



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency ♦ Environmental Health

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LIMITED SERVICE CHARITABLE FEEDING OPERATION BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Relevant categories of Limited Service Charitable Feeding Organizations (LSCFO) are highlighted for each best management practice (BMP) item. See legend below.

FOOD SAFETY

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- 1. Potentially hazardous foods (PHF) are maintained at approved temperatures for hot and cold holding.**
- PHFs (i.e., deli meats, dairy products, cooked meats, cooked rice, cooked vegetables, etc.) are perishable and must be kept at 41°F or below for cold holding or at 135°F or above for hot holding.
 - Exception – the following may be held at 45°F or below:
 - Pasteurized milk and pasteurized milk products in their original, sealed containers.
 - Raw shell eggs.
 - PHFs that are being actively prepared may be removed from proper holding temperatures for a time frame not to exceed 2 hours.
 - Transportation of PHF items should not exceed 30 minutes without proper temperature control (i.e., ice, refrigeration, etc.)
 - PHFs not actively cold-held or hot-held (maintained cold or hot) during food service are dispensed within 4 hours after removal from temperature controls (such as refrigeration units, ovens, crock pots, etc.)
 - PHFs out of temperature for up to 4 hours should be immediately served or destroyed.
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- 2. Food is properly reheated.**
- PHFs that are reheated for hot holding shall be reheated so all parts of the food reach a temperature of 165°F for a minimum of 15 seconds within 2 hours.
 - Food that is reheated to order for immediate consumption, and not for hot holding, may be reheated to any internal temperature.
 - Ready-to-eat food taken from a commercially processed, hermetically sealed container must be reheated to at least 135°F prior to hot holding.
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- 3. Frozen foods are properly thawed.**
- Food may be thawed in any of the following ways:
 - Under refrigeration that maintains the food at 41°F or below.
 - Submerged under running water that is 70°F or below (for less than two hours.)
 - In a microwave oven immediately prior to preparation.
 - As part of the cooking process.

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- 2 = Storage or distribution of commercially prepared and commercially packaged potentially hazardous cold or frozen foods (grocery only, including perishable foods)
- 3 = Reheat or portion commercially prepared foods with no further processing
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4. Raw produce is properly washed in potable water.

- Raw produce has been washed prior to being combined with other ingredients, served or offered for human consumption in ready-to-eat form.
- All stickers should be removed from produce prior to washing.

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5. Food is from approved sources, has been maintained safe, and is fit for human consumption.

- Food or ice is from an approved source.
- Liquid, frozen, dry eggs and egg products are obtained pasteurized.
- Frozen milk products, such as ice cream, are pasteurized.
- Juice as well as fluid and dry milk products are pasteurized.
- Fish is commercially and legally caught or harvested.
- Molluscan shellfish are received from sources listed in the Interstate Certified Shellfish Shippers list.
- Game animals are from an approved source.
- Food prepared in a private home is not utilized or served.
 - Exception: food prepared by a permitted micro-enterprise home kitchen operator may donate food to LSCFOs.
 - Exception: non-PHF cottage foods (such as bread, cookies, popcorn, etc.) prepared by a registered or permitted cottage food operator.
 - Exception: whole fruits or vegetables or unrefrigerated shell eggs grown by a Community Food Producer following AB1990/AB234 / CalCode 114376 requirements.
- Invoices should be maintained on site to allow verification of source.

Note: Nonpotentially hazardous beverages and baked goods may be offered for sale, sold, or given away by a nonprofit charitable organization or an established club or organization that operates under the authorization of a school for fundraising purposes at community events.

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6. All foods are stored to protect them from contamination.

- Food is stored at least 6 inches above floor to protect from splash, dust, vermin or other forms of contamination or adulteration.
- Food storage area is clean, dry, and adequate for the amount of food being stored.
- Raw produce is stored below ready-to-eat foods in all cold holding units to prevent accidental cross contamination.

Notes: (a) Pressurized beverage containers, cased food in waterproof containers such as bottles or cans, and milk containers in plastic crates may be stored on a floor that is clean and not exposed to moisture.

