

County of Nevada
Community Development Agency
Department of Environmental Health

Frequently Asked Questions about Community Event Requirements

- **What is a “community event”?** A community event is a special event where food will be sold or given away to the public **from temporary facilities such as a food booth**. Community events include the county fair, holiday and bridal fairs, street fairs, chili cook-offs and other similar non-profit and for-profit events that are open to the public. Indoor events with individual food booths are also community events.
- **My organization has a pancake breakfast once a month to raise funds. Does the organization have to meet the community event requirements?** Events such as pancake breakfasts, school bake sales, church suppers or other similar events where food will be sold or given away only to its members and their guests and that are held in permanent facilities, usually do not qualify as community events. Therefore, nonprofit events where food is prepared and served from a non-residential kitchen not more than three days in any 90 day period are exempt from the event coordinator requirements.
- **What kind of foods are we allowed to sell at a community event?** The following are four types of general food service. Each type has some examples of foods that would fit into that category and the basic requirements for each.
 1. Potentially hazardous / Unpackaged food:
 - Some food examples are BBQs, tacos, potatoes, hot dogs, hamburgers, etc.
 - **Requirements:** handwashing and utensil/equipment washing, fully enclosed booth, temperature control, thermometer
 2. Potentially hazardous/ Pre-packaged food:
 - Some food examples are boxed pizzas and wrapped sandwiches from an approved food facility, individually wrapped ice cream bars, individually wrapped pasties, etc.
 - **Requirements:** handwashing, overhead protection, durable floor surface, temperature control, thermometer
 3. Non-potentially hazardous / Unpackaged food:
 - Some food examples are sno-cones, cotton candy, popcorn, caramel apples, pretzels, etc.
 - **Requirements:** handwashing and utensil/equipment washing , fully enclosed booth
 4. Non-potentially hazardous/Pre-packaged food:
 - Some food examples are canned/bottled soda and water, candy, bagged cotton candy, bagged popcorn, potato chips, popsicles, etc.
 - **Requirements:** handwashing, overhead protection, durable floor surface
- **What is a “potentially hazardous food”?** It is a food that is capable of supporting the rapid growth of microorganisms that can cause foodborne illness.

- **What is a “pre-packaged food”?** It is a properly labeled food prepared and packaged by the manufacturer at an approved facility. It is packaged in such a way to prevent human contact and is distributed to the consumer in the original package.
- **I understand that our community event needs an event coordinator. What does an event coordinator do and what is their responsibility for the event?** An event coordinator can be a person or an organization. The event coordinator is required to provide the Environmental Health Department information about the food service that will be offered, and to monitor the food service operators for compliance with State food handling regulations.
- **We are going to sell food at a community event. Do we need to submit an application?** Yes, each food vendor is required to submit an application to the community event coordinator prior to the event. The food vendor application will require you to provide information on the foods that will be handled in the booth, and how it will be prepared and served during the event. No food prepared or stored in a private home may be served in a food booth. This information and the application are submitted to the event coordinator who provides the information to Environmental Health.
- **What are the food handling and booth requirements for operating a temporary food booth at a community event?** The event coordinator will provide easy to follow handouts with information on food handling and the requirements for setting up a food booth. The handout, prepared by Environmental Health, explains the type of structure and equipment required based on the type of foods you would be serving. Foods that are non-hazardous or packaged have less restrictive requirements than those foods that are potentially hazardous or prepared on site. Safe food handling practices, procedures to verify foods are protected from contamination, and monitoring for proper temperatures are explained. In addition to booth and safe food requirements, adequate facilities for utensil and hand washing are also discussed in the handout.
- **Does our organization need to have a certified food safety operator on staff to operate a food booth?** No, according to State regulations, temporary food facilities are not required to have a person with certified food safety training in order to serve food at an event.
- **If we hire a caterer to provide and serve food at our event, are we required to apply for a Community Event Permit?** Yes, only if the caterer operates out of temporary food facilities. A private catered event is not a community event. All caterers that operate in Nevada County must have a Nevada County permit.
- For more specific information contact an Environmental Health Specialist at 530-265-1452.