

Arizona State University Catering and Food Guidelines Frequently Asked Questions

Food Approvals

Q: Can I use a vendor from the Approved Vendors List?

A: No. All food vendors must be reviewed for eligibility and the appropriate food approval form should be submitted. The Approved Vendor List is an outdated document and practice. You should not assume vendors listed are in good-standing without verification.

Q: What type of food approvals are there?

A: Approval will come from one of two types of outside food vendor reviews and approval processes: Type 1: “Ready to Eat” (RTE) and Type 2: Onsite Food Preparation.

Type 1: “Ready to Eat” refers to an event that has any type of food that is edible without additional preparation to achieve food safety. Type 2: Onsite Food Preparation refers to an event that will have “open-food” preparation at the event.

Q What are some examples of Type 1: Ready to Eat (RTE) and Type 2 Onsite, preparation foods?

A: Common examples of Type 1: “Ready to Eat” food/beverage items include pizza, sub sandwiches, etc. that are dropped off or picked up and brought to an event at the planned time of consumption.

Type 2 foods include any “open food” preparation include mobile food trucks/units, and onsite food catering where a food vendor is **physically present** and open foods are cooked, sliced, temperature controlled (via; hot or cold holding), plated/served, etc. onsite at an event.

Type 1: “Ready to Eat” Foods

Q: Does this process apply to internal meetings - department meetings, student organization executive board meetings, etc.?

A: FER’s are for ‘Type 1’ (Ready-To-Eat) event situations where the event or meeting is in an exclusive contracted space and event planners will be ordering foods that will be delivered/brought to the event, but there is NOT an onsite food vendor at the event. The outside food vendor must still be reviewed and approved beforehand, and there is no fee.

Q: Can I serve food at my event in a venue that is contract exclusive?

A: A Food Exception Request will need to be submitted if there is a desire or need to serve “RTE” items, and not use the ASU contracted food provider in a venue that has contract-exclusivity.

For “RTE” requests in contract exclusive venues, all ASU student organizations, offices and departments must complete the Food Exception Request form. They must have written approval from the contracted ASU food provider, and they will then work with the ASU Food Safety and Health Manager to verify the outside restaurant/food vendor meets the minimum requirements to be approved; 1.) a current permit to operate and 2.) a sufficient recent food safety history.

Food Exception Form

Q: I will be purchasing pre-packaged items such as individual bags of chips, granola bars, and cans of soda from a grocery store (e.g. Fry’s, Costco., Target). Do I need to complete a food exception form?

A: If your event/meeting is in an exclusive/contracted space or venue, Yes! Otherwise, you do not need to fill out a Food Exception Request form; but still need to review the outside restaurant/food vendor to ensure they meet the (2) minimum requirements in order to be approved, and save the screenshot as your record for having done so before ordering or purchasing any foods.

Q: What is the purpose of the Food Exception Request Form? When does it need to be completed?

A: A food exception request is submitted any time the event or meeting venue is an exclusive contracted space, and the event planner wishes to request to use a different food vendor/restaurant (not use the ASU contracted food provider) in that contracted space.

Q: When a FER is approved, will the requester receive any documentation that shows the approval?

A: In these initial transition weeks of these changes, the requestor may still get an approval email from ASU Food Safety and Health. However, starting now the self-approval (and saved screenshot record of that approval) will be obtained and maintained by the event planner/coordinator themselves for all events going forward.

Q: What should I do if I’ve submitted my food exception request and my event date has changed? What if my food vendor(s) change?

A: If your event date changes, we recommend submitting again if your event is more than one (1) month away to maintain most accurate records. If your event has changed with less than one (1) month, it may not be necessary. If the restaurant/food vendor has changed, resubmission is necessary.

Type 2: Onsite, Food Preparation

Q: If my event is having a food truck or will be hosting an event where onsite food preparation will be taking place, what do I need to do?

A: When the person(s) planning and hosting the event determines there will be “open-food” preparation at the event, an application for a [Temporary Food Establishment Permit](#) will be required. The application along with fee information can be found at [ASU Food Safety and Health](#) webpage.

Additionally, a Certificate of Insurance from the vendor is required and must be obtained, validated and maintained by the person hosting the event. Insurance requirements and examples can be found within [Business and Finance](#).

