

# Temporary Food Service Events Standard

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This Standard describes the basic rules you need to follow, including the physical setup and operational requirements for submitting a notification for a temporary food service event in accordance with the Food Safety Regulations (Regulations).

## Who needs to submit a notification?

If you want to organize or take part as a food vendor at a temporary event, such as an exhibition, fair, or festival, where food is provided, you will need to submit a notification form to the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA).

NOTE:

- You should submit your notification at least 14 days before the temporary food service event.
- Your notification can be cancelled at any time if NSDA determines you are not meeting the Standard.
- A notifier must attest to meeting the requirements specified in this Standard when submitting a notification form. This includes organizers (responsible to ensure adequate facilities, such as power supplies, water supply, and waste management), and vendors (responsible for adequate booths/structure, food protection, and food handling/hygiene).
- If you plan to operate a mobile food service unit, such as a push cart or food truck, at the event, and already have a permit from NSDA, you do NOT need to apply for a temporary food services permit.
- If the food you are selling is considered to be “low risk,” you may not need to submit a notification. Low-risk foods are shelf-stable and may not need refrigeration. Learn more [here](#).
- If you have a food establishment outside of Nova Scotia and plan to attend a temporary event in Nova Scotia, you must submit a Temporary Event Notification. Make sure you provide the name, address, and contact information for the permitted establishment where the food will be prepared.
  - Out-of-province food establishments may be required to meet federal requirements under the Safe Food for Canadians Act. Contact the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for more information or visit [this site](#).

## DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used in the Standard. This is what they mean:

**“High-Risk Food (Potentially Hazardous Food)”** means food that has the potential to support the growth of pathogenic micro-organisms or the production of toxins. This includes any food that consists in whole or in part of milk or milk products, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish (edible mollusca and crustacea), or any other ingredients, in a form capable of supporting growth of infectious and/ or toxigenic micro-organisms.

**“Low-Risk Food (Non-Potentially Hazardous Food)”** means food that is not potentially hazardous and has a pH level of 4.6 or below and/or a water activity of 0.85 or less.

**“Notifier”** means a person or business who submits a notification, as defined in the Food Safety Regulations

**“Notification Receipt”** means notification receipt as defined in the Food Safety Regulations.

**“Organizer”** means a person who coordinates the overall requirements to plan and hold a temporary food service event.

**“Serviced Vendor Booth (Full Utilities)”** means a vendor booth that has a supply of potable hot and cold water, at adequate pressure and volume, to a hand-washing sink and dishwashing facilities and a wastewater system that meets the requirements of applicable legislation, regulations and municipal bylaws. You may be permitted to perform food preparation on site as prescribed in this Standard.

**“Temporary Food Service Event”** means temporary food service event as defined in the Food Safety Regulations as a booth or structure erected to provide a food service in conjunction with a single event that operates for a period of 14 days or less within a 60-day period per location. This may include exhibitions, fairs, community festivals, seasonal holiday events or similar organized community activities.

**“Un-serviced Vendor Booth (Limited Utilities)”** means a vendor booth located at a temporary event and does not have one or more of the following: plumbed hot and cold potable water at adequate pressure and volume, plumbed handwashing sinks, dishwashing facilities and/or a wastewater system that meets the requirements of applicable legislation, regulations and municipal bylaws. Food preparation must take place in a permitted kitchen. Onsite preparation is restricted to reheating and final assembly as prescribed in this Standard.

**“Vendor”** means a person who operates a booth or structure at a temporary food service event for the purpose of offering food products for sale or distribution.

*\*Terms defined in the Health Protection Act-Part II, Food Safety Regulations, and Nova Scotia Food Retail & Food Services Code, apply to this Standard.*

## Requirements for a Temporary Food Services Event Notification

### General requirements for organizers and vendors

You must complete all sections of the notification form that apply to you.

If you plan on organizing, selling, or distributing food at multiple events within a year, and the setup/food will be the same at each event, you can apply for all events on one notification form.

- All of the events must occur within 365 days of the date NSDA receives your notification.
- You must include all the information for each event (organizer, location, date) on the notification form.
- **If anything changes for any of the events, you must submit a separate notification for that event.**

### Requirements for organizers

As the organizer, you are responsible for making sure the physical facilities and the vendors meet the requirements in the Standard.

