

2026 TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE OPERATIONS (\$175 License Fee - eff. Dec 1, 2025)

To sell most food or beverages at a special event within the City of Cincinnati limits, a temporary food service operation license from the Cincinnati Health Department is required (if the food vendor does NOT have an Ohio Mobile Food Service license). The completed license application and receipt showing online \$175 license fee payment must be received by the Health Department at least ten (10) BUSINESS days prior to the first day of the event. For questions, call 513-564-1751 or email TempFoodLicensing@cincinnati-oh.gov. NOTE: A mobile or temporary food license is only needed if food is being sold; food being given away does NOT require a food license

How to Apply and Pay License Fee (Must be RECEIVED 10 business days before event):

- 1) Pay \$175 license fee online - Visit <https://tinyurl.com/Cincinnati-Temp-Pay-Online> for payment instructions.
- 2) Email completed license application and receipt for license fee payment to TempFoodLicensing@cincinnati-oh.gov.

IMPORTANT: Incomplete applications, applications submitted without online payment receipt, or applications received less than 10 BUSINESS days before an event and cannot be accepted.

The license will be issued on the first day of the event and is subject to an authorization inspection. You will not receive anything by mail. The operation must be ready at least one (1) hour prior to the event's scheduled starting time; two (2) hours in advance for large events.

A temporary license is valid for the dates listed on the license ONLY (and for no more than five (5) consecutive days at a single event). ¹ Not more than ten temporary licenses can be issued per licensing period to the same person at different events. ² Refer to attached "Temporary Food Operation Requirements" for more information on setting up and running your operation.

This page is for your reference and should not be turned in with your application.

¹ ORC 3717.01 (k)

² ORC 3717.43 (E) (1)

2026 CHD TEMPORARY FOOD SERVICE OPERATION INFORMATION FORM

Please print or type. Forms that are illegible, incomplete, or submitted less than 10 BUSINESS days before an event cannot be accepted. For questions, email TempFoodLicensing@cincinnati-oh.gov or call 513-564-1751.

Event Info

Event Name: _____

Event Location (i.e. Washington Park, Fountain Square, etc): _____

Event Address (or nearest address): _____

Event Coordinator Name: _____ Coordinator Phone: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____

Time(s) of Event: _____

Food Business Information

Name of Food Business: _____

Name of Responsible Party (individual or entity): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact Name: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Name of Person-in-Charge at event*: _____

Phone Number for Person-in-Charge (for day of event)*: _____

Additional Person-in-Charge at event*: _____

Additional Person-in-Charge Phone Number (for day of event)*: _____

**A person in charge must be present at all times during operation.*

Your temporary operation should be set up and ready for licensing inspection at least 1 hour prior to event start time on first day of event. For example, if event starts at 10 am on a Saturday, your temporary operation should be set up and ready for a licensing inspection by 9 am on Saturday.

Menu/Foods Served

All food must be purchased from a licensed grocery store or restaurant. All food must be prepared onsite or in a licensed food service operation and transported to the temporary food service location by an approved method. **Food may NOT be prepared or cooked at home unless foods comply w/ cottage food or home bakery regulations.** *Allergens: Milk, Eggs, Fish, Shellfish, Wheat, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Soy, Sesame

Menu Item	Temp Served (Hot, Cold, Room Temp) and Food Source (Restaurant or Store)	Prep Location: Onsite -or- Licensed Kitchen	Food Allergen Present?
<i>ex. Sesame Noodles</i>	<i>ex. Cold - Kroger</i>	<i>ex. Onsite</i>	<i>ex. Wheat, Peanuts, Sesame</i>

Hot Food Holding – List the equipment to be used for holding hot foods.

Cold Food Holding – List the equipment to be used for holding cold/frozen foods. **Mechanical refrigeration must be used to store potentially hazardous foods for events lasting more than 6 hours and/or multi-day events. Coolers of ice are NOT permitted for longer events.**

Overhead Protection – Describe how operation will be covered (under tent, inside building, inside truck, etc). **ENTIRE operation must be under cover.**

Protective Barriers – Describe protective barriers to be used to prevent consumer access to food during prep and/or holding (sneeze guards, lattice, etc).

