



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Office of Public Health

## Temporary Food Event (TFE)

### VENDOR PERMIT APPLICATION GUIDANCE MATERIALS

This guidance document is intended to answer common questions associated with completing the NPS Temporary Food Event (TFE) Vendor Permit Application, and provide additional food safety guidance for Temporary Events.

#### TFE Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. What is Temporary Food Event (TFE)?** A TFE is an event that provides food to the public and can last up to 14 consecutive days. Examples include street fairs and festivals, musical and artistic presentations, holiday and ethnic celebrations, trade shows, mobile food trucks, mobile food tents and product introductions at which food is sold, sampled, or given away to the public.
- 2. Do I need a TFE permit to sell or give away food at a temporary event?** Yes. Any person (or organization) intending to sell, give away, or sample food to the **public** from a fixed or temporary location for a period of less than 14 consecutive days in conjunction with a community or park-sponsored event on NPS property requires a TFE permit.
- 3. How do I get a TFE permit?** Contact the event organizer of the event to obtain a TFE Permit application. Then complete and submit the application with supporting documentation to the event organizer. The event organizer is responsible for collecting all applications and submitting them to the park at least two weeks prior to the event.
- 4. What conditions are attached to the TFE permit?** In order to qualify for a permit, the applicant must submit the required information and documentation outlined in the TFE application and must operate during the event in accordance to the FDA Food Code. NPS uses the most recent version of the FDA Food Code, which can be found here: [FDA Food Code | FDA](#)
- 5. In other jurisdictions food service operations need a food safety certified manager. Do I need a certificate to provide food at a temporary event?** Yes. Each food vendor is required to have at least one currently certified manager on site at all times during the duration of the event. Food safety manager certifications are accepted from several credentialing bodies. Visit [American National Standards Institute \(ansi.org\)](#) for details.
- 6. My food is all prepackaged...do I still need a TFE permit?** No. A TFE permit is not required if only packaged food is being sold or given away to the public.
- 7. I am giving away samples of food...do I need a TFE permit?** Yes. A TFE permit is required to give away food including samples.
- 8. What about alcohol and beverages?** All beverage vendors including wine, spirits, beer, coffee, and kombucha are considered food and must have a Certified Food Manager present during all hours of operation.

9. **I work for a nonprofit and we want to provide food at an event. Do I need a permit?** Yes. A permit is required for all food vendors regardless of nonprofit status or fundraising objectives. The potential public health risks involved with food service are the same in these scenarios.
10. **Can I set up a temporary food booth outside a park attraction or green space?** No. A temporary food booth must be connected with a community or park-sponsored event and have an event organizer.
11. **How much do TFE permits costs?** Please contact the NPS Park office to obtain current permit costs.
12. **What are the event organizers' responsibilities at an event?** An event organizer is responsible for distributing the TFE applications to the food vendors and collecting their completed applications, compile a full vendor list, complete the Organizer TFE Application, create a site map indicating food vendor locations and provide all these documents to the park at least two weeks prior to the event.
13. **Who will inspect my operation at the event?** Since National Parks are located on Federal land, food operations are inspected during the event by a Public Health Officer from the U.S. Public Health Service, or by NPS Employees.
14. **What are the penalties for non-compliance during inspections?** Fines are not issued to organizers or to temporary food vendors at events; however a food operation will be closed temporarily or for the event duration if imminent health risks are observed. Multiple failed inspections where several priority violations are observed and repeated will lead to an annual permit suspension and ultimately permit revocation from all park facilities.
15. **Do I need my own hand wash station if my food service unit is located next to a public restroom?** Yes. Hand washing facilities are always required in each unit where open foods are being handled.
16. **As a food vendor, I would like to participate in an event this weekend; can I still apply for a permit?** No. It is not possible to issue an approval and TFE permit at very short notice. Vendors must work with event organizers to have their information submitted at least two weeks in advance.
17. **I provide food at many events during the year. Can I get an annual permit?** Unfortunately, no. A TFE permit is valid for the event applied for only. Each event you participate in will require another application, inspection, and permit.
18. **I already have a permit for temporary events from another jurisdiction. Do I still need to apply for a TFE permit with NPS?** Yes. Permits from other jurisdictions will not be accepted. You must submit a TFE application for an event on federal property.
19. **Who can I call if I have a question?** All questions should first be directed to the event organizer. If the event organizer is unable to help, the park's designated public health officer may be contacted. Contact information for the officer in your area can be found here: [Field Services Branch - Office of Public Health \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](#)

## Temporary Food Event (TFE)

### FOOD SAFETY REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

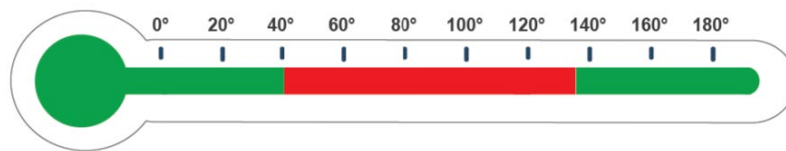
Temporary food events are required to comply with National Park Service (NPS) Public Health Guidelines [NPS-RM83](#) and the FDA Food Code [FDA Food Code | FDA](#). This checklist is meant to highlight the most important elements of food service at temporary food events and to provide guidance consistent with existing NPS public health policy.

