



Whitman County Environmental Health Department

1205 SE Pro Mall Blvd. Ste 203

Pullman, WA. 99163

Phone: (509) 332-6752 Fax: (509) 334-4517

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TEMPORARY EVENT INFORMATION PACKET

TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE PERMITS

Temporary food permits are required for events where food is available to the public. These permits are required in order to ensure that vendors understand the hazards involved in food handling and are equipped to handle food properly in order to prevent outbreaks of foodborne illness from occurring. A TEMPORARY FOOD PERMIT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE WASHINGTON STATE FOOD AND BEVERAGE WORKERS' CARD.

What is a Temporary Food Establishment?

A temporary food establishment is one that serves food to the public at a fixed location for not more than twenty-one (21) consecutive days associated with a single event or celebration. If the event is advertised to the general public (with flyers, banners, newspaper articles or by any other means) a temporary food permit is required. The requirements do not change if the food is being sold for profit or provided at no charge.

What events require temporary food permits?

Individuals or groups planning to hold events that are open to the public must obtain a permit. The Whitman County Health Department requires that a temporary food permit be purchased for each food booth operating during an event (no "blanket" permits). Private weddings that do their own food preparation do not require a permit. If you hire a caterer, he/she must have a permit to prepare the food in a licensed kitchen. Ask to see their caterer's permit.

The follow are examples of events that are typically permitted. If you are unsure if you need a permit, call the Environmental Health Department at (509) 332-6752.

- A fair, carnival, or circus
- Community celebrations
- Public exhibitions
- Sports events
- Church bazaars
- Fundraisers
- Holiday craft fairs

Are there any events that DO NOT require temporary food permits?

Your event is not considered a temporary food service if the food is prepared or provided by members of the group for the consumption of members only (not the general public):

- a meeting or an event for a private or charitable organization, association, or club;
- an activity in a church or other religious congregation;
- a gathering such as a party, picnic, or potluck held by a neighborhood, family, community, school, or office;
or
- A Native American Potlatch

Again, this is only applies to the gathering if it is private. Any public advertisement or public invitation will mean a permit is required.

What about a bake sale?

A bake sale is not considered a temporary event as long as only non-potentially hazardous baked goods are served. No permit is required for a bake sale, but there are certain bake sale safety guidelines that should be followed. Please contact Environmental Health for any questions you may have.

What about a “potluck dinner”?

The Whitman County Health Department defines a potluck meal as one in which food is generally prepared in private homes, is then shared with a private group of people, and is not offered or advertised to the general public. No permit is needed from the Health Department to have a potluck dinner.

Although a potluck meal does not require a Health Permit, it can be a possible source of foodborne illness. It is important to follow proper food preparation methods, as well as a little common sense, to prevent illnesses.

Are there any foods exempt from permitting?

There are a few foods that can be sold in Whitman County without a Health Permit. These foods are exempt because they are not sources for bacterial growth and generally are not involved in the spread of foodborne illness. It is still important that all people involved in the production and sale of these foods maintain good personal hygiene (washing hands, using clean equipment) to ensure a safe food product. Please have all food workers read and sign the Requirements for Operation. Please contact the health district to verify that your food item fall within the exempt food list.

How do I get a permit?

Contact Whitman County Public Health and a temporary food establishment permit packet will be sent to you or stop by one of the office locations listed below for more information.

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| • SE 1205 Professional Mall Boulevard, Pullman
(509) 332-6752 | Mon-Fri | 8:00am-12:00pm
1:00pm - 5:00pm
(Or By Appointment) |
| • N. 310 Main Street, Colfax
(509) 397-6280 | Mon-Fri | 8:00am - 5:00pm
1:00pm - 5:00pm
(Or By Appointment) |

You may also download a copy of the application from: <http://whitmancounty.org/ssi.aspx?ssid=93#Temporary>.

