



Cochise County Environmental Health

Catering

FOOD SAFETY DURING PREPARATION, TRANSPORT AND SERVICE

Licensing

Food catering means food that is prepared for service under contract for an event such as a reception or party. All caterers operating in Cochise County must operate in compliance with the Arizona Food Code and other ordinances, such as zoning, building and liquor.

Catered food must be prepared in a licensed food establishment. Food prepared and/or stored in private homes is not acceptable. Arizona Food Code requires that Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) be present at all times when an establishment is open to the public (this includes catering activities).

Menu & Equipment

Your menu determines the type of equipment you are required to have at a food establishment. Menu changes may affect equipment requirements.

Hot and cold food containers capable of maintaining food at safe temperatures and in a sanitary manner are required during transport. Hot foods must be maintained at 135 F or above and cold foods must be maintained at 41 F or below.

Keeping Food Safe

A food establishment doing catering is responsible for maintaining control of and

ensuring the safety of the food from preparation to service to the consumer. Protect food during storage, preparation, transportation, and serving to prevent cross-contamination and contamination by dust, insects or other sources. Keep equipment and vehicles clean (transport vehicles are subject to inspection).

Five factors that can increase the risk of a foodborne illness outbreak:

- Poor employee health and hygiene
- Improper cooking temperatures
- Food from unsafe sources
- Improper hot and cold holding
- Cross-contamination and contaminated equipment

Five effective control measures to reduce the risk of a foodborne illness outbreak:

- Exclude ill employees, wash hands properly, and prevent bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food.
- Cook raw animal foods to the required temperatures and times.
- Verify all food is from a safe source.
- Keep food out of the temperature danger zone (41°F to 135°F).
- Properly store food and wash, rinse, and sanitize food-contact surfaces.