

Hidalgo County Health & Human Services Department
Environmental Division
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<http://www.hchd.org/index.html>

DO YOU NEED A TEMPORARY FOOD EVENT PERMIT?

Festivals, parades, celebrations and other special events contribute to the quality of life in Hidalgo County. Most of these events also feature food for sale or distribution. These Temporary Food Events (TFE), such as traveling fairs and carnivals, circuses, multicultural celebrations, special interest fundraisers, restaurant food shows, and other gatherings, have become extremely popular and are held with increasing frequency in our community.

Many of these TFE can involve extensive preparation and processes that include the cooking and advanced preparation of food prior to service. Anytime food is being handled there is a possibility of the food becoming contaminated. Some foods such as raw meats and poultry can be contaminated prior to obtaining them. It is estimated that 76,000,000 cases of food borne illnesses occur every year in the U.S. and there are emerging illnesses and drug resistant bacteria that are increasing the hazards. No one wants to make anyone ill. With this in mind, the Hidalgo County Rules and the Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER) provide guidelines for permitting and food safety standards for all food establishments. The Health Department has established procedures that can assist with the advanced planning and management of TFE. We ask for your support in promoting these food safety practices.

Individuals or organizations are required to obtain a temporary food service permit for any event in which they are offering food for public consumption.

If you can answer “Yes” to any of the following questions you will need to obtain a temporary food service permit.

1. Is the general public invited to the event?
2. Can a person other than a member of the organization and their family members or invited guest attend?

3. Have you advertised the event or sold tickets to the general public?

4. Are you serving open food, open container drinks (mixed drinks w/ ice, wine or keg beer) or food that requires refrigeration or to be held hot?

If you have additional questions, contact us at (956) 383-0111.