Handwashing Setup – Describe handwash setup. (Required unless ALL food is pre-packaged)

Dishwashing Setup – Describe dishwashing setup. (Required unless ALL food is pre-packaged)

Temporary Operation Setup and Drawing

An equipment layout drawing is required. In the box below, draw a sketch of your proposed operation as if you were looking down from overhead. Number and identify ALL equipment, tables, storage items, etc to be used in your temporary food operation. Make sure to also include:

- at least one **hand wash setup** comprised of a 5 gallon (or larger) insulated container with a *free flow stay-on* spigot at the bottom, a waste receiving bucket of equal or larger volume to collect the waste water; a suitable hand cleanser (soap, not hand sanitizer); and disposable towels.
- a three-bin setup (wash - rinse - sanitize) for soiled utensils and/or dishes unless all food is pre-packaged.

Front of Tent/Customer Service Area

Equipment and Other Items Shown in Drawing Above					
1.	Hand wash setup	6.		11.	
2.	Three-bin setup	7.		12.	
3.		8.		13.	
4.		9.		14.	
5.		10.		15.	

Final onsite inspection of temporary operation by Cincinnati Health Department staff is required before issuance of temporary food service operation license. License fee must accompany this application; both application and fee must be received **at least 10 BUSINESS days prior** to event. Late applications may be rejected. A signature below acknowledges acceptance of all requirements listed and the temporary food service operation will meet all requirements in the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3717.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Online Payment & Application REQUIRED (no mailing or in-person submission)

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/Cincinnati-Temp-Pay-Online> to pay license fee, then email payment receipt and application to TempFoodLicensing@cincinnati-oh.gov.

Application for a License to Conduct a Temporary(2026) : (check only one)

Instructions:

1. Complete the applicable section. (Make any corrections if necessary.)
2. Sign and date the application.
3. Make payment online and return via email with payment receipt

- Food Service Operation
 Retail Food Establishment

Before license application can be processed the application must be completed and the indicated fee submitted. Failure to complete this application and remit the proper fee will result in not issuing a license. This action is governed by Chapter 3717 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Name of temporary food facility		
Location of event		
Address of event		
City	State	ZIP
Cincinnati	OH	
Start date	End date	Operation time(s)
Name of license holder		Phone number
Address of license holder		
City	State	ZIP
List all foods being served/sold		

I hereby certify that I am the license holder, or the authorized representative, of the temporary food service operation or temporary retail food establishment indicated above:

Signature	Date

Licenser to complete below

Valid date(s)	License fee: \$175
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Application approved for license as required by Chapter 3717 of the Ohio Revised Code.

By	Date
Audit no.	License no. FSO- H202 -TEC

TEMPORARY FOOD OPERATION REQUIREMENTS (for reference only – do not return with your application)

This document was prepared by the Cincinnati Health Department (CHD) Food Protection Office and is intended to educate operators about the basics of operating a food-safe temporary operation.

BOOTH REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) **PERSON IN CHARGE (PIC)** - must be present during all operating hours. The PIC shall ensure that safe food handling practices are always conducted. If the PIC is not knowledgeable about the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code then he/she should attend food safety training prior to managing a temporary food operation.
- 2) **HAND WASHING** - Provide at least one **HAND WASHING** set up. An example is a large insulated container with a spigot near the bottom and a receiving bucket to collect the waste water. Locate disposable towels and soap near the container. See “Fig. 1”.
- 3) **WASH STATION** - Provide a utensil **WASH STATION**. The procedure is wash - rinse - sanitize. The set-up is three containers filled with: 1) **WASH** - clean water and dish detergent; 2) **RINSE** - clean water; and 3) **SANITIZE** - clean water with an approved **SANITIZER** (use either chlorine OR quaternary ammonium). See “Fig. 2”.
- 4) **SANITIZER TEST KIT** - Provide a **TEST KIT** (see “Fig. 3” and “Fig. 4”) that is compatible with the chosen sanitizer. A test kit strip is used to test the concentration of the sanitizing solution. Use the solution for the utensil wash station and for sanitizer solution in cleaning buckets. Sanitizer concentration should be: 1) **CHLORINE** – 50 to 100 ppm, and 2) **QUATERNARY AMMONIUM** – check label.

