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## **Guidelines for Pot Luck Meals and Bake Sales**

### **Tara Tradd, Board of Health Food Inspector**

#### **Guidelines for Pot Luck Meals**

- Pot luck Meals are limited to informal activities where there is no money collected and the public does not attend, such as a church group. They are a one-time, one-location event. Foods may be prepared at home; these events do not require a permit.
- Food items may be prepared in private homes for pot luck meals.
- No money may be collected and the general public may not attend.
- The sponsor should retain a list of who donated what food items in case of any necessary follow up.
- Prior to preparing foods, everyone should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and warm water. Hand washing is to be repeated after any act that could contaminate hands, such as coughing, sneezing, eating, handling garbage, or using the toilet.
- Pets and children should not be present in food preparation area. Also, anyone ill with contagious symptoms such as a cold, stomach bug, or cuts/sores on hands should not prepare food.
- Prior to preparing foods, all surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned. After preparing raw meats, clean all work surfaces completely before preparing salads or other ready to eat foods.
- If thawing frozen meats is necessary, they should be placed in the refrigerator in a pan to catch drips on the bottom shelf up to 2 days in advance. Do not thaw on counter!
- Food should be prepared immediately prior to service, and kept hot in the oven or cold in the refrigerator to keep bacteria growth in check. Do not partially cook foods or leave hot or cold foods sitting at room temperature.
- Protect products by wrapping to protect from contamination during transportation and service. Use ice packs or bags of ice in a cooler to keep cold foods cold. Serve or reheat within one hour.
- Do not handle ready to eat or cooked food with bare hands; use tongs, serving spoons, napkins, or disposable gloves.
- Leftovers should be discarded.
- These are only guidelines and do not supersede compliance with MA Food Code 590.

#### **Guidelines for Bake Sales**

- Bake Sales are limited to informal activities where cakes, cookies, fruit pies, or similar low risk foods are sold to the public. They are a one-time, one-location event, such as a benefit for a church or school group. These events do not require a permit.
- Low risk items may be prepared in private homes for a bake sale.
- The sponsor should retain a list of who donated what food items in case of any necessary follow up.
- Potentially high risk foods, such as cream pies, custards, cut fruit, and meat, poultry,

eggs, or fish in the form of salads or sandwiches, or any foods requiring refrigeration may not be sold at bake sales. Sales or service of these items requires a temporary food permit.

- Prior to preparing any foods, everyone should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and warm water. Hand washing is to be repeated after any act that contaminates hands, such as coughing, eating, handling garbage, or using the toilet.
- Prior to preparing any foods, all surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned. Do not prepare other foods, such as raw meats while preparing baked goods.
- No one who is ill with any contagious symptoms, such as a cold, stomach bug, or cuts or sores on hands, may prepare food. Pets and children should not be in the area.
- Once products are baked and ready to eat, do not touch food with bare hands. Use napkins or utensils; wrap individually or cover to protect from contamination during transportation, storage, and display.

***Technical disclaimer:*** Every attempt has been made to keep the content of the regulations intact while converting the document for viewing on the web, however, the file copy in the BOH office is the official copy and any questions as to content should be addressed to the BOH.