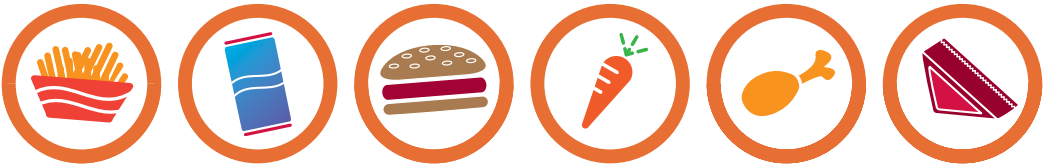
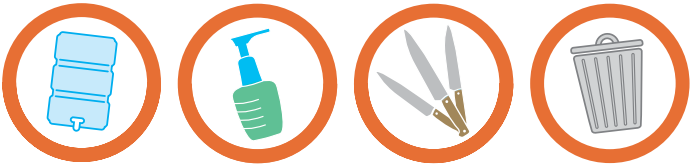
Food Hygiene and Event Catering Guide





The Office of
Environmental
Health and Pollution
Regulation

1 - Introduction

1.1 - The purpose

Events will often involve catering for large numbers of people for a long period of time, for example, a whole day or perhaps several days. Even the most experienced caterer or event organiser may be dealing with a situation which is “out of the ordinary”. You must think about all of the hygiene elements related to what may be significantly large quantities of food, over a long period, from premises which are unfamiliar or from a temporary stall.

You must also ensure, before the event, that any premises to be used comply in full with the minimum requirements outlined for stalls in Section 2 and referred to in the checklist within this booklet.

The purpose of food hygiene legislation is to ensure that food is safe and free from the risk of contamination. In other words - any food that you supply must be what people are expecting and mustn’t make them ill. Outdoor catering presents more opportunities for things to go wrong. Therefore particular attention needs to be paid to food hygiene matters.

1.2 - In this guide

A brief and simplified guide to hygiene and event catering follows this introduction. This only covers the basic principles - if you are unsure how they apply to your operation please get in touch. The contact details of the Office of Environmental Health and Pollution Regulation are on the back page of this booklet.

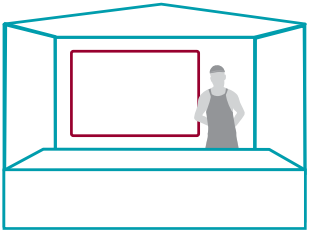
We stress that all of the points may not apply to everyone at the event, but some of them will apply and you should consider all of them accordingly.

A checklist is also included for use as a memory jogger for when you are thinking about the requirements of the operation.

Please contact Environmental Health should you require any more detailed information on food safety law.

! Ensure food is safe and free from the risk of contamination

2 - Stall Structure, Site Layout & Services



2.1 - Site Layout

Services, including electricity, WC facilities and water and drainage must be sited close to any stalls that need them. Adequate space should be available to allow separation of facilities where necessary. Advice should be sought from Environmental Health prior to the event commencing.

2.2 - Structure of Stalls

The stalls must be able to be kept clean and not subject food to a risk of contamination. In particular:-

- Any surfaces on which food is prepared must be smooth, impervious and hardwearing. A lesser standard, e.g. plastic sheeting on wood, may be acceptable for display or storage, provided that both are in good condition.
- Stalls should be covered to protect open food and screened at the back and sides as appropriate.
- Check everything on arrival to ensure it is clean and safe.
- All stalls must display the name and address of the person carrying on the business during the event.

2.3 - Water Supply

Potable water must be available at any stall where food preparation or storage takes place. It is up to each individual stallholder to decide how much water they require and to make suitable arrangements. Ensure that any containers used for water are clean and are not subject to a risk of contamination.

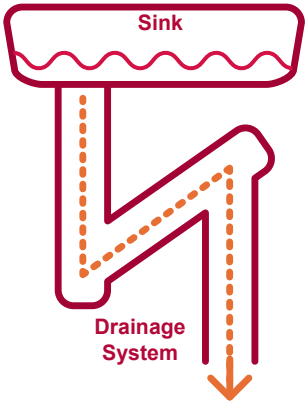
2 - Stall Structure, Site Layout & Services

2.4 - Drainage

Waste water from sinks and wash hand basins etc, must be disposed of to a proper facility, i.e. directly to a drainage system or into a collection tank and then to a drainage system. It should not be poured or allowed to drain on the ground.

