Thomas Jefferson HEALTH DISTRICT
Serving: Albemarle Charlottesville Fluvanna Greene Louisa Nelson

Environmental Health Division

Location	Phone	Fax
C'ville/Alb	434-972-6219	434-972-4310
Fluvanna	434-591-1965	434-591-1966
Greene	434-985-2262	434-985-4822
Louisa	540-967-3707	540-967-3706
Nelson	434-263-4297	434-263-4304

CATERING GUIDELINES

The health department looks at other parameters beyond just an approved commercial kitchen when the operator decides to cater either in an existing restaurant or create a catering specific food-service establishment with no seating.

1. Type of menu- The health department will need to assess the flow of food proposed and capacity of the equipment and operational procedures. If foods will be prepared for ahead there will be a need for bulk cooling or if raw meats will be stored, handled, thawed, and/or prepared, there will need to be adequate space during storage and preparation to minimize the risk of cross-contamination between raw meat and any foods ready to eat foods such as raw vegetables or precooked foods.

2. Volume (relates to capacities)- The operator needs to determine the maximum number of meals per day to be prepared and served from the kitchen including catered events as well as meals served from the dining room. This will allow the health department to determine the amount of preparation table space, accessibility to handsinks, as well as adequate backstock refrigeration and cold/hot holding both during preparation and service.

3. Sufficient equipment and an area to properly store insulated transport equipment will need to be demonstrated. Operator is discouraged from storing insulated containers in outside sheds that are not air conditioned.

4. Adequate facilities to wash, rinse, sanitize/ air dry all food & nonfood contact equipment used for catering will also need to be assessed.

5. Adequate refrigeration/ freezer and hot holding capacities (sec.1450) to maintain PHFs at proper temperature (relates directly to menu & volume).

6. An adequately sized walk-in cooler with "speed" racks or cooling racks for rapid cooling of prepared RTE foods may be needed if high volumes of food are prepared/cooked/cooled ahead for service. Walk-in coolers & freezers can also be used to pre-chill insulated transport containers for cold TCS transport to off-site locations.

7. It is strongly recommend that a temperature cooking log and a food temperature transport log. This will allow the operator to prove via documentation that "reasonable care" was taken to ensure that food borne illness prevention measures were taken at each event including those off-site.

8. At off-site events, the department strongly recommends a portable hand wash station w/ warm water and a free-flow valve for proper employee hand washing in a "field" setting.

9. The department will need to assess food dispensing when self-service is provided for customers. Operator may need to supply sneeze guards or provide alternate service methods to minimize risks of Norovirus transmission. Tents may need to be provided for overhead protection.

10. Cleaning food/nonfood contact surfaces-Adequate facilities will be needed to accommodate volume/process proposed. Commercial dish machine, in addition to 3-compartment sink with integrated drain boards may be needed at the commissary kitchen to handle the volume of soiled dishes, utensils, and pans after events.

11. Types of transport vehicles will need to be outlined by the operator. Unit may need to be climate controlled (air conditioned / heated if unit to be operated outdoors in the summer months depending on volumes. Vehicle should be visually observed recommend obtaining digital camera image. Note: All pull behind trailers are to comply with VDOT requirements (be road worthy, have tags etc.).

12. Operator will be responsible to ensure there is a knowledgeable person in charge (PIC) at each off-site catered event. If food is prepared and served, each off-site location is considered to be a food preparation area so this is crucial at each event. The department will strongly recommend owner /operator, managers and on-site PICs attend Serv-Safe or equivalent manager food safety certification class.