

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

CATERING GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law (CURFFL) does not specifically mention 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 caterers with regard to CURFFL. Since it is not possible to cover every type of catering function, these guidelines are to be used to determine where and how a caterer is to be regulated.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Caterer**: any person who operates from a permitted food establishment and who supplies food and related services including, but not limited to, an off premises catering function.
- B. **Catering Vehicle**: vehicle upon which food, beverages and related serving equipment are transported to a catering function.
- C. **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 handled, nor utensils washed or stored, at the private home of the cook-for-hire. No health permit is required.
- D. **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. A function occurring on premises is not covered by these guidelines.
- E. **Private Function**: a function for, or restricted to, a particular group from which the public is excluded. Examples include, but are not limited to, private parties such as weddings and receptions.
- F. **Public Function**: a function to which the public is invited. Examples include, but are not limited to, promotional events and benefits.

OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Any person doing business as a caterer, as previously defined, must have a valid health permit. (Section 113920).
- B. All food, prior to the function, shall be stored and prepared at the caterer's permitted food establishment, or other approved food facility. (Sections 113980, 114010).

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- C.** All utensils and equipment shall be washed and stored at the caterer's permitted food establishment. Prior to use all utensils shall be sanitized according to Sections 114060, 114090. (Sections 114050, 114090).
- D.** At all times that the caterer has control over the 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, adulteration, and spoilage. (Sections 113980, 114010, 114050).
- E.** Catering vehicles shall be maintained in a clean, sanitary condition. (Section 114040).
- F.** Utensils and equipment shall be protected from contamination. (Sections 114060, 114260(h)).
- G.** All potentially hazardous food shall be maintained at temperatures specified in Section 113995.
- H.** The caterer shall not provide home prepared food at a catering function. (Section 114015).
- I.** 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. (Section 114020).
- J.** Toilet facility shall be available within 200' of the catering function. (Section 114315(e)).