

Special Event Food Stand

A special event food stand is a food establishment which is used in conjunction with celebrations and special events, and which operates for no more than ten total days within the applicable license period. All food stands must operate in compliance with the Minnesota food code.

This fact sheet provides information about licensing and operating a special event food stand in Minnesota.

Licensing

The menu and location of operation determine which agency is responsible for licensing. To determine which agency will issue a license see the [Licensing](#) website.

Contact the appropriate agency, and submit a completed license application and required fee at least 14 days prior to operating a special event food stand.

Location and construction

Special event food stands must comply with the following location and construction requirements:

- Locate the stand away from possible contamination sources and provide a canopy or other form of overhead protection.
- Construct the stand or locate it so that it is protected during bad weather. If the food is not adequately protected from weather, dust, and debris, you cannot operate the food stand.
- Protect food preparation and cooking areas from the public by a shield or separation distance.

- Provide smooth, durable and easily cleanable floor, wall, and ceiling surfaces. Acceptable floor surfaces include vinyl, sealed wood, concrete, machine-laid asphalt, or other materials that effectively control dust and mud, and sloped for drainage.
- Operate in compliance with all applicable gas hook-up and service, electrical and fire code requirements.

Equipment

Menu and process determine the type of equipment required and whether a special event license can be issued.

- Cold potentially hazardous foods must be held at 41°F or below. Adequate mechanical refrigeration is required for potentially hazardous foods held longer than 4 hours.
- Drained ice may be used to cool beverages in watertight containers.
- Hot potentially hazardous foods must be held at 140°F or above. Domestic slow cookers are not allowed.
- If multiuse utensils are used, dishwashing facilities must be available including at least three compartments large enough to accommodate

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immersion of the largest equipment and utensils. Provide adequate space for air-drying utensils.

Water supply

Water must be from an approved source. Some approved sources are a public water supply system or commercially bottled drinking water.

Water tanks must be easy to clean, big enough to meet the needs of the food stand, and constructed of an approved, non-toxic material. Hoses used to obtain water must be of food grade quality and have an approved backflow prevention device.

Wastewater disposal

Dumping any wastewater onto the ground or storm sewer is not allowed. Use an approved connection to a sanitary sewer, or store wastewater on-site in an approved tank before transporting.

Healthy employees

Employees who have been ill with vomiting and/or diarrhea should not work in a food stand for at least 24 hours after their symptoms end.

Handwashing and limiting bare hand contact

Handwashing station(s) must be set up and operational prior to the start of an event, be easily accessible to all employees and used for no other purpose. To wash hands:

1. Turn water on (temperature between 70°F and 110°F).
2. Rub soapy hands together for 20 seconds.
3. Rinse under running water.
4. Dry hands with disposable towels and turn water off.

Gloves, wet-wipes or hand sanitizers are not substitutes for handwashing. Hands must be washed before working with food, clean equipment and utensils, after smoking, eating or drinking, using toilet facilities or any time hands become contaminated.

Limit bare hand contact with ready-to-eat or cooked foods by wearing disposable gloves or using utensils, deli tissue, spatulas, tongs or other dispensing equipment.

Food sources

All food, beverages and ice must be obtained from approved sources. Food cannot be prepared or stored in a home. Off-site preparation or storage must be done at a licensed food establishment.

Safe food temperatures

Cook all potentially hazardous food to the following temperatures or hotter: poultry, 165°F; ground beef, gyro, 155°F; pork, 155°F; shell eggs, 145°F; beef steak, 145°F.

Hold hot foods at or above 140°F. Hold cold foods at or below 41°F. Never thaw foods on the counter. Provide accurate thermometers for checking food temperatures and in all refrigeration units.

Avoid cross-contamination

Do not cross-contaminate ready-to-eat foods with raw meats, poultry and fish. Common cross-contaminated items may include cutting boards, cooking utensils, cloths, aprons and hands.

Ice must be stored and handled as a food product. Drained ice used to cool beverages must not be used in drinks or food preparation.

Cleaning and sanitizing

Utensils and equipment must be washed, rinsed, sanitized and air dried after each use in an approved sanitizer at the required strength and contact time.

Approved sanitizers may include chlorine bleach, quaternary ammonium or iodine. Always follow label instructions. Provide an appropriate test kit to check the concentration of the sanitizer used.

Provide single service disposable utensils (i.e., plates, forks, spoons, and cups) for eating and drinking purposes.

Resources

[Licensing](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/license/index.html)

(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/license/index.html>)

[Food Business Safety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/)

(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/food/>)

Minnesota Department of Health
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[Food, Pools, and Lodging Services](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/fpls/)

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MDH DISTRICT OFFICES

Bemidji	218-308-2100
Duluth	218-302-6166
Fergus Falls	218-332-5150
Mankato	507-344-2700
Marshall	507-476-4220
Metro	651-201-4500
Rochester	507-206-2700
St. Cloud	320-223-7300

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*To obtain this information in a different format, call:
651-201-4500.*