2.5 - Washing Facilities

2.5.1 Personal Washing Facilities



Hand washing facilities should be provided and be accesible

- Liquid soap and disposable paper towels are to be maintained at each basin.
- Hot and cold water, or hot water at a suitably controlled temperature, must be available at each basin. However, if there is no open or unwrapped food (or only raw vegetables for sale), cold water is acceptable.
- In order to prevent contamination the wash basins must only be used for hand washing.

2.5.2 Equipment Washing Facilities

A suitable sink, or other suitable facilities, must be provided and be accessible for cleaning purposes. The only exception is where all food is pre-wrapped before delivery to the stall and will be sold without removing or opening the wrapping.

Hot and cold water, or hot water at a suitably controlled temperature, sanitisers and clean cloths must be available at all times.

We strongly advise the use of disposable plates, cups, glasses, cutlery, etc and also the return of crockery and cooking equipment to a caterer's base premises for washing up, to reduce the need for comprehensive washing facilities. Note that this produces more waste and requires more equipment.

2 - Stall Structure, Site Layout & Services

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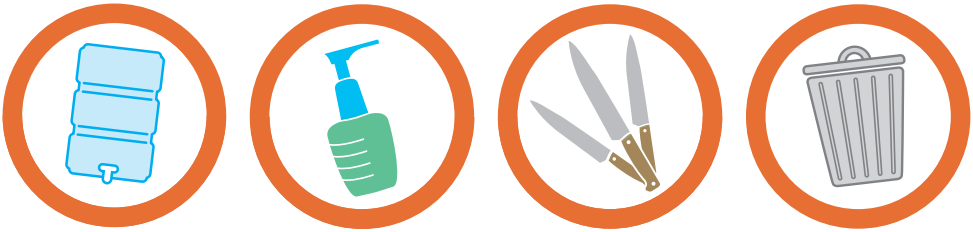
It is important to keep the site tidy and not attract gulls or vermin. Therefore dustbins with close fitting lids must be provided at each stall.

2.6 - Refuse Storage and Disposal

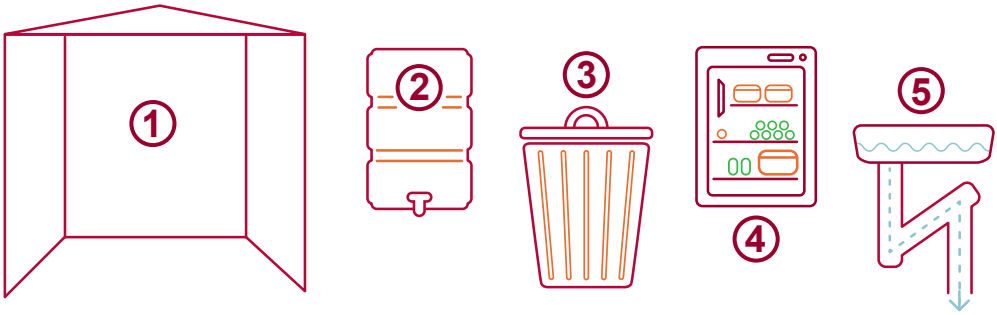
Dustbins with close fitting lids must be provided at each stall. All refuse must be bagged and removed from stalls to a proper skip or other suitable facility at regular intervals. It is important to keep the site tidy and not attract gulls, etc to waste food. Glass should be avoided. Where this is not possible it must be separated for disposal purposes.

