

WHAT IS A TEMPORARY EVENT ?

TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE PERMITS

Temporary food permits are required for events where food is available to the public. These permits are required in order to ensure that vendors understand the hazards involved in food handling and are equipped to handle food properly in order to prevent outbreaks of foodborne illness from occurring. A TEMPORARY FOOD PERMIT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE WASHINGTON STATE FOOD AND BEVERAGE WORKERS' CARD.

What is a Temporary Food Establishment?

A temporary food establishment is one that serves food to the public at a fixed location for not more than twenty-one (21) consecutive days associated with a single event or celebration. If the event is advertised to the general public (with flyers, banners, newspaper articles or by any other means) a temporary food permit is required. The requirements do not change if the food is being sold for profit or provided at no charge.

What events require temporary food permits?

Individuals or groups planning to hold events that are open to the public must obtain a permit. The Whitman County Health Department requires that a temporary food permit be purchased for each food booth operating during an event (no "blanket" permits). Private weddings that do their own food preparation do not require a permit. If you hire a caterer, he/she must have a permit to prepare the food in a licensed kitchen. Ask to see their caterer's permit.

The follow are examples of events that are typically permitted. If you are unsure if you need a permit, call the Environmental Health Department at (509) 397-6280.

- A fair, carnival, or circus
- Community celebrations
- Public exhibitions
- Sports events
- Church bazaars
- Fundraisers
- Holiday craft fairs

Are there any events that DO NOT require temporary food permits?

Your event is not considered a temporary food service if the food is prepared or provided by members of the group for members of the group and their invited guests such as:

- a meeting or an event for a private or charitable organization, association, or club;
- an activity in a church or other religious congregation;
- a gathering such as a party, picnic, or potluck held by a neighborhood, family, community, school, or office; or
- A Native American Potlatch

Again, this is only applies to the gathering if it is private. Any public advertisement or public invitation will mean a permit is required.

