

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

		Effective Date November 1, 2024	Number F 02
Subject UHCL Temporary Food Permit Guidelines			
Reference 25 TAC 228.222, 25 TAC 229		Special Instructions None	
Distribution UHCL Faculty, Staff, Students, and Guests		Reevaluation Date November 1, 2025	No. Pages 12

I. PURPOSE

When faculty, staff, students, and/or visitors want to cook and/or distribute food on UHCL property, steps must be taken to ensure food is purchased, handled, prepared, and served safely according to state and federal food regulations for the public. The university has developed the UHCL Temporary Food Permit Guidelines (TFP-Guidelines) to address these concerns and fulfill state requirements.

The UHCL TFP-Guidelines do not in any way replace or supersede food safety and health regulations set forth by any city, county, state of Texas, or federal regulations. Where this guideline or local regulation sets stricter standards, the stricter standard shall be followed.

Anyone requesting to distribute food on campus must have an approved permit and comply with [Texas Temporary Food Establishments, in 25 Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\) Rule §228.222](#) (including references to other sections in [Chapter 228](#)), and the requirements outlined in this document.

II. AGREEMENTS

UHCL has an exclusive agreement with Chartwells, the UHCL Dining (Food) Services provider on campus. It is a violation of the agreement to allow any other outside vendors to sell food products or provide samples to our campus community without requesting their services first. This also applies to departments, groups, and/or organizations at UHCL using university funds greater than \$250 or more than \$500 for UHCL-Pearland. Catering requests with Chartwells may be submitted via <https://dineoncampus.com/uhcl/fresh-fork-catering>

If you do not wish to use Chartwells products or services, then a Food Service Waiver Request Form must be completed. To obtain a [Food Service Waiver Request](#), complete the following steps:

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT

1. Email foodservice@uhcl.edu, and attach your quote(s) from the vendor or store.
2. Forward your approved response from Chartwells with the attached quote(s), a completed [Waiver Request Authorization Form](#), and any other pertinent information to procurement@uhcl.edu. Please note this form must be submitted a **minimum of ten business days** before the event.
3. If approved, the requester will receive a signed Food Waiver Request from the Procurement Department.
4. After you receive the waiver, **you must still obtain a Temporary Food Permit (TFP)**.

III. FUNDRAISING

Nonprofit employees and student groups registered with the Office of Student Involvement & Leadership (OSIL) may sell low and medium-risk food items for fundraising purposes only. Individuals wanting to make a profit (outside of fundraising purposes) are not allowed to do so on UHCL campuses. See Cottage Food Production in section XVII.

IV. OUTSIDE CATERER

All outside caterers/vendors/restaurants/contractors providing food at UHCL and UHCL-Pearland must have a valid City or County Health Permit and Food Service Manager's Certification.

V. DEFINITIONS

- Catering Services – A licensed entity that provides food services (cooking and/or provision of cooked and/or uncooked food) at an event. The catering service is required to have properly trained personnel and all necessary equipment to maintain temperature control and handle food before, during, and after the event.
- Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) – A UHCL department that oversees the health and safety environment on campus.
- Event Assistant – An individual who prepares and/or distributes food or drink to the public.
- Food Handler Certificate (FHC) – A certification accredited by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The FHC proves a person's knowledge of safely handling and serving food. **This certificate is required by individuals who plan to distribute medium and high-risk food items.**
- Food Manager Certificate (FMC) – A certification accredited by the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS) or the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT

FMC proves a person's knowledge and skills to keep food safe and prevent foodborne illnesses. This certificate is required for high-risk food events (e.g., Chili Cook-Off).

- [Open Flame Permit \(OFP\)](#) When an open flame is needed (e.g., sterno for hot holding), select OFP on the temporary food permit application, upload the [fire extinguisher training](#) certificate for the Fire Watch person(s), and the OFP will be generated along with the TFP if/when approved.
- [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) - gloves, hair restraints, face masks, etc
- [Responsible Person](#) – The applicant of the TFP and/or OFP who is trained and ensures the food service and/or event and event assistant(s) adhere to policies and procedures.
- [Temporary Food Permit \(TFP\)](#) - A one-time use permit that is approved for a specific date and time range, with a maximum of four hours for medium and high-risk foods and no set time in a day for low-risk foods.

