

## CATERING REQUIREMENTS AND TRANSPORTATION

A caterer establishment must show proof that

- All foods are from an approved source.
- Appropriate protection and temperature precautions must be practiced, when foods are held and transported.

If food is washed, cut, or otherwise handled, appropriate hand washing, utensil sanitizing, and other necessary facilities must be available at a base of operations that is licensed as a food establishment. (Floral shops and licensed residential kitchens are not acceptable as a base of operation for caterers.)

To catered food, the establishment must meet the requirements of 105 CMR 590.000 and obtain a caterer's permit from the Local Board of Health (LBOH). The LBOH may limit each permit to specific operations and food categories. This limitation is often used to avoid the progression to more complicated and higher risk menu items.

From an operational standpoint, the caterer may fall into one or both of the following categories:

- Transporting ready-to-eat foods directly from an approved source to the event, without the need to handle any exposed food. In this situation, the caterer is merely transporting and placing out for service the fully prepared and arranged food. Since there is no handling of exposed food, the local board of health may issue a variance for a base of operation and limit the menu items on the permit to fully-prepared foods which require no further preparation, reheating or hot holding.
- Acquiring and holding foods from an approved source, and/or preparing food prior an event, and then transporting it to the event (or) preparing food at the event in a licensed kitchen. The base of operation must be a licensed food establishment, inspected and permitted as a catering operation that fulfills the scope of operation. A commercial base of operation is required when issuing a caterer's permit for food preparation, regardless if the food preparation occurs at a base of operation or in a licensed kitchen at the event. It is the responsibility of the florist-caterer to assure that there are sufficient facilities available at the site for safe food handling and hand washing. Depending on local regulations, caterers may be required to employ a manager who has obtained a food safety manager certificate.

As with all catering operations, the caterer must notify the Local Board of Health in the community of the event for which they are providing food. You may register with the Avon Board of Health at 508-588-0414 ext.1016 contact: Tara N. Tradd, Food Safety Manager.

If you have any questions, comments, or additional information about caterers, contact Priscilla Neves or Ellen Gould at the Massachusetts Division of Food and Drug, Food Protection Program: (617) 983-6712.