#### *General requirements*

You must:

- notify NSDA if any of the details you supplied in your notification have changed,
- keep a copy of your notification receipt, your notification form, and any other supporting documents onsite for inspection,
- make sure all vendors on the site also have their notification receipts and forms,
- get approvals for any other partnering agencies and municipalities, if required, and,
- submit a site plan (including location of vendor booths, mobiles, seating areas, washrooms, waste, etc.) and list of vendors as part of your notification form.

If you are an organizer who is also selling high-risk foods, make sure you have a copy of your food handlers' certificate onsite for inspection. This must be valid within the last five years and be from a training organization recognized by NSDA.

#### *Specific requirements*

##### Power Supply

- You must ensure the site has power for the vendors.
- You must also have a backup plan/supply available in case of a power failure. This could include generators, propane burners, etc.

## Water Supply (if applicable)

- You must ensure the water used by the vendors is safe for cooking and drinking and meets the requirements set out in Nova Scotia's Food Safety Regulations.

You can do this one of two ways:

- Use water from an approved municipal or registered public drinking water supply that is available onsite, buy bottled water from a commercial source, or have water trucked in from an approved source and store it onsite.
- Use water from a private source, such as a well. You must be able to prove this water is safe for drinking and cooking by having it tested at an approved laboratory. Keep the test results onsite for inspection.

## Sanitation and Waste Handling

You must organize the following for solid waste, toilets/handwashing, and wastewater:

Solid Waste:

- Provide containers for solid waste (garbage), recycling, and compost. These containers should have tops or lids so the contents do not attract flies or other pests.

Toilets/Handwashing:

- Ensure the site has toilets and handwashing facilities. These can be portable or temporary, if necessary. Separate toilets and handwashing facilities may be required for vendors.
- Keep the toilets/handwashing facilities in good working order and in a location where they can be pumped, inspected, and maintained during the event.

Wastewater:

- Wastewater must be stored in a covered, durable container.
- Wastewater must NOT be poured out on the ground or down a storm sewer. It must only be poured down an approved sanitary sewer or bathroom facility.
- If no sanitary sewer or bathroom facility is available, you must store the wastewater in a holding tank so it can be taken to a proper facility.

Contact a Public Health Inspector for more information about site plans, washroom facilities, safe drinking water, and waste issues. [Offices | Department](#).

## Requirements for vendors (sellers)

Vendors are responsible for making sure their booths/structure, food protection, and food handling all meet the requirements in this Standard.

### *General requirements*

You must:

- notify NSDA if any of the details you supplied in your notification have changed,
- keep a copy of your notification receipt, your notification form, and any other supporting documents onsite for inspection,
- have a food handlers' certificate onsite for inspection. This must be valid within the last five years and be from a training organization recognized by NSDA. See Food Handler Training (below) for more information.
- submit a list of all menu items you will be providing as part of your notification form.

### *Specific requirements*

#### **Physical Setup of Booth or Structure**

As a vendor, you must ensure your booth:

- is protected from rain, wind, and direct sunlight,
- has a canopy, tarp, or umbrella to protect food from contamination,
- can be easily and thoroughly cleaned; food prep surfaces must be smooth and non-porous,
- keeps animals, young children, and the public out of food handling areas,
- has handwashing facilities, and
- meets all local fire safety and other regulatory requirement.

#### **Food Preparation and Storage**

You must ensure the food is prepared and stored in an eating establishment that has a permit, or at a serviced vendor booth, as specified in this Standard. (A serviced booth has its own source of safe, clean water and electricity.)

- If you are using your own permitted eating establishment, provide its name, address, and permit number in your notification form.
- If you are using an offsite permitted eating establishment that you do not own, you must provide its name, address, contact details, and dates of use on your notification form.

- If you are attending multiple events using more than one offsite permitted eating establishment, you must have the information for all facilities available on site using the Permission to Use Permitted Eating Establishment – Appendix 7.

## Food Handling Onsite

- There are some restrictions when handling foods at an un-serviced booth. Only limited food preparation, such as reheating or associated assembly, can be done.
- Food must not be cut, chopped, marinated, prepared, or processed at the event.

## Food Sources

You must ensure all food is safe for humans to eat or drink.

- All foods must come from a source that is subject to inspection. This does NOT apply to [exempt foods](#).
- If you use ice, it must come from an approved source (for example, ice that is commercially packaged) and is stored in a way that avoids contamination.