An Environmental Health Specialist will review the application and follow-up with the applicant regarding any questions or changes that may be necessary. This review will include:

- Types of food to be served
- Location of food preparation

- Procedures used in preparation
- Limits of facilities
- Available resources of facilities

Amount and type of food service and preparation may be restricted based on facility

WASHINGTON STATE FOOD CODE: WAC 246-215-131: TEMPORARY FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS

- (1) The permit holder and person in charge of a temporary food establishment must comply with the requirements of this chapter, except as otherwise provided in this section.
- (2) The regulatory authority may impose additional requirements to protect against health hazards related to the operation of the temporary food establishment and may:
 - (a) Limit the food preparation steps;
 - (b) Prohibit some menu items; and
 - (c) Restrict the mode of operation when facilities or equipment are inadequate to protect public health.
- (3) The owner of a temporary food establishment must:
 - (a) Apply to the regulatory authority for a permit to operate the temporary food establishment at least fourteen calendar days before intending to provide food service, or as otherwise required by the regulatory authority;
 - (b) Allow only employees and other persons authorized by the regulatory authority to be present in the temporary food establishment; and
 - (c) Require the person in charge of the temporary food establishment to obtain a valid food worker card before beginning work.
- (4) The person in charge of a temporary food establishment must ensure:
 - (a) Adequate facilities are provided at the temporary food establishment for all necessary food preparation steps;
 - (b) All foods, including ice, are from an approved source;
 - (c) All off site food preparation is done in an approved food establishment;
 - (d) All storage of food and equipment is done at approved locations;
 - (e) Food is transported and stored in properly designed food-grade containers;
 - (f) Food is protected from potential contamination during transport;
 - (g) Only single-service articles are provided for use by consumers, unless otherwise approved by the regulatory authority; and
 - (h) Condiments not in individual packages are provided in dispenser bottles or in other containers protected from contamination.
- (5) The person in charge of a temporary food establishment must ensure that potentially hazardous foods are
 - (a) Not cooled in a temporary food establishment;
 - (b) Properly temperature-controlled during transport to the temporary event location;
 - (c) Temperature-monitored by use of a stem-type thermometer or thermocouple capable of measuring all proper food temperatures;
 - (d) Reheated, for hot holding, from 45°F to 165°F or above within one hour when cooked and cooled in an approved food establishment;
 - (e) Reheated, for hot holding, from 45°F to 140°F or above within one hour when produced in a food processing plant;
 - (f) Reheated no more than one time; and
 - (g) Held in preheated mechanical hot holding equipment or prechilled mechanical cold holding equipment, or otherwise temperature controlled by an approved method.
- (6) The person in charge of a temporary food establishment must ensure potentially hazardous foods that are thawed as part of a continuous cooking process are not greater than four inches thick.
- (7) The person in charge of a temporary food establishment must ensure a separation barrier or other effective method is used to protect food preparation and cooking areas from public access.
- (8) The permit holder of a temporary food establishment must ensure approved handwashing facilities are conveniently located for employees in all food preparation areas, which include:
 - (a) Potable, warm, running water;
 - (b) Soap and paper towels;
 - (c) A five-gallon or larger insulated container kept supplied with warm water for handwashing delivered through a continuous-flow spigot, if permanent plumbing is not available; and
 - (d) A wastewater retention tank sufficient in size to hold all wastewater generated by the temporary food establishment until emptied in an approved manner, if a public sewage system hookup is not available.
- (9) The permit holder of a temporary food establishment must ensure approved toilet facilities are available for employees:
 - (a) Readily accessible during all times of operation; and
 - (b) Provided with handwashing facilities with potable, warm, running water.
- (10) The permit holder of a temporary food establishment must ensure access within two hundred feet to a three-compartment sink with approved drain boards and an adequate supply of hot and cold running water to wash, rinse, and sanitize utensils when:
 - (a) Equipment or utensils are reused on-site; or
 - (b) The temporary food establishment operates for two or more consecutive days; except
 - (c) The regulatory authority may approve an alternative utensil cleaning method when three-compartment sinks with drain boards

are not available and no health hazard will result.

(11) The permit holder and person in charge must ensure a separate food preparation sink is available at the temporary food establishment that is supplied with potable running water, drained to an approved wastewater system through an indirect connection, if produce needs to be washed on-site. Alternative produce washing facilities may be used if approved.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [43.20.050](#), [43.20.145](#) and [69.80.060](#). 04-22-111, § 246-215-131, filed 11/3/04, effective 5/2/05.]

FOODBORNE ILLNESS OUTBREAKS Q&A

What is a foodborne illness outbreak?

The Washington State Department of Health defines a foodborne illness outbreak as “Two or more persons experiencing a similar illness after ingestion of a common food or meal **AND** food or meal is implicated as the source of illness by:

1. Epidemiologic evaluation (statistical evidence) OR
2. Laboratory evidence (identify agent in a food source) OR
3. Other compelling supportive information (i.e. field investigation, ill food workers, etc.)”

