



TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENT FAQ's

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What is a temporary food establishment?

A temporary food establishment is defined as any food establishment that operates for a period of no more than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration.

How do I know if I need to obtain a Temporary Food Permit from the Board of Health?

Generally, any time you are serving food to the public you need to obtain a Temporary Food Permit. There are some exceptions to the rule, so if you are unsure please contact the Board of Health Office at 508-785-0032, ext. 232.

Where can I find the application and document requirements?

The application is located on the Dover Board of Health page, and the fee is \$25, with a check made payable to: Town of Dover. You should also include a certified Food Protection Manager certificate as well as an Allergen Awareness certificate with your application, unless you are a non-profit organization (501(c)3.), or if you will have limited preparation of non-time/temperature control for safety food (food that doesn't require refrigeration).

What will I need at my event to ensure I'm compliant?

- A restroom should be conveniently located and accessible to all food handlers.
- A sink with hot water (at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit), soap, hand sink signage, and towels.
- Disposal gloves.
- Ability to keep cold food below 41 degrees Fahrenheit and ability to keep hot food above 135 degrees Fahrenheit. You should have a thermometer on-site to verify this information.
- Ability to sanitize either in the form of quaternary ammonium or bleach. You should provide test strips to verify proper concentration of these chemicals.
- Hats or hair restraints. Avoid wearing jewelry unless it is a plain wedding band.
- Make sure food is covered so it is protected from possible contamination.
- Proper garbage and waste disposal.

What if I serve only packaged food items?

If you are serving pre-packaged food items only that do not require refrigeration, you do not need to obtain a Temporary Food Permit (i.e. Chips, soda, candy bars, etc.) Other exemptions include: whole, uncut fresh fruits and vegetables, unprocessed honey, pure maple products, or farm fresh eggs, which are stored and maintained at 45°F (7.2°C) or less.

Can I serve food that I made at home?

No. The only food that can be served should come from a commercially licensed kitchen or facility. Baked goods that don't require refrigeration are the only exception to this rule.

What if a caterer is coming to serve the food?

Per the state sanitary code, "Each caterer shall: (a) Give written notice to the board of health of the city or town in which it plans to serve a meal prior to or within 72 hours after serving any meal elsewhere other than in its own food service establishment; and (b) If required by the board of health or its agent, provide the board with a copy of its food service establishment permit prior to serving a meal in a city or town other than the one in which its food service establishment is located."

What if the caterer is only dropping off the food for us to serve?

You, rather than the caterer, would obtain a Temporary Food Permit through the Dover Board of Health.

Can I do a bake sale?

Baked goods that do not require refrigeration are exempt from permitting requirements, but you are required to post signage stating that you are not licensed or permitted by the local Board of Health.

What about a potluck event?

Events like this are exempt from permitting requirements. According to M.G.L. c. 94, § 328A: All of the following conditions must be met for the event to be considered a "Potluck Event" exempt from regulation:

- *People must be gathered to share food at the event; and*
- *No compensation may be provided for bringing food to the event; and*
- *The event is sponsored by a group of individuals or by a religious, charitable or non-profit organization; and*
- *The event may not be conducted for commercial purposes, but money may be collected to support the religious, charitable or non-profit organization; and*
- *The participants at the event must be informed that neither the food nor the facilities have been inspected by the state or the local public health agency.*

What if my event is private?

The requirements above only apply to events that are open to the general public such as something that is advertised with flyers or posted in the newspaper. A private event such as a large gathering in someone's home would be exempt.

What if I want to hire a food truck or ice cream truck?

The truck would be responsible for obtaining a permit through the Dover Board of Health. Requirements vary, depending on the type of operation, so it is recommended that they contact the Board of Health, prior to the event. Ice Cream trucks should also get approval from the Police Department, prior to operation, at 508-283-5217.

What if I'm going to set up a tent or use propane for my event?

You should contact the Building Department at 508-906-3357 to see if a permit may be required for your tent. Prior to using any fuel source to cook, you will need to contact the Fire Department at 508-785-1130.

Will I need a food inspection prior to operation?

This is a local Board of Health decision and will be dependent on the size of the event and risk level. Typically food trucks, large events serving a great deal of people, and multi-day operations would receive an inspection prior to approval. The Dover Board of Health will let you know if one is needed. If you have had a recent inspection from another Board of Health, that would also be a sufficient substitute.