(b) Food in packages and working containers may be stored less than 6 inches above the floor if stored on dollies, pallets, racks, and skids designed to be moved by hand or by conveniently available hand trucks or fork lifts to facilitate cleaning.

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7. Food is inspected upon delivery or receipt to ensure it is wholesome and in good condition.

- Food is inspected to ensure it was received from approved sources and is in a wholesome condition.
- Packages must be in good condition and protect the food so it is not exposed to adulteration or potential contamination. Paper containers of food may not be soiled or water-damaged.
- PHFs should not show signs of spoilage or temperature abuse.
- Cold foods should be received at 45°F or below but must then be cooled within 4 hours of receipt to a temperature of 41°F or below.
- Hot foods should be received at 135°F or above.
- Unlabeled canned foods shall not be accepted.

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8. Food removed from its original packaging and stored in a working container must be food-grade and labeled.

- Reusable food containers must be food-grade.
- Working containers of food or ingredients removed from original packages are identified with the common name of the food (except food that can be easily recognized, such as pasta).

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9. Food is protected from consumer contamination during service and is not re-served after being in the possession of a consumer.

- When food is on a table for servers to dispense to the consumer, the food shall be covered and protected.
- After being served and in the possession of a consumer, food that is unused or returned by the consumer shall not be offered as food for human consumption.
 - Exception: containers of food may be transferred from person to person IF the food is dispensed so it is protected from contamination and the container is closed between uses (e.g., narrow-neck bottle of catsup) or is in an unopened original package and monitored (e.g., packaged crackers, sugar packets).

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10. Food is stored with newer products behind older products and expiration dates are within acceptable limits.

- Practice First In-First Out (FIFO): Rotate food stock when receiving food by placing new products behind existing stock of food.
- Store food based on “expiration date” or “best by” dates so products with earlier dates are stored in front of later dates.
- The California Good Samaritan Food Donation Act provides protection from civil liability for foods donated from food facilities.
 - The donation of nonperishable food that is fit for human consumption but that has exceeded the labeled shelf life date recommended by the manufacturer.
 - The donation of perishable food that is fit for human consumption but that has exceeded the labeled shelf life date recommended by the manufacturer if the person that distributes the food to the end recipient makes a good faith evaluation that the food is wholesome.
- Baby food and infant formula shall not be distributed after its “use by” date on its packaging.

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11. LSCFO is knowledgeable about the major food allergens.

- Be aware of foods identified as major food allergens: milk and dairy products, egg and egg products, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soy.
- Recommend posting a general allergen warning for consumers that food being served may contain a major food allergen.

EQUIPMENT AND UTENSILS

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12. All equipment and utensils that come in contact with food or beverages are food-grade quality, smooth, easily cleanable, and non-absorbent.

- All new and replacement food-related and utensil-related equipment are certified by an ANSI accredited certification program, or if no standard exists, are approved by the local enforcement agency.
- Electrical equipment is UL listed.
- Soft wood and/or wood wicker may not be used as a food-contact surface. Hardwood cutting boards may be used.
- No enamel/ceramic/stoneware pots or pans, or lead-glazed containers may be used.
- Portable propane burners must be used appropriately.
- Clean-In-Place (CIP) equipment is self-draining or designed for effective cleaning and sanitizing.

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13. Handwash facilities are maintained clean, unobstructed and accessible at all times.

- Soap and paper towel dispensers (or heated-air hand drying device) are available and stocked.
- Handwash facilities shall not be used for purposes other than handwashing.

Note: For LSCFO's falling under Categories 1 or 2, hands are washed and/or sanitized using a handwash station or commercial-grade hand sanitizer.

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14. Accurate probe thermometers are available to measure food temperatures and are properly sanitized between uses.

- A metal probe thermometer suitable for measuring the temperature of food shall be readily available, and accessible by staff, on the premises where PHFs are held.
- The temperature measuring device with a suitable probe designed to measure the temperature of thin masses of food shall be provided to measure thin foods such as meat patties and fish filets.
- Thermometers should be easily readable and have a numerical scale in increments that are no greater than 2°F.
- Thermometers should be accurate to within plus or minus 2°F.
- Glass stem thermometers may not be used, unless they are candy thermometers encased in a shatterproof coating.
- Thermometers must be sanitized prior to use. Alcohol wipes, unscented chlorine bleach solution (100ppm), and quaternary ammonium solution (200ppm) are acceptable to use.