The water you use for drinking and cooking must meet the Food Safety Regulations. See Organizers: Water Supply above for approved sources.

## Temperature Control

High-risk foods must be cooked, cooled, stored, transported, and held at the correct temperatures as specified below:

- Hot food must be cooled from 60°C (140°F) to 20°C (68°F) in two hours or less and from 20°C (68°F) to 4°C (40°F) in four hours or less.
- Cold foods must be kept at or below 4°C (40°F).
- Hot foods must be kept at or above 60°C (140°F).
- Reheated foods must come to an internal temperature of 74°C (165°F).
- Potentially hazardous foods that are cooked at a serviced vendor booth or prior to the event at a permitted eating establishment must be cooked to the proper internal temperature.

See more in Appendix 6.

The equipment you use for cooking, reheating, and holding hot high-risk foods must be safe and functioning.

- Open-flame chafing dishes must not be used at outdoor temporary events.
- You must have a safe and sufficient electrical source to power your electrical equipment.

- Styrofoam coolers must NOT be used. Only mechanical refrigerators or insulated, hard-sided coolers with sufficient ice to completely surround the food may be used. Thermometers must be present in all refrigerators or coolers.
- You must have properly calibrated food-probe thermometers to check the hot and cold food temperatures. These must be sanitized between uses.
- You must check the temperatures of the hot and cold food storage every two hours. Keep a log of these checks and make it available for inspection. Learn more in Appendix 3.

## **Food Protection**

You must protect food from contamination at all times.

- Use food-grade quality containers to transport, store, and serve food.
- Keep the food covered at the event with lids, plastic, or aluminum wrap, or under a sneeze guard.
- Keep all food, food packaging, dishes, and utensils at least 15 cm up off the ground/ floor and protected from any source of contamination.
- All plates, bowls, cups, cutlery etc., the customers use to eat the food must be single-use only.
- All condiments (such as ketchup and mustard) must either be in individual packages or dispensed from a container that protects the condiments from contamination.

## **Cleaning and Sanitation**

You must clean and sanitize the booth, equipment, and all surfaces that have contact with food.

- Any equipment or surfaces that come in contact with food must be easy to keep clean and protected from contamination. Surfaces must be smooth and non-absorbent.
- You must change or properly clean and sanitize all utensils that touch food at least every two hours or as required.

Find a daily self-inspection checklist in Appendix 2.

Learn more about sanitizers in Appendix 5.

## Food Handler Hygiene

You must ensure anyone who handles food at your booth practises good personal and food-handling hygiene.

### *Handwashing:*

- Your booth must have handwashing facilities. This can be a temporary handwashing station (see Appendix 4) or safe hot- and cold-running water under pressure.
- You must have liquid hand soap and paper towels in dispensers at the handwashing station.
- Everyone who handles food must wash their hands as often as necessary to prevent contamination of food and food areas.
- The wastewater from the temporary handwashing station must be properly disposed of in a sanitary sewer. Wastewater must NOT be poured out on the ground or down a storm sewer. See **Requirements for Organizers, Sanitation and Waste Handling**.

### *Personal hygiene:*

- All food handlers must wear clean clothing and proper footwear (no open-toe shoes, sandals, or flipflops).
- They must wear a hairnet, beard net, or hat to keep hair from getting in the food.
- They must not eat, drink, or smoke/vape while working in the booth.
- If your booth has more than one person working, designate one person to only handle the money. This person will NOT touch the food.

Contact a Public Health Inspector for more information about safe food handling practices for your event and the types of food you are serving. [Offices | Department](#).

## Food Handler Training

Find a list of recognized programs [here](#).

- Ensure that at least one person who is always present at your booth has successfully completed a recognized food handler training program within the past five years.
- We recommend that all persons who are involved in food preparation and service should take a food handling program to learn about proper food hygiene.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Temporary Food Service Event Notification

Appendix 1A - Additional Event Information

Appendix 2 – Daily Self-Inspection Checklist

Appendix 3– Temperature Log Sheet

Appendix 4 – How to Set Up a Temporary Hand Wash Station

Appendix 5– How to Mix a Chlorine Bleach Sanitizer

Appendix 6 – Temperature Fact Sheet

Appendix 7 – Permission to Use Permitted Eating Establishment