Temporary Food Establishment Permits

Q: How long is my Temporary Establishment Permit valid? Can I use it anywhere?

A: Temporary Food Establishment permits are valid only for ASU campus locations/events for which they are initially approved, and vendor approval does not extend to other campuses/locations.

The same approved outside food vendor may be used at the same campus location as often as wanted over a 2-week period (starting with the initial event date of use), without needing a new approval or fee payment.

Q: How far in advance should I submit my application for a Temporary Establishment Permit? Who do I submit it to?

A: A Temporary Food Establishment Permit application must be submitted (typically via email) at least 7 working days prior to the event, to the [ASU Food Safety & Health Manager](#).

Q: I've obtained a Temporary Food License Permit for my department-hosted event. We host events at the Tempe and the Downtown campuses regularly. Can I use the same vendor at both locations?

A: You can use the same vendor; however, you would need to submit two (2) Temporary Food License Permits - one for the Tempe location and one for the Downtown location. Permit would apply to both locations.

Temporary Food Establishment permits are valid only for ASU campus locations/events for which they are initially approved, and vendor approval does not extend to other campuses/locations.

Q: I've obtained a Temporary Food License Permit for my department or organization's upcoming event. Can someone from a different department use the same vendor without permit fees if their event is within a two-week period and on the same campus?

A: Yes, the vendor permit stays active for the two (2) week period following the listed event date (or first event date, if there are multiple). An active permit list will not be maintained publicly given the short window of eligibility, however you can reach out to the ASU Food Safety and Health Manager to inquire about options if needed!

Q: We have a vendor come to campus and provide a type 2 service (ex: food truck), should we expect someone from ASU to come to the event to check?

A: Yes. ASU Food Safety and Health inspects as many outside food vendors at events as are submitted/approved, and as non-overlapping schedule allows; at each Maricopa County ASU campus (Downtown, Tempe, Polytechnic, and West).

Food Permits and Vendor Food Safety

Q: How do I go about verifying current permits and food safety history for a food vendor?

A: Visit the [Maricopa County Restaurant Ratings](#) website and enter the establishment address (or business name). Please note that the spelling must be precise to their County-listed permit name. When a permit is found, this indicates a valid permit with Maricopa County.

To verify sufficient food safety on recent Routine Inspections, click on the hyperlinked Permit ID number and review the vendor's recent inspection history page that opens. Capture and save a screenshot showing permit information and most recent Routine Inspection with zero (0) Priority Violations. Full instructions can be found at [ASU Food Safety and Health](#).

Q: If we book a caterer in advance, are we required to re-check their health department status just in case there is an infraction in the meantime?

A: Once an approval is given for an event (typically within 30 days of an event, or sooner), that approval is in effect through the event date. No other additional approval is needed again, unless the event date changes to a further out date.

Donated Food and “Potlucks”

Q: My team hosts a staff potluck at the end of each semester. People are encouraged to bring a dish to share. Do I need to complete this process?

A: If the event is occurring with your internal team and is not open to the public, you are not required to complete a food approval submission. Staff ‘potlucks’ are specifically discouraged and generally not allowed. However, the University recommends considering the foodborne illness risks and hazards associated with serving food or beverages prepared in personal/home kitchens and taking any and all precautions needed in order to encourage the best care and food safety for your team.

Q: If a vendor is donating food for my event, do I still need to complete this process?

A: Yes, you should verify that the vendor donating food is eligible to be utilized for your event, and ensure all steps of the food approval process have been completed! If your event is in a contract exclusive location, you may not be able to serve donated food items. Submit a Food Exception Request to request approval for any outside food or beverage in an exclusive contract location, including donated food items.

Multiple Food Providers

Q: I’m planning to utilize multiple food vendors at my event. Do I have to submit a unique form for each vendor?

A: For Type 1 “Ready to Eat” approvals, *no*. Multiple vendors (along w/each’s address/location) can be listed on a single Food Exception Request (‘FER’) form.

For Type 2 “Onsite Preparation” approvals, *yes*. There must be a separate Temporary Food Establishment Permit (‘TFP’) submitted for each different onsite open food vendor expected, and separate fee payment made.

Insurance

Q: Does ASU/ABOR have to be listed as an additionally insured?

