

Guidelines for Permitting a Caterer in the City of Northampton

Definition of a Catered Food Event:

A catered food event is one where food is served to a pre-determined number of people and where the food is generally served at one point in time to the entire group. Event planning is driven by the number of anticipated guests, and payment is contingent upon the guaranteed number of guests.

Definition of a caterer:

Caterer means any person who prepared food intended for individual portion service and transports it to another location, or who prepares and serves food at a food service establishment other than one for which s/he holds a permit, for service at a single meal, party or similar gathering.

Caterers can prepare food at their licensed base of operation or another licensed food establishment. Caterers who prepare food at a location other than their base of operation are responsible for providing adequate equipment and sanitary facilities. At an unlicensed facility, food handling should be limited to serving items prepared at the base of operation with a minimum of further food preparation, unless adequate equipment is provided by the caterer.

Anyone purchasing and preparing food for a client in the client's home kitchen using the client's utensils and equipment will not be considered a caterer. Such a person is providing services compared to that of a personal cook or housekeeper. However, if the individual or business is storing or processing food at another establishment, is using their own equipment, or is preparing food at a licensed establishment for service there or at a client's home, they be considered a caterer.

Permit Requirements:

All caterers are required to hold a permit issued by the board of health/Health Department in the city/town in which they have their base of operation. All caterers must have a base of operation designated on their application even if they routinely use other licensed facilities to prepare and serve food. Kitchens holding a residential kitchen permit shall not be used as a base of operation of catering.

The Massachusetts Food Establishment Regulations, 105CMR590.000, have been revised to include caterer in the list of permits issued to the food establishment (590.009 (A) (1)). A permit form issued to a food establishment must list the types of operations authorized. Table 1 lists examples of how various caterer operations should be permitted.

Notification Requirements:

Caterers must notify the local BOH when planning to serve a meal at a site other than their own food service establishment. Written notice must be submitted to the board of health prior to the catered function, on a form provided by the BOH (See template notification letter and Food Protection Questionnaire for catered events). In emergency situations, caterer can notify the board orally and follow up within 72 hours with written notification. The Food Establishment Regulations do not authorize a fee for the notification process, nor do they allow a BOH to issue a permit to a caterer based outside its jurisdiction, unless authorized by a local ordinance. In addition to that, the caterers should fill out the Food Protection Questionnaire for catered events and submit it with the notification letter.

Table 1

Base of Operation

Caterer operating from his/her own commercial catering facility

Caterer operating from his/her own food establishment business

Caterer operating from another business (e.g. restaurant)

Operations Designated on Permit

Caterer

Food Service/Caterer

Caterer (the restaurant must have a separate permit for a food service operation)

Template Caterer's Notification Form

Date
Name of Establishment
Address of Establishment
Telephone number

Board of Health
212 Main St.
Northampton, MA 01060

Dear Sir/Madam,
In accordance with 105 CMR 590.009 (A) (2), we wish to notify you that we plan to cater a function within your jurisdiction:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Menu: _____

Approximate Number of people: _____

A copy of our caterer's permit from the city/town of (base of operation location) is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Name of Person in Charge
Name of Establishment

Food Protection Questionnaire for Catered Events

Date of Event: _____ Event Time: _____

Location of Event: _____

List all foods that you will be chilling, holding, cooking, and/or re heating at the event location:

On ice/Refrigerated	Cooking	Reheating
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Food Manager Certification Person Trained On Site?	ΔYes	ΔNo
Allergen Awareness Menu Label Present?	ΔYes	ΔNo

List all Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF) and the individual intended temperature required:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

List the required temperature for each food as it leaves your preparation site:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

How will the PHF be kept at or below 41°F? _____

How will the PHF be kept at or above 140°F? _____

Time of PHF? Setup	Served	Removed
_____	_____	_____

List all equipment that will be supplied for an event, including but not limited to food thermometers, cleaning wipes, utensils, non-latex gloves, heating utensils, ice etc.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



CITY of NORTHAMPTON
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Municipal Building - 212 Main Street - Northampton, MA 01060
Phone (413)587-1214 - Fax (413)587-1221
<http://www.northamptonma.gov/245/Health>



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Be sure to fill out the application in its entirety and check all permit types that are applicable to your business.

For your review, definitions of the permit types are as follows:

Bed and Breakfast Permit – required for a private owner-occupied house where rooms are let and a breakfast is included in the rent.

Bar Permit – required for an establishment that serves alcoholic drinks for consumption on the premises. Such establishments are allowed to sell individual portions of pre-packaged, non-potentially hazardous food products. (Includes but not limited to: chips, peanuts, pretzels)

Caterer Permit – required when any person (s) prepares food intended for individual portion service, transports and serves it at another location, or who prepares and serves food at a food establishment, other than one for which he holds a permit, for service at a single meal, party or similar gathering.

Food Service Establishment Permit (FSE) – required for any premise or part of a premises where food is prepared, served, or sold for immediate consumption on or in the vicinity of the premises; called for or taken out by customers; or prepared prior to being delivered to another location for consumption. (Includes but not limited to: Bakery, Bar, Café. Club, Restaurant)

Frozen Dessert Manufacturer Permit – required for any premises or part of a premises where ice cream, ice cream mix, ice milk, sherbet, frozen malt, ice milk mix, mellorine, edible fat frozen dessert or ices are manufactured or frozen.

Retail Food Permit – required for any premises or part of premises pre-packaged food and food products are offered to the consumer and intended for off-premises consumption and conducts no food processing or food preparation on site.