VI. PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES

A. [How To Obtain a Temporary Food Permit \(TFP\)](#)

1. Reserve your space/room first. UHCL [Scheduling](#) must confirm site reservation before applying for the TFP and/or OFP online.
2. For the online [TFP Request System](#), you will need a valid UHCL email and login credentials to use the system. The "Username" is your faculty or staff email prefix, the same as your UHCL computer and email account login (e.g., [lastname@uhcl.edu](#)).
3. Before an application can be completed online, each applicant/Responsible Person and Event Assistant(s) must read these TFP-Guidelines and submit a [Declaration of Acknowledgement \(DOA\)](#) to the online TFP Request System found on the EHS Forms webpage. The DOA signature page is valid for one year and can be submitted as one sheet with several signatures or (preferably) individually online. [Submitting individually allows for the DOA to be searched by name for later applications.](#)
4. After the DOA is uploaded, the application link will appear. The TFP permit request must be submitted at least **14 days** before the proposed event.
5. See *Procedures & Training Requirements for Employees and Student Organizations*.

VII. PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

All UHCL students and student organizations requesting to serve food must be officially recognized and registered with the UHCL OSIL before they can apply online for a TFP through *GetInvolved*. For any questions or concerns regarding this process, please contact the OSIL at 281-283-2560 or getinvolved@uhcl.edu.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

VIII. PROCEDURES & TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

- A. Food shall be obtained from approved sources and be of good quality. Food shall be prepared only in permitted or licensed establishments. **Food prepared in a private home is not allowed.** Homemade food may not be distributed on campus to the public as donations, for fundraising, for profit, or for free.
- B. Food Handler Certificate (FHC) **(Required for Medium & High-Risk Events Only)**
1. The FHC is required for the Responsible Person(s) and Event Assistant(s) before permit approval.
 2. Nominal fees are associated with obtaining these training certificates, which are paid directly to the training provider and are at the expense of the applicant/organization. Training may be found at the following links: <http://www.learn2serve.com> or <https://www.servsafe.com>.
 3. Upload and attach a copy of the current certificate to each TFP request. For employees, upload the certificate(s) to the online TFP Request System; for student organizations, upload the certificate(s) through GetInvolved.
- C. Food Manager Certificate (FMC) **(Required for High-Risk Events Only)**
1. The FMC is required by at least one person for high-risk food events.
 2. The FMC holder must be present during the duration of the event.
 3. Nominal fees are associated with obtaining this training certificate, which are paid directly to the training provider and are at the expense of the applicant/organization. Training may be found at the following links: <http://www.learn2serve.com>, <https://www.servsafe.com>, or <https://www.houstonconsumer.org/food-permits/food-manager-food-handler-certification>
 4. Upload and attach a copy of the current certificate to each TFP request. For employees, upload the certificate(s) to the online TFP Request System, and for student organizations, upload the certificate(s) to GetInvolved.
- D. Open Flame Permit (OFP)
1. An OFP is required to approve the use of open flames for cooking, hot holding, or decorative purposes. This includes chafing fuel cans, wood/charcoal grills, barbecue pits, propane grills, candles, sparklers, tiki torches, oil lamps, bonfires, etc.
 2. A designated Fire Watch must always be present when open-flame equipment is in use. This person can be the same as the Responsible Person/Applicant.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

3. Before an OFP can be approved, the designated Fire Watch must complete [Fire Extinguisher Training](#) and upload their certificate.
4. If/when the TFP is approved, the OFP will be generated automatically along with it. Print the OFP and place it on your table at the start of your event.

E. Allergens (For Medium & High-Risk Events)

1. Select which allergen ingredients you will include in the application; an allergen sign will be generated and emailed along with your TFP. The common allergens (e.g., eggs, nuts) are listed, but you can type in and add any other potential allergen ingredients.
2. Print and post this allergen sign at your event.