How does an individual report a suspected foodborne illness?

Any suspected cases of foodborne illness should be reported by the victim (or their family/friends/coworkers etc.) directly to Whitman County Public Health.

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If you have difficulty contacting the Health Department, contact the Washington State Department of Health’s Food Safety Program Staff at (360) 236-3330.

What does a food service establishment do if a foodborne illness is suspected?

The Washington State Department of Health requires food service owner/operators to immediately contact Whitman County Public Health and report any complaints or incidence of a foodborne illness. **ALSO**, any food items that may be suspect are to be removed from sale and refrigerated until released by the health officer.

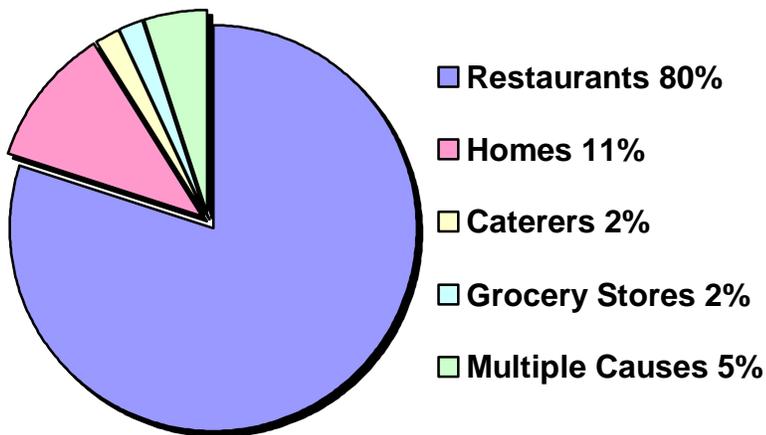
TOP 10 REASONS AN OUTBREAK MAY OCCUR IN YOUR ESTABLISHMENT

10. Inadequate Utensil Cleaning
9. Room Temperature Storage
8. Slow Cooling
7. ½ Day or More Food Prep Time
6. Insufficient Heating/ Reheating
5. Insufficient Time/Temp on Hot Hold
4. Contaminated Raw Ingredients /
Cross Contamination
3. Food Handled By Sick Worker
2. Improper Handwashing or Glove Use

1. Bare-Hand Contact



Washington State Foodborne Outbreaks Locations-2003



Nationwide, restaurants will provide more than **70 billion** meal and snack occasions in 2004.

Unfortunately, many people do not think about food safety until a food-related illness affects them or a family member. While the food supply in the United States is one of the safest in the world, CDC estimates that 76 million people get sick, more than 300,000 are hospitalized, and 5,000 Americans die each year from foodborne illness.

Preventing foodborne illness and death remains a major public health challenge.

What does Whitman County Public Health do if a foodborne illness is suspected?

When the health officer suspects that a food service establishment (or its employees) may be a source of a foodborne illness, the health officer shall take appropriate actions to control the transmission of the disease. Whitman County Public Health will work closely with Washington State Department of Health in all investigations of a foodborne illness. The actions can include any or all of the following.

- 1) Secure all records that may help identify individuals that may have been exposed, or require assistance in locating these individuals.
- 2) Secure the illness history of suspected employees.
- 3) Exclude any suspected employee(s) from working in a food service establishment until the health officer decides there is no further risk.
- 4) Suspend the permit of the food service establishment until the health officer decides there is no further risk.
- 5) Restrict the work activities of any sick employee.
- 6) Require medical and laboratory exams of any food service establishment's employees.
- 7) Obtain laboratory testing of any suspect foods.
- 8) Require the destruction of any suspect foods or prevent it from being served.
- 9) The health officer will prohibit food service workers with a communicable illness in a disease or carrier state from handling food if the infectious agent can be transmitted through food.
- 10) The provisions of chapter 246-100 WAC, communicable and certain other diseases shall apply.

**WASHINGTON STATE FOOD WORKER CARDS
CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE WEBSITE:**

<https://www.foodworkercard.wa.gov>

Did you lose your card? Do you want information on how to get 3-year and 5-year food worker cards? Would you're group of 10 or more like a food class? Contact Whitman County Environmental Health today.