A: The following is what should be included for additional insured: The State of Arizona, its departments, agencies, boards, commissions, universities, and its officers, officials, agents, and employees. The State of Arizona is included as ASU's insurance provider.

If you are using a Purchase Order, the insurance requirements are included in the Purchase Order terms and conditions. Otherwise, the insurance requirements can be found here:

<https://cfo.asu.edu/insurance-required-vendors>

Q: Can TULIP still be used for COI? I know they previously would have all the ASU verbiage plugged in.

A: TULIP is generally used for an event, providing short term insurance. A caterer/food provider that is properly licensed to do business would likely have insurance and should not need a short-term plan from TULIP.

Q: Is the COI good for a calendar year? Is the pay to serve fee per event?

A: The COI will show the effective dates of the insurance policy and it is important to verify the event date is within the begin/end dates of the insurance policy. While insurance policies are typically for a term of a year, they are not all on a calendar year.

As an example, if you are planning events using the same caterer/food provider on 7/25/23 and 9/15/23 and the insurance policy term listed on the COI is 8/1/22 to 7/31/23, the COI covers your first event date but you will need to obtain a new COI from the vendor for the September event, showing the insurance was renewed.

Other

Q: Are there any special considerations for the Mullett Arena?

A: Mullett is operated by a different outside food vendor; OVG 360; who have the food contract and oversight for Mullett Arena property only.

Q: Which departments or organizations does this catering and food exceptions policy apply to?

A: This policy applies to any ASU entity planning or making food purchases for a pre-planned and scheduled event, meeting, or other social occasion on ASU property; including/especially where attendance is not only limited to internal department/organization members.

Q: Are some of the food retail operations in the student unions or Gordon Commons Downtown run by Aramark? Do we still need to submit a Food Exception Request form to use them?

A: These locations are sub-contractors of Aramark; meaning they are approved by the contracted ASU campus food provider (Aramark) and have an agreement with them, but depending on the terms of their agreement they may or may not have varying degrees of control by Aramark. Therefore, each vendor must still be sent for approval.

Being that they are on ASU property, their permit to operate is with ASU Food Safety and Health (not Maricopa County), so they will not be found listed with the Maricopa County Restaurant Ratings webpage of permits. Email ASU Food Safety and Health Manager for inquiries or approvals about ASU permitted food establishments.

Q: Is this only if ASU funds are used or is it a food policy, regardless who pays?

A: These are food policy guidelines to follow regardless who pays. Also, 'Type 2: Onsite Food Preparation' scenarios come with an \$85.00 fee for their required Temporary Food Establishment Permit, which will typically be paid by the outside restaurant/food vendor (i.e.; the Mobile Food truck operator or Food Caterer). However, it could be paid by the organizing ASU org/club through internal ASU codes (CC, SC, PG, etc.) as well.

Q: Do places selling prepackaged foods have inspections listed on the Maricopa website that I can check?

A: Yes, all outside restaurants/food vendors (including 'Retail Food Establishment' permits for 'Grocery-type' permits selling 'pre-packaged' isles of food/drinks) across Maricopa County that have a food establishment permit, will have their permits and inspection histories available to check at the Maricopa County Restaurant Ratings website.

Q: Do I have to submit a Food Exception Form for an event that is serving food but is happening off-campus?

A: No, but it is still recommended that an event planner pre-check the offsite vendor's food permit history to make sure they have a valid permit to operate with their jurisdiction (i.e.; [Maricopa County](#)), and a sufficient recent Routine Inspection (food safety) record.

Additional Questions

Q: I have additional questions or a specific situation to my individual organization or department. Who can I reach out to?

A: Please submit questions about these guidelines or other food catering exceptions and approvals via email to [ASU Food Safety & Health Manager](#).

Q: Where can I find the full ASU Catering and Food Guidelines?

A: To review the full guidelines, visit [ASU Food Safety and Health](#).

Contract Exclusivity

Q: How can I verify if a location has an exclusive contract with a contracted vendor?

A: Event planners can verify if a venue has an exclusive contract with a food provider (e.g. Aramark, Sodexo, etc.) by contacting the venue in which they would like to host their event, or the closest building or property likely associated with a particular outdoor space or venue.