F. Application Changes

1. If the event is rescheduled, a new site reservation is necessary, and applicants should contact the EHS Department by email (foodpermits@uhcl.edu) to request TFP and/or OFP permit modifications; otherwise, a new application for a TFP and/or OFP will need to be submitted through the systems.
2. If the already approved application needs modifying (e.g., changes to the food items, changes to the Event Assistants on-site, or modifications to the caterer/vendor listed on an approved TFP), the EHS Department must approve those changes at least **7-days** before the start of the event; otherwise, a new application for a TFP and/or OFP will need to be submitted.
3. **The TFP and OFP expire upon completion of the event.**

G. Private Events Exemption

1. A TFP is not required when an organization, campus office, department, or service unit hosts a private event (e.g., a staff meeting or intra-departmental birthday celebration), and food is served only to members.
2. These personal and/or private events held by an immediate group or organization are closed to the public. If the event is held in a public area, **“Members Only” and/or “No Visitors Allowed”** signage must be displayed and clearly visible. Events are not considered private if they are advertised around campus to other students, faculty, staff, etc.
3. Food must still comply with federal and state safety rules, including fresh ingredients from approved sources, within storage “best by” timelines, in good condition (e.g., correct color & odor, texture, not slimy), and kept at the required temperatures before, during, and after cooking.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

4. Dishes should be covered to protect against dust and sneezes. Clean utensils, sanitizer, and gloves should also be utilized.

IX. FOOD RISK CATEGORIES AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Low-Risk Category

1. Low-risk category foods are sealed, individually packaged, bottled or canned, single-serving, shelf-stable, ready-to-eat, non-perishable foods with low moisture content or preserved. These foods do not need temperature control before being consumed or need to be reheated or kept cold. **Food or drink may not be opened and cut/poured into smaller serving portions.**
2. Examples of Low-Risk sealed packaged foods include, but are not limited to:

Candy	Soda/Water	Chips	Popcorn	Pretzels	Cookies
Little Debbie Snacks	Trail Mix/Jerky	Gummy Fruit Snacks	Sandwich Crackers	Granola Bars	Applesauce

3. **These food items do not require a FHC but do require a TFP.**
4. Beverages must be unopened, single-serving, canned, bottled, or pouch.
5. Serving portions from a commercial package that are not individually wrapped by the vendor (e.g., a box of donuts or a tray of cookies) is prohibited in this category.

B. Medium-Risk Category

1. Medium-risk category foods may require breaking the seal of a package, bottle, or similar to combine ingredients and/or divide them into smaller quantities. These foods are not individually wrapped, and/or may need to be warmed up, and/or opened and poured into smaller portions. Time and temperature can affect the quality of these food items.
2. Examples of Medium-Risk food items include, but are not limited to:

Cotton Candy	Value-size items intended to be open, manipulated, and served in smaller portions (e.g., coffee, chips)	Whole Fruit (e.g., apples, bananas, peaches)
Popcorn	Pickles, Snow Cones	Tray of Cookies, Brownies, and sliced Cakes

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

Coffee	Box of Pizza(s), Box of Donuts	Catered food from a restaurant (e.g., Raising Cane's, Chick-fil-A)
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3. These **food items must be consumed within 4 hours** after opening and final preparation. Anything not consumed after that time must be discarded.
4. Professionally cooked and served foods prepared by a caterer/restaurant are also in the medium-risk category. When made, transported, and served by the restaurant, the individual or organization/department does not need to have a FHC; however, if food is purchased from a professional company **but transported and served by the individual or organization/department**, all participants (Responsible Person & Event Assistants) must have FHC or FMC.
5. If the event includes serving or selling medium-risk food items, then ALL participants are required to have at least a FHC. The only exception is if the food is made, transported, and served by the caterer.
6. Food items that suggest or require an open flame are prohibited in this category (e.g., hot dogs, canned chili, or cheese).

C. High-Risk Category

1. High-risk category foods are commonly cooked, stored and/or maintained at specific temperatures (either hot, refrigerated, or frozen), and all foods not covered by low or medium-risk categories.
2. High-risk category foods are not allowed to be cooked on campus unless for UHCL-sponsored events. These events are hosted by UHCL departments and are **arranged 30 days in advance**. Someone possessing a Food Manager Certificate must be present to supervise during the duration of the event. More than one trained Food Manager is recommended for larger events requiring multiple serving stations and backup purposes (e.g., Chili Cook-Off, and National Night Out).
3. Examples of High-Risk foods include but are not limited to:

Dairy Product (e.g., cheese, milk, yogurt)	Fat (e.g., olive oil, oil mixtures)	Fruit (e.g., melon, stone fruits)
Grain Product (e.g., pasta, pizza, tamale)	Other Protein Food (i.e. tofu, soy, sprouts)	Meat (e.g. beef, lamb, pork)
Poultry (e.g., chicken, duck, turkey)	Seafood (e.g. crustacean, fish, shellfish)	Vegetable (e.g. bean, potato, rice)