#### FOOD & BEVERAGE

- Menu limited to approved-items list.
- Certified Food Safety MANAGER(S)** on duty at all times, at each onsite location.
- Cold food items held at  $\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$  during transport and while onsite.**
- Hot food items held at  $\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$  during transport and while onsite.**

#### **TCS Food** **Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food**

Hold food  $\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}(5^{\circ}\text{C})$  or  $\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}(57^{\circ}\text{C})$



Foods that grow bacteria more easily and quickly than other foods are a higher risk and are referred to by the FDA Food Code as "Time/Temperature Control for Safety food" or "TCS food" - (formerly called "potentially hazardous food" (PHF)).

- Source – All food items are from an approved source.
- Source - food items prepared off-site are prepared in a pre-approved licensed establishment
- If required, HACCP temperature logs maintained on TCS Foods prepared offsite.
- Food stored in food-safe containers (not in garbage bags or unapproved buckets).
- Raw meats stored so that they will not contaminate other foods.
- Toxic materials are stored separately from foods.

#### EMPLOYEES

- Healthy; **no** illnesses or infection symptoms such as:
  - (a) diarrhea, (b) fever, (c) vomiting, (d) jaundice, (e) sore throat with fever, or (f) open cuts or sores on the hands or wrists.
- Employees thoroughly wash hands with soap and water before working, after breaks and after using bathroom, and any other time their hands become contaminated.**
- Employees must wear clean clothes.

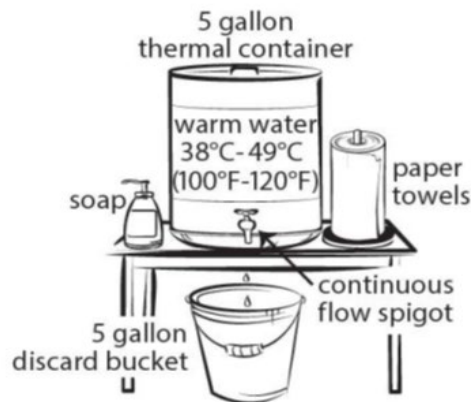
#### EQUIPMENT

- Food containers cleaned and sanitized after each use.
- Sufficient refrigeration or drained ice to maintain cold temperatures  $<41^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- Sufficient hot holding devices to maintain hot temperatures  $>135^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- Cooking equipment to heat food to  $165^{\circ}\text{F}$ .
- Sufficient power to operate all heating and refrigeration units.

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- Approved clean food thermometers are available and used frequently for measuring food temperatures during cooking and holding.**
- Approved refrigeration thermometer for each cold holding unit.
- Three compartment sink or equivalent for dishwashing.
- Counter protection (sneeze guards) if food is to be held on counter for serving.
- Tables, stands, pallets or other devices to keep all food, utensils, single service, equipment, food prep and other operations off the ground or pavement.
- Clean and sanitized water containers to transport water to food booth.
- Wiping cloth sanitizer containers.
- Sufficient utensils, disposable gloves for food prep and dispensing.
- Sufficient garbage storage containers for food prep.
- Propane (and all compressed gas) cylinders secured at all times (chaining or crating).
- Fire extinguishers
- Handwashing facilities MUST be provided. Minimal hand washing facilities consist of: Potable Water (5 gallons) in a container with a continuous (hands-free spigot), pump-dispensed hand soap, paper towels, a wastewater catch basin, and a nearby trash can.**



### SUPPLIES

- Sufficient supply of sanitary disposable towels.
- Sufficient supply of hand soap and dishwashing soap.
- Sufficient chemical sanitizer (chlorine, quat or iodophor).
- Sufficient supply of sanitizer test strips for selected sanitizer.
- Sufficient fuel for cooking and hot holding.
- Sufficient ice if needed for cold holding.
- Extra plastic wrap and/or foil to cover food containers during holding.
- Wiping cloths are stored in a 50-100 PPM chlorine solution (1 capful of household bleach per gallon of water) or in another approved sanitizer (quat or iodophor), changed when dirty.
- Wiping cloths are either discarded or washed when soiled.

### MOBILE FOOD TRUCKS

- Adequate ventilation equipment must be provided.
- Portable storage tanks and containers must be filled utilizing a food-grade hose.
- Must have a designated handwashing sink, with hot water provided.
- All liquid waste must be stored in a retention tank that is 15% larger than the drinking water supply tank.
- Propane cylinders must be secured