

What if a non-profit group is selling food as a fund-raising event?

According to the Indiana Food Code, 410 IAC 7-24, and Senate Enrolled Act 190, if your non-profit group meets **all of the following requirements**, you are not considered to be a “food establishment” and are exempt from following the rules set forth in the food code.

If your group:

- is a religious, nonpublic educational, civic, fraternal, veterans or charitable organization;
- is a “tax exempt legal entity” under IRS code 501;
- is serving food that is related to an “event” or “celebration”;
- does not serve food more than 15 days per calendar year;

you are exempt from following the food code rules.



But...

...even though you are exempt from following the Food Code rules, you should still realize that you have a responsibility to prepare and serve the organization’s food safely.

There are significant food safety issues, such as temperature control, cross-contamination, and storage, that need to be considered by food handlers.

Always remember... non-profit groups can make people just as sick as for-profit groups!



The health department recommends:

1. **Choose a reliable person to be in charge.** The person-in-charge should provide instructions to the volunteers on how to handle food safely and provide friendly customer service.
2. **Limit your menu to low-risk items** such as hot dogs, bagged chips, canned drinks, non-refrigerated pies, cakes, cookies or ice cream.
3. **Keep food covered and away from insects.**
4. **Wash your hands often and well.**

5. **Wash, rinse and sanitize utensils and food contact surfaces as needed.** Wash with warm, soapy water and sanitize with 1 tablespoon (TBS) of bleach to 1 gallon of cool water.
6. **Keep raw food separate from ready-to-eat food.** Do not cross-contaminate surfaces or utensils.
7. **Cook food to a safe internal temperature.** Use a probe thermometer to check. Hamburgers and hotdogs should be cooked to $\geq 165^{\circ}$ F.
8. **Keep hot food hot ($>135^{\circ}$ F).** Have adequate storage for hot foods such as properly operating crock pots, warmers, or foil-lined coolers.
9. **Keep cold food cold ($<41^{\circ}$ F).** Have enough storage for cold foods. If using ice in a cooler, wrap your food tightly or store it in plastic containers so it doesn’t get soaked with melt water.
10. **Wear hair restraints.** Even though a hair in the food never killed anyone, people don’t like it. It’s gross.
11. **Don’t touch customer’s food with your bare hands.** Use gloves, wrap cones with napkins, etc. If you were an employee at a restaurant and were touching ready-to-eat food with bare hands, you’d be written up with a critical violation.
12. **Know when to avoid certain foods altogether.** Food-borne illnesses are especially serious and potentially life-threatening for children, pregnant women and their babies, older adults, and people with a weakened immune system. These individuals should avoid:
 - Raw or rare meat (continued)

- Raw or undercooked eggs or foods that may contain them, such as cookie dough or homemade ice cream
- Unpasteurized juices and ciders
- Unpasteurized milk and milk products
- Uncooked hotdogs

13. **When in doubt, throw it out.** If you aren't sure a food has been prepared, served, or stored safely, discard it. Food left out too long may contain bacteria that can't be destroyed by cooking or reheating.

14. **Remember, your consumers have a choice.** If they don't like what they see while you are preparing or serving food, they won't buy from your group. Your goal is to raise money for your group AND provide safe food for your customers.



THE BOTTOM LINE

Keep hot food hot. Keep cold food cold.
Keep everything, especially your hands, clean.

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Food Safety for Volunteers & Community Groups

