

University Center & Special Events Food and Catering Guidelines

I. University Center & Special Events Food and Catering Guidelines:

The University Center & Special Events (UCEN) at Texas A&M University established the following food guidelines in recognition of industry standards, practices and processes governing the provision of food and beverage service on University property or at University sponsored events. Although the use of Chartwells is preferred they are not the exclusive caterer of the facility. The UCEN allows customer supplied and/or non TAMU vendor provided food as defined within these guidelines. The criteria herein apply to all persons and organizations using the approved and scheduled facilities in the UCEN which includes the Memorial Student Center (MSC), the John J. Koldus Student Services Building, Rudder Tower, All Faith's Chapel and any outdoor area considered part of and/ or managed by the UCEN. The criteria outlined herein does not pertain to food and beverages for personal consumption; rather the conditions set forth are intended for meetings, assemblies, socials, festivals, receptions, or other like gatherings in order to provide for the safe service of food. The type of menu selected, the setup of the space, the number of attendees expected, and the timing of the food service will determine the parameters deemed necessary.

II. Customer Provided Food:

UCEN customers/ guests may bring in approved food items if the following criteria are met: 1) the food items are from the approved foods list (see below), and the approved food items are "ready to eat" requiring no preparations, heating or refrigeration, and the Food & Beverage Information Form has been submitted and approved. Furthermore, the Event Services Office retains the right to request a proof of inspection by a local health authority should questions arise about the type of food being served.

Customer Provided Approved Foods Include:

- Brownies
- Donuts
- Bagels
- Cheese Trays
- Vegetable Trays
- Fruit Trays
- Personal Brown Bag Lunch
- Pizza **
- Chips
- Cookies
- Nuts
- Candy
- Popcorn
- Cake
- Crackers
- Soft Drinks
- Bottled Water

**No more than 20 pizzas can be brought in for an event.

Not Approved Foods Include:

- Home Cooked Dishes (ie. Casseroles, etc.)
- Lunch meat
- Mayonnaise
- Dips
- Cream Cheese
- Milk

- Fish
- Eggs
- Poultry
- Shellfish
- Deli Salads
- Anything that must be heated
- Anything that must be refrigerated
- Foods that require strict temperature control

UCEN customers who have been approved to provide food for their event are required to provide linens for all catering tables to include round tables for banquet style events, clean up after themselves, which includes wiping up any spills and emptying trash.

III. Bringing in Outside Food Vendors

In order to use an off-campus food vendor, a *Food & Beverage Information Form* must be submitted to and approved by the Event Services Office. The sponsoring party or group(s), seeking to serve food and/ or beverages in the UCEN, is required to submit a *Food & Beverage Information Form*; and depending on circumstances deemed appropriate by the Event Services Office and/ or Environmental Health and Life Safety (EHS), completing a *Food Distribution Using Caterers (Commercial Companies) Form* (see link below) may also be required. If a commercial food vendor is not expected to serve the food, the Sponsoring Party seeking approval must complete a *Food Distribution Form*. The delivery or service of food and/or beverages by unauthorized providers is prohibited. Please be aware that if food approval is granted, food brought in by the organization or caterer may be reviewed by a UCEN staff, or a staff member of the TAMU Environmental Health and Life Safety Dept. (EHSD).

The sponsoring party is responsible for the following actions:

1. Submit the *Food & Beverage Information Form* to the Event Services Office at least 10 working days prior to the date of the event.
2. Assure that adequate time has been scheduled in your group's event time for set up, take down, and cleanup of the food and area being reserved in the UCEN facilities.
3. Submit the required EHSD *Food Distribution Form*

(<https://ehsd.tamu.edu/Safety/foodsafety/default.aspx>) to the Event Services Office.

In addition to the TAMU EHSD Food Distribution Form, a commercial food vendor must have a retail food permit issued by the Brazos County Health Department. If the commercial food vendor is based in a county outside of the jurisdiction of the Brazos County Health Department, the food vendor must obtain a temporary retail food permit or other required authorizations of the Brazos County Health Department when serving food to the public.

4. If requested, provide a Certificate of Insurance confirming that the required insurance coverage has been secured and such coverage includes Texas A&M University as an additional insured on the required guidelines (see SAP 28.99.99.M3.01); and
5. The sponsoring party/ group is responsible for complete food cleanup and trash removal in connection with the service of the food and any damages or stains caused by the vendor or catered food to facility. Noncompliance with these guidelines will result in the sponsoring party being charged a minimum of a \$50 fee for trash disposal and clean up. A more stringent penalty may be assessed based on the nature and degree of the incident. In addition, violating these guidelines may result in:

- First Offense – issued warning
- Subsequent Offense – blocked from scheduling privileges in UCEN for up to an academic year.

EHSD is authorized, along with the Brazos County Health Department, if deemed in the interest of public health and safety, to condemn or embargo food items or prohibit the sale of such items.

IV. Other Requirements

- Suitable utensils must be provided by the sponsoring party to reduce/minimize guest's manual contact with food.
- Resale of food items is not permitted.
- At the conclusion of the event, any leftover food taken from the facility becomes the responsibility of the contracted caterer or sponsoring party; likewise leftover food remaining must be disposed of immediately by the contracted caterer sponsoring party.

- All linens, dinnerware (plates, forks, cups, etc.) and service ware (chafing dishes, serving utensils, serving dishes, platters, etc.) are the responsibility of the sponsoring party and are required.
- Table linens are required on all tables that food will come in contact with. Table linens are available from Event Services for a rental fee, if arrangements are made prior to the event.
- Potlucks are not permitted.

Bake Sales

Bake sales are only permitted in areas approved as concession locations. Baked goods must be pre-portioned and individually wrapped (i.e. plastic wrap) prior to the event. This eliminates the need for a hand washing station and the need to clean and sanitize utensils at the site. All baked goods must be labeled with product names and ingredients for those who have food allergies or sensitivities.

Donated Food

Food donated for meetings and events must meet all preceding criteria to include approvals and waivers.