice.
- ☐ Use counters, tables, sneeze guards, etc. to provide a distance of at least 6 feet from consumers and to protect unpackaged food and food-contact surfaces of equipment from contamination by consumers.
- ☐ Store all food, equipment, utensils, and single-service items at least six inches above the floor.

## Menu

- ☐ Provide a limited menu with little preparation; cook-serve with no or limited leftovers if possible. The menu must be approved by the health officer.
- ☐ Food requiring time and temperature control for safety (TCS) delivered to the site must be received between 41°F and 135°F.
- ☐ Ensure appropriate refrigeration/cooking/hot holding equipment is available for all TCS food.

## Food Preparation and Service

- ☐ Use single-use gloves unless suitable utensils are used.
- ☐ Provide a thermocouple or metal stem thermometer to check the internal temperatures of hot and cold TCS foods.
- ☐ Ensure food is cooked to the proper temperature:
  - o 135°F – fruits, vegetables
  - o 145°F – fish, meat, pork, raw shell eggs (immediate service)
  - o 155°F – chopped/ground/minced meat, raw shell eggs (later service)
  - o 165°F – poultry
- ☐ Keep cold foods cold at 41°F or below and hot foods hot at 135°F or above.
- ☐ Provide only single-service articles for customer use.

***No bare hand contact with any food!***

## Cleaning and Sanitizing

- ☐ Sanitize food-contact surfaces and equipment with chlorine bleach, iodine, or a quaternary ammonium

- ☐ compound.
    - o Do not use expired, scented, or splashless bleach.
    - o Follow manufacturer's instructions for preparing the sanitizing solution to ensure the appropriate concentration of sanitizer.
  - ☐ Dedicate wiping cloths for wiping food spills and store clean and dry or in a clean sanitizing solution at the approved sanitizer concentration.
- OR**
- Use single-use disposable sanitizer wipes following the EPA-approved sanitizer/disinfectant's manufacturer's instructions.
- ☐ Provide at least three containers (plastic buckets, plastic food containers) labeled for washing, rinsing, and sanitizing equipment and utensils. Each container should be large enough to completely immerse the largest piece of equipment that will be used.
  - ☐ Provide a test kit to measure the concentration of sanitizing solutions.

## Wastewater and Grease Disposal

***Water from handwashing, cooking, and dishwashing must be disposed of properly.***

- ☐ Connect food preparation and dishwashing sinks and other plumbing connections (except toilets) to a gray water tank (for very large shelter operations).
- ☐ Contact the Houston Permitting Center (HPC) Plan Review at (832) 394-8810/8820 to connect outdoor sinks or other plumbing connections to a gray water tank and for an onsite inspection at (832) 394-8870 after installation.
- ☐ If portable sinks are not used, transport all water from the containers used in outside booths or tents for handwashing, cooking, and dishwashing to sinks connected to either a gray water tank or a grease trap.
- ☐ Inspect the grease trap routinely to ensure it is not overflowing.
- ☐ Store used cooking grease:
  - o In a rendering grease bin

**OR**

In containers with properly fitted lids and store in a designated area ready for disposal

- ☐ Arrange for the rendering oil bin or containers to be removed by a rendering grease/used cooking oil hauler.
- ☐ Clean any grease spills immediately to avoid slippery surfaces. If spills occur outside the facility, use an absorbent material and discard in the trash bin.

***Do not dump wastewater, grease, or other material or wash kitchen floor mats, pots or utensils onto the ground, waterways, or storm drains.***

- For questions or concerns regarding wastewater and grease disposal, contact the Bureau of Consumer Health Services at (832) 393-5740/5674/5675.
- For questions regarding pre-approval for connections to the sanitary sewer or containment units, contact the Houston Permitting Center (HPC) at (832) 394-8810/8820.
- To request an onsite inspection after installation contact (832) 394-8870.

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