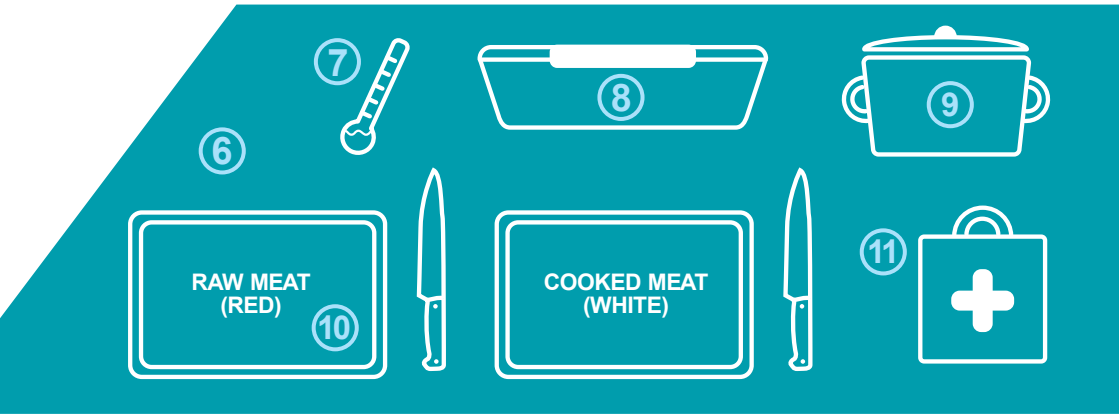
2.7 - Staff Sanitary Accommodation

Separate staff sanitary accommodation should be provided if possible. Toilets used by food handlers must be kept clean and in good order. Please report any deficiencies or problems immediately.



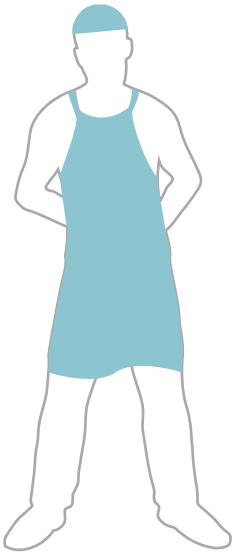
Outside Catering Checklist





Please note that the above diagram does not indicate a proposed layout

1. **Stall Structure**
   Stall preferably screened at back and sides
2. **Clean Water Supply**
   Clean and potable water available
3. **Bins**
   With lids for waste food
4. **Fridge/Chiller**
   Unit to keep foods cool
5. **Drainage**
   Waste water into suitable drainage system
6. **Food Preparation Base**
   A smooth, impervious washable surface
7. **Thermometer**
   To check correct food temperatures
8. **Food Storage**
   Protect food from risk of contamination



Food Handlers Personal Checklist:

Hat:
To be worn all times to keep hair out of food.

Apron:
Used to cover outdoor clothing.

Clean hands:
Employees must wash hands as often as possible.

Hair Back:
Hair to be tied back, away from food and mouth.

Good Hygiene:
From food handler to prevent food contamination.

Good Health:
Food handlers are not to work if they have suffered from illness in the past 48hrs.

9 **Bain Maries (Double Boiler)**
Unit to keep food hot over a period of time

10 **Chopping Boards**
Two boards to prevent food cross-contamination

11 **First Aid Kit**
To treat minor accidents in the kitchen

12 **Two Wash Basins/Bowls**
One for washing hands and one for utensils

13 **Liquid Soap & Nail Brushes**
For cleaning hands before/after handling food

14 **Paper Towels**
For drying hands and cleaning up spills

15 **Cleaning Equipment**
To clean the food areas and utensils after use

16 **Disposable Cutlery**
Disposable plates/cutlery and cups

3 - Food Safety

3.1 - Introduction

The methods of handling, storing, cooking and displaying of foods, from the point they leave home through to point of sale, have to be thought through well before the day of the event. Basic hygiene principles should be applied at each stage of the operation.

- Try to choose food items which can be stored, cooked and served safely.
- Use staff who are experienced and able to demonstrate good practices throughout the whole operation.

For the purpose of this document high risk foods are those that readily support the growth of micro-organisms at ambient temperature, and will therefore require strict temperature control.

3.2 - Delivery

Food must be transported in a safe and hygienic manner, in particular:-

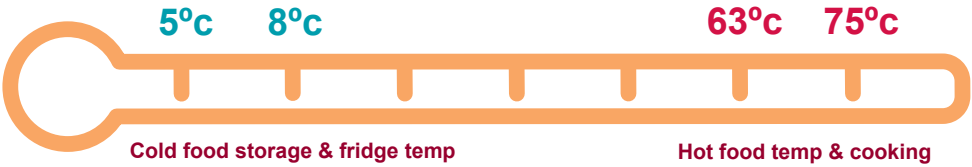
- No food should be placed so it's at a risk of contamination. Open food must be kept covered and raw and cooked foods must be stored separately.
- All high risk food should be transported at the correct temperature; i.e. **8°C** or less for chilled food (**preferably 5°C**), **-18°C** for frozen food.
- All food containers must be suitable for the purpose, clean and in good condition.