Fig. 1: Ex of proper hand washing set up

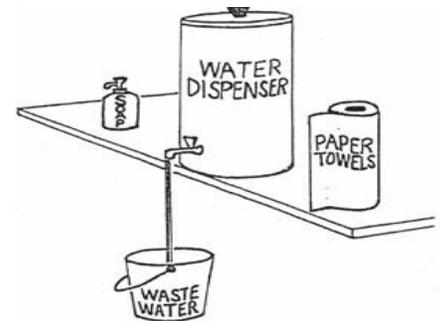


Fig. 2: Ex of proper wash station



Fig. 4: Chlorine test kit

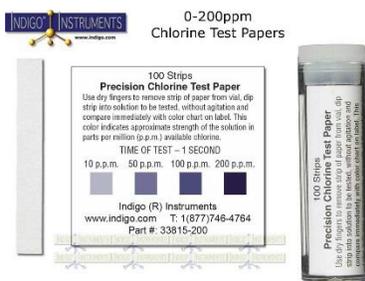


Fig. 3: Quaternary Ammonium test kit



FOOD, EQUIPMENT & UTENSIL REQUIREMENTS

- 1) **PROTECTION FROM CONTAMINATES** - All food, food prep equipment, food utensils must be protected from environmental contaminants as well as customer handling, coughing, and sneezing. To achieve this:
 - a. The **entire** operation must be under cover.
 - b. Displayed food and food prep equipment (including grills) **cannot be located at the edge of the booth** unless **effective barriers** are in place. Examples are: sneeze guards, lattice, distance, etc.
 - c. Customer self-serve condiments must be in one of the following: single-service package, pump-style dispensers, squeeze bottles, shakers, or similar dispensers. **No open bulk, customer self-serve containers allowed.**

- d. Customer self-serve condiments must be in one of the following: single-service package, pump-style dispensers, squeeze bottles, shakers, or similar. **No open customer self-serve containers allowed.**
- e. Eating utensils provided for customer self-service shall be stored inverted with the handles presented up.
- f. Store food containers and related items 6 inches or more off the ground – **not directly on the ground.**

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES REQUIREMENTS

1) THERMOMETERS

- a. Provide at least one calibrated thermometer to check temperatures of potentially hazardous foods.
- b. Each cold and hot storage unit is required to have a thermometer inside.

2) MECHANICAL REFRIGERATION

- a. A commercially approved refrigeration unit is required for cold foods. This requirement applies to multi day events and events lasting longer than six hours. **No home use refrigerators allowed.**

3) HOT HOLDING

- a. Hot holding equipment is required for foods that need to be held hot.

4) ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- a. Label chemical storage containers with the common name.
- b. Use fans to control flying pests. Direct the air *up away* from food.
- c. Make you have a broom, dust pan, trash can, buckets to hold sanitizer and wiping cloths, and items that can be used to elevate all food and single use items at least 6 inches off the ground.
- d. Concrete/asphalt flooring must be completely covered in roll roofing or similar. Grass "flooring" must be completely covered with a water-resistant, impermeable material or covering.

SAFE FOOD REQUIREMENTS

1) FOOD SOURCE

- a. All food and ice used as food must come from licensed food facilities.
- b. Food prepared off-site must be prepared in a licensed food establishment **-NO Home-prepared foods.**

2) FOOD TRANSPORTATION & FOOD STORAGE

- a. While transporting temperature-controlled food to the site use insulated equipment such as cambros or insulated bags.
- b. At all times use commercial, food grade containers.

3) CLEANING

- a. All food contact surface-equipment and utensils shall be cleaned throughout the day **at least every four (4) hours** or sooner if necessary. The procedure is wash, rinse, sanitize.

4) UTENSIL STORAGE

- a. If storing in-use food dispensing utensils in the food itself, ensure handle stays **above** the food.
- b. If an in-use utensil is stored on a surface between uses, make to wash/rinse/sanitize both the surface and the utensil at least **every four (4) hours.**

5) TEMPERATURE REQUIREMENTS

- a. Thawing: Potentially hazardous food shall be thawed under refrigeration ONLY. Do not thaw foods at ambient air temperature.
- b. Hot Holding: Potentially hazardous food must be maintained at 135° F or higher.
- c. Cold Holding: Potentially hazardous food must be maintained at 41° F or below.
- d. Reheating for Hot Holding: Potentially hazardous food that is reheated for hot holding shall be heated so all parts of the food reach a temperature of at least 165° F for 15 seconds within two hours.

6) ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR FOOD SAFETY

- a. Keep the menu simple. Prepare and serve a limited number of menu items.
- b. Foods that require washing must be washed in a licensed facility prior to arrival at temporary location.
- c. Do not serve raw foods.
- d. Food Allergen Notification Required: If menu items contain milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soy or sesame, a posted notice is required. See attached example.

*****NEW ezTRak ONLINE APPLICATION and PAYMENT PROCESS COMING -
Spring/Early Summer 2026*****

A new way to apply and pay for temporary licenses is coming in the first half of 2026! Continue to check our website for the most up to date information on when these changes will take effect.

Written Notification of Major Food Allergens as Ingredients

3717-1-03.5(D)(6)

Below is an example of a statement that could be listed on a menu, table tent, placard or display board that informs the consumer of major food allergens that are present as ingredients in unpackaged foods:

- * The following major food allergens are used as ingredients: Milk, Egg, Fish, Crustacean Shellfish, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Wheat, Soy, and Sesame. Please notify a food employee for more information about these ingredients.



Written notification can be provided in many forms such as: physical or electronic means, including, but not limited to, brochures, deli case or menu notifications, label statements, table tents, placards, or other effective written means.

For more information, please contact your local health department.



Department
of Health

Department
of Agriculture

Temporary Food Booth Setup – What to Bring to Your Event

1. Equipment

- a. Cold Holding - Commercial, mechanical refrigeration is required for events lasting longer than 6 hours. Use of coolers of ice for this purpose is not permitted.
- b. Hot Holding – Equipment appropriate for keeping food hot for the length of the event

2. Dish Washing (Not required if ALL items are pre-packaged)

- a. Dish Soap
- b. Sanitizer (for 3-bin dishwashing and wiping off surfaces)
- c. Sanitizer Test Strips (for the type of sanitizer you are using)
- d. 3 labelled bins for washing dishes/utensils (preferably with covers/lids)

3. Hand Washing

- a. Five-gallon, insulated dispenser w/ free flow, stay on spigot at the bottom
- b. Hand Soap (Soap required – sanitizer is optional)
- c. Single Use Towels
- d. Bucket or Tub to catch wastewater when washing hands
- e. Small trash can for single use towels

4. Other Important Supplies

- a. Buckets and Wiping Cloths (for sanitizing of non-food contact surfaces)
- b. Stem thermometers for checking food/water temperature
- c. Equipment thermometers (one for each refrigerator/freezer being used)
- d. Hair restraints and covering (hats, visors, etc) for all employees
- e. Plexiglass, lattice, sneeze guards, or similar to protect food when cooking/prepping near edge of booth
- f. Plenty of non-latex gloves (so they can be changed often)
- g. Broom and dustpan
- h. Risers or crates for storing items at least 6 inches off the ground
- i. Roofing paper for covering ground inside booth or something more substantial (waterproof/impermeable) for booths with grass "flooring".
- j. Tall containers for holding plastic forks, spoons, etc. upright
- k. Containers with lids to keep supplies clean and dry
- l. Extra sheet pans, aluminum foil, or foil lids to use as covers, barriers, etc
- m. Cooler for keeping employees' personal food and drinks **ONLY**
- n. Masking tape (for labeling and posting license), sharpie, scissors (these items are optional, but recommended)

*****FOOD ALLERGEN NOTIFICATION AT SPECIAL EVENTS – NEW REQUIREMENT*****

The Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code requires that food service operators inform consumers of allergens present in both packaged AND unpackaged food. This will ALSO apply to temporary and mobile food license holders operating at special events. This can be achieved by a VERY visible sign posted near their point of sale (for unpackaged or open food) that reads something like:

“The following major food allergens are used as ingredients in our menu items: Milk, Eggs, Soy and Sesame. Please ask one of our employees for more information about these ingredients.”

Only allergens actually used in the menu should be included in the posted notice. The major food allergens are: 1) Milk; 2) Eggs; 3) Fish; 4) Crustacean Shellfish; 5) Tree Nuts; 6) Peanuts; 7) Wheat; 8) Soy; and 9) Sesame