



**Municipality of Anchorage  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Environmental Services Division  
Food Safety & Sanitation Program**



825 "L" Street

P.O. Box 196650 Anchorage Alaska 99519-6650

<http://www.muni.org/Departments/health/Admin/environment/FSS/Pages/fssfood.aspx>

(907) 343-4200

## Frequently Asked Questions

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

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

Telephone number: 907-343-4200 FAX: 907-343-4786

Location: 825 "L" Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Customer Service Counter

Mailing Address: Food Safety & Sanitation

PO Box 196650

Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650

On the internet: <http://www.muni.org/Departments/health/Admin/environment/FSS/Pages/fssfood.aspx>

### 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 utensils.
- 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. Sampling is allowed if done safely. However some activities may 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; or
  - d. 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 application must be provided to the department not less than **7 days prior** to the sale.

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

- a. **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* handout.
- b. **Change of ownership.** When 50% 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.
- c. **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/Departments/health/Admin/environment/FSS/Pages/fssfood.aspx>.
- d. **Submit documentation of food manager certification.** The operator of an F002 or F003 food service establishment must have at least one certified food protection manager. See *Food Manager Certification Information* handout.
- e. **Mobile Units.** Submit with the application a copy of the menu, documentation of freshwater and wastewater sources and transport.

#### **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. All facilities classified as an F002 or F003 must have at least one certified food protection manager. An individual will be considered a certified food protection manager when they provide documentation that they have successfully completed an approved food protection manager certification examination. Anyone may challenge the training course by completing a written test through one of the approved 3<sup>rd</sup> party testing companies. Certificates are valid for five years. See *Food Manager Certification Information* handout.

#### **7. What is a food worker card? Do I need one?**

While facilities that are Risk Type 2 or Risk Type 3 must have a certified food protection manager, all food workers at all facilities, regardless of Risk Type, must have a current food worker card. Each food worker must be trained in basic food safety and have a current food worker card from an approved program. This card must be obtained within 30 days of hire. The food worker card is valid for 3 years. Anyone who works with unpackaged food, potentially hazardous food, or food contact surfaces such as clean dishes must have a food worker card. An individual that is a current certified food protection manager has met the employee education requirement and does not need to have a separate food worker card. To become certified, vendors may take the Food worker card training and testing is provided online by Premier Food Safety by logging in to the following link at <http://www.premierfoodsafety.com/anchorage-food-handlers-card>. Vendors who have completed a DHHS approved 8 hour food protection manager certification program (ServSafe, for example) and have passed the exam within the last 5 years have met the certification requirement. Submit a copy of the certificate along with your permit application.

#### **8. 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.

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

Yes, but only if all items are prepared and cooked at the permitted facility. No food prep or cooking may take place at the offsite location. Only hot or cold holding and food service is allowed at the offsite location. If offsite cooking or preparation is required a temporary food service permit can be obtained for these types of operations.

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

Yes, unless the foods sold are exempt from permit requirements - see number 2 above.

**11. 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.

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

Minimum Cooking Temperatures

Roasts	130°F for 112 minutes or 135°F for 36 minutes or 145°F for 12 minutes or other time/temp in table*
Pork & inspected game meat	145°F for 15 seconds
Fish	145°F for 15 seconds
Eggs for immediate service	145°F for 15 seconds
Intact beef steak (not pinned)	145°F on surface
Eggs that are not for immediate service (Quiche)	155°F for 15 seconds
Ground beef (Hamburgers)	155°F or 15 seconds or 150°F for 1 minute or other time/temp in table*
Poultry (Chicken, Duck)	165°F for 15 seconds

\*See 3-401.11 of the 2005 FDA Food Code

**13. 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 135° 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. Using containers to facilitate heat transfer.
- 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.

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

The temperature for hot holding potentially hazardous foods is **135°F or above**. The temperature for cold holding potentially hazardous foods is **41°F or below**.

**15. What other agencies might I need to contact?**

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

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

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

**16. 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 seven 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.**