3.3 - Food Storage

One of the main problems facing caterers is the provision of adequate storage facilities. All open food must be protected from risk of contamination and must not be stored on the ground. Proper containers and covers must be provided and used where necessary.

! All open food must be protected from risk of contamination and must not be stored on the ground.

3 - Food Safety



3.4 - Temperature Control

Effective temperature control is one of the most important safeguards when considering high risk foods. The basic principle to adhere to is that all high risk food should be kept hot (**above 63°C**) or cold (**below 8°C**). You should have some means available to check this, such as a thermometer, and all temperatures should be recorded. The only time high risk foods should be at ambient temperature is during preparation or, if they are definitely to be sold within 4 hours, when they are displayed for sale.

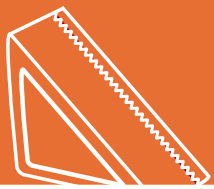
You must ensure adequate refrigeration facilities are provided for the storage of high risk foods for which the temperature in the refrigerator should be **8°C** or less. You may need to consider hiring extra refrigeration to ensure there is enough storage for high risk food.

Alternatively, if you are selling hot food you must ensure that adequate facilities e.g. ovens, bain maries etc are available for thorough cooking, to at least **75°C** in the centre, and for maintaining food at a temperature of at least **63°C** after cooking.

If it is necessary to prepare large quantities of food it should, on completion of cooking, be transferred to shallow trays and cooled to **8°C** or less as quickly as possible, and in all cases within 1½ hours. Such trays must be adequately screened or covered to prevent contamination.

Cooled food should be kept at **8°C** or less after cooling. Any foods subsequently reheated should be thoroughly heated to the original cooking temperature. Any hot food left over at the end of the trading session should be disposed of. Keeping high risk food at the correct temperature is a priority. Thermometers should be used to check that temperatures are correct and you must ensure that cross-contamination does not occur during its use (see point 3.5).

3 - Food Safety



3.5 - Cross-Contamination

There is a serious risk of cross-contamination where the same equipment and utensils are used in the preparation of both raw and cooked foods. Separate utensils must be used and the foods must be prepared on separate surfaces. Preparation surfaces must be regularly cleaned and disinfected throughout the event.

- Disposable, single-use, wiping cloths should be used where possible.
- Food should be handled as little as possible.

All cooked and raw foods should be stored in separate chilled facilities, if possible. In any case, cooked food must be stored above raw food at all times.

3.6 - Personal Hygiene

People must be clean and wear clean overclothing, which covers outdoor clothing, if handling open food. Hands must be washed as often as is appropriate to ensure there is no risk of contamination of any food, particularly after handling raw food, visiting the toilet or handling rubbish. Wearing gloves is not a substitute for hand washing.

Any food handler who is aware, or becomes aware, of food poisoning symptoms (such as vomiting and/or diarrhoea) affecting themselves must not handle food and must not return to work until clear of symptoms for 48hrs.

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Personal hygiene is very important in food preparation to reduce the risk of food cross-contamination and prevention of food poisoning.

3 - Food Safety

3.7 - First Aid

All stalls must have an adequate first aid kit. The list below is considered suitable for up to 5 persons:

1. Ten individually wrapped sterile waterproof adhesive plasters (preferably blue or green).
2. One sterile eye pad.
3. One triangular bandage.
4. One sterile covering for a serious wound.
5. Six safety pins.
6. Three medium sized sterile dressings.
7. One large sterile dressing.

Advisory note

- Some events may require an PA Permit please call, **Tel 711161**.
- We would advise that you also contact the Health and Safety Executive, **Tel 234567** and Fire Services, **Tel 724491** as they may have additional requirements.

For further information please contact

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and Pollution Regulation
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