



Mark
Begich,
Mayor

Municipality of Anchorage
Department of Health and Human Services
Environmental Services Division
Food Safety & Sanitation Program
825 "L" Street, 5th Floor
P.O. Box 196650 Anchorage Alaska 99519-6650
<http://www.muni.org>
(907) 343-4200



Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can I contact the Food Safety & Sanitation program?

Customer Service Hours: Monday - Thursday, 8 am – 5:30 pm, Friday 8 am – 4:30 pm

Telephone number: 907-343-4200

FAX: 907-343-4786

Location: 825 "L" Street, 5th Floor, Customer Service Counter

Mailing Address: Food Safety & Sanitation

PO Box 196650

Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650

On the internet: <http://www.muni.org/healthesd/sanity.cfm>

2. Who needs a Health Permit?

As a general rule, if you are offering food to the public, regardless of whether a fee is charged, you will need a permit. However, some activities may be exempt from permit. Some of these include:

- a. A business that sells only pre-packaged, non-potentially hazardous foods from an approved source.
- b. A bake sale. **NO items may contain potentially hazardous food filling or topping such as meringue, whipped cream or custard.**
- c. A facility distributing or selling only popcorn, cotton candy, prepackaged ice cream novelties, black coffee with single service items, or coffee offered with non dairy creamers and served with single service.
- d. A facility selling raw, whole vegetables and fruit at a farmers' market, a roadside stand or a seasonal event such as a fair, if the vegetables and fruit are offered in their natural state or after rinsing, trimming of unnecessary parts, or separating greens from roots. Slicing produce (cutting up a melon to provide samples, for example) is not exempt and does require a permit.
- e. Food served in conjunction with the following activities if the food is prepared or provided by and for members of the group and their invited guests; **however, nothing in this paragraph exempts fundraisers, promotional events, or gatherings that are advertised or open to the public, if food is provided, with or without charge:**
 - a. A meeting or an event of a private or charitable organization, association, or club;
 - b. An activity of a church or other religious congregation;
 - c. A gathering, such as a party, picnic, or potluck held by a neighborhood, family, school, or office;
 - d. A traditional Native potlatch; or
 - e. The occasional food preparation as a part of a curriculum in a school.

3. How long is the permit valid?

Annual permits expire on December 31 of the year in which they are issued. However, seasonal permits are available for operations operating for part of a year. Temporary permits are valid for the

duration of the specific event(s) as specified on the application and permit. See "Temporary and Seasonal Temporary Operators" document for more information on temporary events.

4. Are permits transferable to other locations or individuals?

No. Permits are not transferable to other locations **or** to other individuals. You must provide the department with plans and have them approved prior to moving to a new location. If you sell the facility to another individual, a change of ownership must be provided to the department not less than **14 days prior** to the sale.

5. What do I need to do to apply for a permit?

1. **New or remodeled facilities.** Submit plans for review and have them approved prior to beginning construction. See *Plan Review General Information* and *Guidelines for Plan Review for a Food Service Establishment* handouts.
2. **Change of ownership.** When 25% or more of the value of the assets of a food facility changes hands a new permit must be applied for prior to operation of the facility.
3. **Submit completed application with fees** to Food Safety and Sanitation prior to operating. Applications may be obtained at our office or downloaded on the internet at <http://www.muni.org/iceimages/healthesd/allinoneapplication.pdf>.
4. **Submit documentation of food manager certification.** The operator of a food service establishment must have at least one certified food protection manager. See *Food Manager Certification Information* handout.
5. **Mobile Units.** Submit with the application a certificate of insurance with minimum policy limits described in AMC 16.60.030.D.3.a. Documentation of freshwater and wastewater sources and transport must be provided as well.

6. What is food manager certification? Do I need it?

The owner or manager of a food facility must demonstrate knowledge of food safety and foodborne illness. An individual will be considered a certified food protection manager when they provide documentation that they have successfully completed an approved food manager certification examination. The owner or manager may challenge the training course by completing a written test. Certificates are valid for three years. See "Approved Certified Food Manager Courses" document.

7. Is another permit required for operations outside the Municipality of Anchorage?

Possibly. The DHHS Food Service Establishment Health Permit is valid only for operations within the corporate limits of the Municipality of Anchorage. Food facility operators in other areas of Alaska should contact the State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation in Anchorage at 269-7501 for more information.

8. Does my permit cover any Food Service operation off my permanent premises?

No. You may obtain a temporary food service permit for food service off your premises. You may also purchase a catering permit that will enable you to do more events during the calendar year.

9. If I buy food from a local supplier, do I need a permit to sell or give away that food?

Yes, unless they are exempt from permit requirements - see number 2 above.

10. Can homemade foods be sold or given away at a permitted food facility?

No. Food prepared in a private home may not be used or offered for human consumption in a permitted food facility.

11. What are the minimum cooking temperatures for potentially hazardous foods?

Minimum Internal Temperatures

Item	Temperature	Time
Poultry; stuffed meat, seafood, or poultry; stuffing containing meat, seafood, or poultry; traditional wild game; and casseroles containing potentially hazardous food	165°F	15 seconds
Pork; game meat; ground or restructured meat or seafood; and injected meat; however, ground beef may be cooked to a temperature below 155°F if ordered by an adult consumer	158° or	1 second or
	155°	15 seconds
Other potentially hazardous food requiring cooking; however, eggs may be cooked to a temperature below 145°F if ordered by an adult consumer	145°	15 seconds
Rare roast beef and rare beef steak; however, beef steak may be cooked to a temperature below 130°F if ordered by an adult consumer	130°	15 seconds

12. What are approved methods for cooling foods?

Potentially hazardous food that requires cooling or cold-holding after preparation or processing must be cooled from a temperature of 140° F (or 130° F for rare beef) to 70° F or below within two hours, and from a temperature of 70° F or below to 41° F or below within four additional hours as follows:

- a. Place the container in an ice bath or cold running water and stir frequently;
- b. Separate the food into smaller or thinner portions and refrigerate;
- c. Place the food in a shallow pan, refrigerate, stirring occasionally if needed;
- d. Use rapid chilling equipment;
- e. Modify the recipe by adding ice or cold water in final stages of preparation; or
- f. Use another approved method that will result in compliance with code requirements.

13. What are required temperatures for holding hot foods hot and cold foods cold?

The temperature for hot holding potentially hazardous foods is **140°F or above**. The temperature for cold holding potentially hazardous foods is **41°F or below**.

14. What other agencies might I need to contact?

Permanent: Development Services
4700 Bragaw (off Tudor)
343-8301
343-8347

Mobile/Carts: Municipal Clerk's Office
632 W 6th Ave.; Room 250
343-4316
343-4311

Mobile/Carts: See *Approved Water Source* sheet.

17. How long will it take to get a permit?

Applications need to be submitted a minimum of thirty days before opening an establishment or a minimum of fourteen days before a change of ownership. Once the application, fee and documentation of food manager certification have been received, an inspection will be scheduled. A permit will be issued only after it has been determined that the application and facility meets the requirements of AMC16.60.

If you have concerns that are not addressed here, please contact us at (907)-343-4200.