



**Northeast Tri County Health District
Environmental Health Division**

Do I Need A Permit to Serve or Sell Food?

Always working for a safer and healthier Washington

When is a Permanent Food Establishment Permit Required?

If you plan to open a food business, such as a restaurant, espresso stand, convenience store, catering business, or mobile food unit (ex. hot dog cart), you must complete a Food Service Establishment Plan Review and obtain a Food Establishment Permit before opening. For more information contact the Environmental Health office.

When is a Temporary Food Establishment Permit Required?

The Washington State Retail Food Code, Chapter 246-215 Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires that **vendors, individuals or groups planning to hold or participate in an event, in which food will be served to the public, must obtain a temporary food establishment permit.** Northeast Tri County Health District requires that a Temporary Food Establishment Permit be obtained for each food booth in operation at an event. If you advertise your event with flyers, banners, newspaper ads or articles, internet, or by other means it is considered a public event, regardless of whether or not there is a charge for the food served. (Church dinners, or other events, that are only for members and their guests and are not advertised, are not considered to be public events.)

- A temporary food establishment is defined as a food establishment operating at the same location, with the same menu, for not more than 21 consecutive days in conjunction with a single event or celebration, such as a fair or festival.
or
A food establishment operating not more than three days a week at the same location, with the same menu, in conjunction with an approved reoccurring, organized event, such as a farmers market.
- Northeast Tri County Health District permits different categories of temporary food establishments based on the level of risk associated with the foods that will be served. Some foods can be prepared and served at a lower risk of foodborne illness than other foods. The different categories, descriptions, and fees are listed below. Additional information regarding Temporary Food Establishment Permits is available in the Temporary Food Establishment Packet; which can be obtained from any Environmental Health Office or on our website <http://www.netchd.org>.

| Colville Environmental Health Office | Newport Environmental Health Office | Republic Environmental Health Office |
|---|---|---|
| Address: 240 E. Dominion Colville, WA 99114 | Address: 605 Hwy 20 Newport, WA 99156 | Location: 147 N. Clark Mailing: PO Box 584 Republic, WA 99166 |
| Phone: (509) 684-2262 | Phone: (509) 447-3131 | Phone: (509) 775-3111 |
| Fax: (509) 684-8506 | Fax: (509) 447-5644 | Fax: (509) 775-2858 |
| Toll Free: 1-800-776-6207 | Toll Free: 1-800-873-6162 | Toll Free: 1-800-876-3319 |
| Internet www.netchd.org | Internet www.netchd.org | Internet www.netchd.org |

When is Food Service Exempt from Permit?

If you will be serving **only** foods on the list below; a food service permit is not required; however, you must submit an [Application for Exemption from Permit](#) prior to operation in order to ensure basic food safety practices are followed.

1. **Popcorn and Kettle Corn** – popcorn and flavored popcorn prepared from commercially packaged ingredients that are not potentially hazardous food
2. **Cotton Candy**
3. **Dried herbs and spices** – processed in an approved facility
4. **Machine frozen ice drinks** – crushed ice drinks containing only ingredients that are not potentially hazardous foods and dispensed from a self-contained machine that makes its own ice. Drinks with potentially hazardous food, snow cones, and shaved ice are not included
5. **Corn on the cob** – prepared for immediate service
6. **Whole peppers roasted** – for immediate service
7. **Roasted and candy coated nuts**
8. **Chocolate dipped ice cream bars** – made with commercially packaged ice cream bars.
9. **Chocolate dipped bananas** – made with bananas peeled and frozen in an approved facility.
10. **Sliced fruits and vegetables for sampling** – for individual samples of non-potentially hazardous produce.

When is No Permit Required?

If you will be serving **only** the types of foods on the list below; a permit is not required . . .

1. **Hot Beverages**, such as coffee, hot tea, hot cider, or hot chocolate served into disposable cups. Only commercially prepared, single serving or powdered creamer may be used.
2. **Individually Packaged Ice Cream Bars or Popsicles**
3. **Baked Goods** – Non-potentially hazardous baked goods may be prepared in home kitchens **ONLY** if sale benefits a non-profit organization.
4. **Commercially Pre-Packaged, Non-Potentially Hazardous Foods** – Must be produced in a permitted food establishment or food processing plant. Must be served without direct hand contact onto/into disposable plates or cups from the original container, or in original wrapper or container. Examples include: candy bars, crackers, cookies, canned goods, donuts, cookies, pretzels, cake, and beef jerky.
5. **Fruits and Vegetables** - Must be non-potentially hazardous, non-ready to eat, and minimally cut (large vegetables, such as squash, may be cut into halves or quarters; melons cannot be cut).
6. **Dry, Non-Potentially Hazardous, Non-Ready to Eat Foods**, such as dry beans, coffee beans, in shell nuts, and herbs for tea.
7. **Potlucks** do not require a permit if people are bringing food to share and there is no charge for any food or beverage provided at the event.
8. **Foods** produced in a Cottage Food operation licensed by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

If you have any questions or need help determine if you need a permit contact the Environmental Health office.