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

4. Meat, pork, and poultry products shall be initially cooked to the following minimum internal temperatures: Poultry = 165°F, Ground Meats and Pork = 155°F, and Other Meats = 145°F. Once cooked, they must be held hot at 140°F.
5. Potentially hazardous food already cooked that will be served hot (instead of cold) needs to be reheated prior to the start of the event; it must be done rapidly to 165°F or above for at least 15 seconds within two hours. A microwave oven, conventional oven, stove, or electrical skillet may be used. Crock pots, chafing dishes, or food warmers shall not be used to rapidly reheat foods – they may only be used for hot holding after food is reheated.
6. After cooking or reheating, potentially hazardous foods (e.g., foods which consist in whole or in part of meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, cooked beans, rice, potatoes, pasta) must be maintained at 140°F or above for hot foods, or 40°F or below for cold foods.
7. An appropriately scaled and calibrated metal stem-type thermometer must be on site and used to monitor proper internal cooking and holding temperature of the food when served.
8. Applicants planning to use an open-flame device must obtain an [Open Flame Permit](#) (OFP). Please complete and submit your OFP request to the Office of Emergency Management.

X. PERSONAL HYGIENE / PPE / ILLNESS

1. All individuals shall maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and conform to good hygienic practices.
2. Individuals cooking or serving must thoroughly wash their hands before and after handling or switching between different foods, changing gloves, using the restroom, touching their face or body, handling trash, etc.
3. Hand sanitizers must be readily & visibly available at all food events
4. Servers must wear disposable gloves and use a different serving utensil for each food group. **If self-serving, individuals must first sanitize their hands and use serving utensils.**
5. Individuals handling food shall wear an effective hair restraint (e.g., ball cap, hair tie, hair net, scarf, beard restraints). Hair longer than shoulder length shall be tied back and/or worn up under the hair restraint.
6. Cooks and servers may not wear food gloves outside of the serving station nor eat or drink inside the food prep area.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

7. Any individual feeling ill (e.g., runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever, jaundice, stomach or digestive illness) or with an infection (nasal, throat, skin infected wound, or boil) may not handle or prepare food.

XI. FOOD TRANSPORTATION

1. If not professionally transported or catered, use insulated carriers (e.g., thermal tote bag, thermal cargo blanket, cooler with ice) to keep hot/cold items hot/cold and separate from each other.
2. Food should be delivered to the campus event as close as possible to serving time to prevent food from potentially being out of temperature control.

XII. SERVING HOT FOOD

1. Food cooked and/or typically served hot must be kept hot utilizing one or more of the following: electric skillet, slow cooker (microwaved first), or chafing fuel cans (OFP required along with fire extinguisher and training).
2. Additional/extra food containers must be kept hot in a thermal container. Before serving, they must be reheated rapidly to 165°F for 15 seconds within two hours. If it takes longer than two hours to reheat, the food should be thrown away.
3. Containers must remain covered and sealed throughout the food event.

XIII. SERVING COLD FOOD

1. Food must be kept cold using one or more of the following: double bowl on top of a larger bowl with ice, ice pan with small bowls or plates for condiments; otherwise, it should be kept in an ice chest.
2. Ice used for drinking must be from an approved water source and stored in bags until used and dispensed properly, away from other food items. Do not store any food in water or ice that is intended for human consumption. Use an ice scoop and disposable gloves to handle ice. Do not use bare hands or a cup (which is touched by bare hands).
3. Containers must remain covered and sealed throughout the food event.

XIV. EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

1. Surfaces of equipment with food contact shall be protected from contamination by consumers by using engineering controls such as separating counters, tables, sneeze guards, etc.
2. Provide consumers only single-service articles (e.g., plastic knives, forks, and spoons).

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

3. Utensils, including ice scoops, shall be provided to minimize the handling of food and beverage items. All serving utensils must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized before use or reuse.
4. Bring extra utensils in case they are needed. Washing in the bathroom sink is not acceptable. Proper washing includes three containers (large enough to completely immerse the largest knife, fork, or spoon) with the following contents:
 - Container #1** – Potable water and soap mixture
 - Container #2** – Clean potable water
 - Container #3** – Sanitation Solution (2 capfuls bleach to 1 gallon of water, or equivalent container directions).
5. Store all food, utensils, plates, cups, and napkins at least 6 inches above the ground.
6. Chafing fuel cans shall only be the open can-hole gel type, which burns completely and poses less of a spill hazard than the liquid wick type. Burn completely before disposal. Unconsumed fuels may not be disposed of in regular trash. Please see section XVII, #3 for proper disposal.

