

TEMPORARY FOOD FACILITY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need a permit to sell or give away food at a community event?

Yes, a permit is required even if the food is given away. The requirements apply to all persons participating in food events, regardless of non-profit status, and includes sampling.

2. What is a Community Event?

A “Community Event” is defined as an event that is civic, political, public or educational in nature. It includes: state and county fairs, city festivals, circuses and other public gathering events. A grand opening, a store give-away event, or any other event that is designed to increase, celebrate, or promote a business is **not** a Community Event.

3. What is an Event Organizer and when are they required?

An Event Organizer is a person or organization that is responsible for the coordination, sponsorship or arrangement of a community event. An Event Organizer is required when two or more food/beverage booths will be at an event.

4. My food is prepackaged...do I still need a permit?

Yes, a permit is still required. However, certain requirements may not apply.

5. I am only selling or giving away drinks ... do I still need a permit?

Yes. Beverages are considered food and a permit is required. The requirements for bottled or canned beverages are the same as for prepackaged food.

6. Can I prepare food at my home for sale/distribution from a temporary food facility?

Food intended for public consumption may not be prepared in a home. All food must be obtained from approved sources.

7. Do I need a permit if I'm a non-profit organization?

Yes, a permit is required for all food vendors offering food for sale to the public. The potential risk associated with handling food is the same, regardless of where the proceeds go.

8. Do I need a permit to have a private party?

No. Private parties intended only for members of an organization and/or their invited guests do not require a permit. If the event is advertised to the public; however, then a permit is required.

9. How long is the permit valid?

The permit issued to a temporary food facility vendor or to an organizer is valid only for the duration of that specific community event. A new application must be submitted, and a new permit obtained for each different community event.

10. I already have a permit for my restaurant in Santa Barbara County. Does that permit me to participate in temporary events?

No. The permit for your restaurant is site-specific and does not transfer to any other location.

11. When do I need to submit my application?

At least 2 weeks prior to the event.

12. Why is a health permit required?

The Legislature finds and declares that the public health interest requires that there be statewide health and sanitation standards for food facilities to assure the people of this state, that the food provided to consumers is safe, unadulterated and honestly presented through adoption of science-based standards.