



## Placer County Health and Human Services Department

# CATERING GUIDELINES

### PURPOSE:

The California Retail Food Code (CRFC) does not specifically address the permitting and regulation of caterers. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a set of criteria that will assist regulators and other interested parties in providing consistent enforcement of CRFC requirements with regard to catering operations.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Caterer** - any person who supplies food and beverages and/or related services to any off premise public or private function. Per California Retail Food Code, Caterer's are required have a valid Health Permit and must operate from a permitted Food Facility (i.e. Commissary, Restaurant, and Coffee Shop). If your facility is out of Placer County, submit a copy of your Caterer's permit and the valid Health Permit for that Food Facility.

**Catering Vehicle** – a vehicle upon which food, beverages, utensils and related serving equipment are transported to a catered function.

**Commissary** - a permitted food facility that services Mobile Food Facilities (MFF's), Mobile Support Units (MSU's), Vending Machines, and Caterer's. Where any or all of the following occur: food, containers or supplies are stored; food is prepared or prepackaged; utensils are cleaned and sanitized; liquid and solid waste are disposed; and where potable water is obtained.

**Cook for hire** – any person hired to prepare and /or serve food at a private function. All food prepared by a cook for hire is handled at the location of the private function. No food is stored, prepared or handle at the private home of the cook for hire. No health permit is required.

**Off Premises Catering Function** – any private or public function where a caterer provides food and related services for a person or persons at a location other than their permitted food establishment

## OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- ❖ A caterer must have a valid health permit. (CRFC Section 114381)
- ❖ A caterer, an employee or volunteers of the catering company must be clean and in good health; at least one person must possess a current food safety certificate and the rest food handler card. (Sections 113947, 113949, 113790)
- ❖ All food, prior to the function, shall be stored and prepared at the caterer's ( home kitchen not allowed ) permitted food facility or commissary (Sections 113789, 114021)
- ❖ All utensils and equipment shall be washed and stored at the caterer's permitted food establishment. Prior to use, all utensils shall be washed and sanitized. (Sections 114095, 114099, and 114175)
- ❖ At all times that the caterer has control over food, including periods of storage, preparation, transportation and service. All food shall be adequately protected so as to be maintained pure, and free of contamination (ice use for refrigeration at a catering event cannot be used for consumption, etc...), adulteration, and spoilage. (Sections 113980, 113982, 113984, 113990)
- ❖ Utensils and equipment (i.e. probe thermometer, etc...) shall be protected from contamination. (Sections 114095 and 114899)
- ❖ All Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF's) shall be transported, prepared and maintained at the appropriate temperatures ( i.e. cold foods @ 41°F or below, hot foods @ 135°F or above sections 113996 and 114004)
- ❖ The caterer shall not provide home prepared food at a catered function, except foods that are approved for Cottage Food Operations (CFO) as long as these are coming from a registered or permitted CFO (Sections 114021, 114285, and 114365)
- ❖ All food handlers shall wash their hands and arms with cleanser and warm water before commencing work, immediately after using toilet facilities, and as frequently as necessary to prevent contamination of food, etc... (Sections 113952 and 113953.3)
- ❖ Toilet facilities shall be available within 200 feet of the catered events. (Sections 114250, 114315, and 114359)
- ❖ Catering vehicles shall be maintained in a clean, sanitary condition. (Sections 114257)

**NOTE: CONTACT PLACER COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FOR DETAILED EXPLANATIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA FOOD CODE SECTIONS MENTIONED AND FOR ANY OTHER QUESTIONS.**