XV. BOOTH CONSTRUCTION (MOSTLY FOR OUTDOORS)

1. When outside, provide a ceiling in food preparation and service areas, such as a wood or canvas canopy, that protects the interior of the established area from weather and other potential contaminating agents.
2. Dust and Pests (e.g. flies, roaches, rodents, bird poop) shall be controlled. Doors, walls, screening, and other measures may be required to restrict.
3. Floors shall be constructed of concrete, asphalt, tight wood, tarps, outdoor carpet, or other cleanable material approved by health authorities.
4. Carpeted floors may require protective covering to shield it from food spillage. Potential cleaning fees may be charged back to the Responsible Person.

XVI. TOILET FACILITIES

1. Conveniently located toilet facilities must be provided. Immediately adjacent to UHCL buildings is acceptable if such buildings are unlocked and available for use.
2. A handwashing sink with soap must also be available for all participants and guests after use.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

XVII. WASTE DISPOSAL

1. The Responsible Person shall arrange or provide waste disposal covered containers for waste and garbage.
2. Properly dispose of all liquid and solid waste according to UHCL regulations. No large quantities of liquid food or hot food items are to be placed in campus trashcans.
3. Chafing fuel cans may be extinguished/put out with a candlesnuffer and then wait until cooled before properly being disposed of. If the fuel can is empty, it may be recycled or put in the regular trash. If it is not empty, you may place the lid securely back on and keep it for reuse.
 - a. Do not put full or partially full chafing fuel cans in the trash, as this is considered hazardous flammable waste due to the fuel content.
 - b. If you need to dispose of any unwanted fuel chafing cans, contact the EHS **Department at 281-283-2104 or 281-283-2106 or email EHS@uhcl.edu**. Please allow several days for pickup.

XVIII. COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTION OPERATIONS

Cottage Food Operations are not permitted at UHCL. These small businesses are run by individuals and groups selling certain types of food items for profit. These operations have annual monetary restrictions and item-type restrictions. Individuals wishing to make a profit or not must get their temporary food permit from the City of Houston and have it visibly displayed at their table/booth.

XIX. COMMUNITY MEMBERS RENTING FACILITIES & SERVING FOOD

Applicants who do not have a valid UHCL email account and are not sponsored, such as community members renting UHCL facilities for events, must follow guidelines on the FMC webpage. The group will be responsible for submitting the TFP, training certificates, and any other requirements that must be met for the event. If online assistance is not possible, a [paper food permit application](#) may be submitted by email to FoodPermits@uhcl.edu with the same **14-day** advance request.

XX. VIOLATIONS

1. The first violation may result in a warning, and the Responsible Person and Event Assistant(s) may be required to review the TFP-Guidelines and take training.
2. Second violations may result in suspension of TFP requests.
3. Violations may be forwarded to the OSIL and Academic Affairs for further review and/or disciplinary action.

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

4. EHS reserves the right to shut down any function it deems as a public health hazard.
5. Posting of food permits is required, and they will be inspected periodically for adherence.

XXI. LINKS

1. City of Houston Food Manager Certificate Website – <https://www.houstonconsumer.org/food-permits/food-manager-food-handler-certification>
2. ServSafe Food Handler Certificate Website – <https://www.servsafe.com>
3. Learn2Serve Food Handler Certificate Website – <http://www.learn2serve.com>
4. Fire Extinguisher Training Website – <http://www.fireextinguishertraining.com>
5. Fresh Fork Catering Website – <https://dineoncampus.com/uhcl/fresh-fork-catering>
6. UHCL Online TFP Request System – <https://apps.uhcl.edu/ehs/permitrequests/>
7. UHCL Food Permits E-Mail – foodpermits@uhcl.edu
8. UHCL EHS E-Mail – ehs@uhcl.edu
9. UHCL Procurement Department E-Mail – uhclprocurement@uhcl.edu
10. UHCL Scheduling Website – <https://www.aaiscloud.com/UHoustonClearlake/default.aspx?home>
11. Texas Temporary Food Establishments, [Rule §228.222 Website](#)

ELECTRONIC APPROVAL

Niki Pearce

Interim Manager of Environmental, Health & Safety

Date: August 19, 2024