

UW POLICY DIRECTORY

Rescinded 11-17-25

APS 11.5 – Food Service Standards

(Approved by the Executive Director of Health Sciences Administration by authority of Executive Order No. 1 and the Vice President for Student Affairs by authority of Administrative Order No. 10)

1. Overview

Contamination and mistakes which occur during food processing, transportation, storage, preparation, and service expose consumers to potential foodborne illness. The University food sanitation program goals are to prevent foodborne illness and ensure wholesomeness of foods at all operations.

The regulations described in this standard do not apply to food and beverages consumed within individual departments or organizational units when that food is prepared for consumption by unit personnel only and is not intended to be served or sold to the general public or campus community.

2. University Food Sanitation Program

A. Environmental Health and Safety Department Responsibilities

The Environmental Health and Safety Director is assigned responsibility for the University food sanitation program and authorized by the Washington Secretary of Health to enforce State Board of Health Rules and Regulations for Food Service, [Chapter 246-215 WAC](#), as they apply to the University.

The Environmental Health and Safety Department (EH&S) works in cooperation with academic and service units to:

- Identify health and safety problems in food service operations.
- Evaluate and report operational compliance with state rules and regulations.
- Provide technical assistance.
- Recommend operational modifications.
- Investigate, evaluate, and report suspected foodborne illness.
- Develop training programs for food service personnel.
- Review proposals for all new food service facilities and alterations to existing food services, including: equipment, design plans, menus, and food flow.

B. Food Service Managers' Responsibilities

The food service manager is responsible for:

- Maintaining the highest possible standards of consumer protection in conformance with State Board of Health Rules and Regulations for Food Service.
- Correcting sanitation deficiencies by improving food service operations.

- Conducting employee training programs.
- Reporting any suspected foodborne illness and initiating investigation processes.
- Notifying the Purchasing and Stores Department when products from new vendors are desired.
- Providing proper materials, equipment, and facilities for employees.
- Ensuring employees hold valid Food and Beverage Service Worker permits.

3. General Food Service Regulations

All food sold or served on University premises (including satellite operations such as Pack Forest, Friday Harbor, etc.) must meet applicable health standards. Food offered for consumption must be:

- Obtained from approved wholesale or retail sources.
- Prepared in an approved location, e.g., restaurant, bakery, or approved campus food service.
- Prepared and served by persons with valid health permits (food worker cards) obtainable from EH&S or Seattle-King County Health Department.
- Processed, stored, and transported by methods which effectively prevent microbial growth, contamination, or adulteration.

Preparation of food in home kitchens or “potlucks” to be served to the public or University community, except within departmental units, is prohibited.

4. University Food Service Operations

A. University Institutional Food Service Operations

University institutional food service operations are administered by Housing and Food Services, University and Harborview Medical Centers, and other departments authorized by the University to operate smaller food services. Food services not operated by Housing and Food Services and the medical centers must be overseen by a responsible departmentally appointed staff member.

Proposals for new food service operations, including espresso carts, must be submitted to EH&S for comment and approval on the sanitation aspects of the proposed operation.

B. Food Concessions and Vending Machines

Contractual arrangements for concession food sales are made through the Purchasing and Stores Department with EH&S's review and approval. Vending machine operations are managed by Housing and Food Services with design, location, and contracts subject to EH&S's review. All vending machines must comply with National Sanitation Foundation Standard #25, “Vending Machines for Food and Beverages,” and the U.S. Public Health Service Vending Code. See also [APS 52.6](#), “Installation of Vending Machines on University Premises.”

C. Temporary Food Service Events

1. Applications

Groups wishing to provide food for their members, guests, and the public at meetings, sports events, concerts, receptions, or other events must file a Temporary Food Services Event Application with EH&S at least two weeks before the planned event. Applications and guidelines are available from EH&S and other campus locations.

When a regular University food service is providing food, no application is necessary since these operations are under continuous EH&S review to ensure compliance with applicable health standards.

Groups from off campus may be charged a fee for reviewing their temporary food service activities.

2. Caterers

Departments may use caterers from off campus provided they operate in compliance with all Seattle-King County Health Department regulations. These regulations require caterers to have a business license and valid health department permit to cater, process food in approved facilities, transport food in approved temperature maintenance equipment and vehicles, and have all employees possess valid food worker permits. Proposed caterers must have a record of acceptable health department surveillance experience as determined by EH&S.

3. Restrictions

Due to the variety of conditions related to temporary food service operations, there may be restrictions on foods or processing methods allowed at an event. Each application will be reviewed with primary emphasis on compliance with the State Board of Health Rules and Regulations for Food Service, [Chapter 246-215 WAC](#).

February 1995.

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