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Note that temperatures of pre-packaged, refrigerated foods may be measured by placing a probe thermometer in between stacked, unopened packages or use of an infrared thermometer to measure surface temperatures.

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15. Refrigeration units are equipped with an accurate thermometer and proper temperatures are maintained.

- Refrigeration units must be maintained at proper temperatures:
 - Refrigerators maintain a temperature 41°F or below.
 - Freezers maintain food in a frozen state, typically 30°F or below.
- A readily visible thermometer is provided and placed in the warmest part of each refrigeration unit.
- A permanently affixed thermometer in cold holding equipment used for PHFs is readily visible.

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16. Food, equipment, and food-related supplies are properly stored.

- Food and equipment may not be stored in restrooms, garages, outdoor open and/or unenclosed sheds, or unenclosed areas.
- Food must be stored in a manner to prevent vermin access or cross contamination.
- Provide a separate area to store damaged, spoiled or recalled food that is intended to be returned or discarded.

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17. Equipment (i.e., utensils, tables, sinks, food containers, etc.) is clean and well maintained. Food contact surfaces are properly washed and sanitized.

- Equipment and utensils are kept clean, fully operative, and in good repair.
- Surfaces of equipment such as cutting blocks and boards are effectively cleaned and sanitized.
- No accumulated grease or food debris is allowed to build up on the nonfood-contact surfaces of equipment, shelving, cabinets, or fryers.
- No accumulation of mold/mildew inside food equipment such as a soda gun holder, beverage dispenser, or ice machine.
- No dirty fan guards, shelving or door gaskets in the walk-in refrigerator.
- No debris encrusted drawer(s) used for the storage of utensils.
- No accumulation of calcium or chemical buildup on the interior surfaces of the mechanical dishwashing unit.
- Handles and door gaskets of equipment are maintained clean and in good repair.
- An approved sink is provided when the operation conducts washing, rinsing, soaking, thawing, or similar preparation of food.

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18. Equipment and utensils must be properly washed and sanitized.

- Proper manual warewashing involves all of the following steps:
 1. Wash with soapy water.
 2. Rinse with clean and clear water.
 3. Sanitize with a sanitizing solution.

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4. Air dry.
- Manual sanitization shall be accomplished in the final sanitizing rinse by one of the following:
 - Immersed in a solution of 100 ppm chlorine for at least 30 seconds.
 - Immersed in a solution of 200 ppm quaternary ammonium for 60 seconds.
 - In a mechanical dish machine achieving a utensil surface temperature of 160°F.
 - No towel drying of cleaned and sanitized utensils. Equipment and utensils should be allowed to adequately drain or air dry before reuse.
 - Use of a mechanical dish machine is a secondary option but does not replace the need to have an available warewashing sink. If a mechanical dishwashing machine is used:
 - It must be approved, installed, and operated according to manufacturer's specifications.
 - Utensils must be properly scraped or flushed of food debris, pre-soaked, or scrubbed as necessary prior to use of dish machine.
 - During active mechanical dishwashing the sanitizer concentration should be measured so it is at least 50 ppm chlorine. If a high temperature dish machine is used, the water temperature during the sanitizing cycle must measure at least 160°F on the surface of the utensils/equipment.

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19. Appropriate testing materials (test paper strips) are readily available to test sanitizing solutions/method.

- Approved sanitizer solution and correct test strip/kit shall be available and maintained on site. For example, chlorine test strips that detect concentrations of 0-200ppm chlorine shall be available to test chlorine-based sanitizer solutions.
- Thermolabels can be used to verify hot water temperature during the sanitizing rinse cycle of high temperature dish machines.

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20. Utensils are protected from dirt and contamination during storage.

- Damaged utensils (knives, spoons, colander, chipped dishes, and glassware) should not be used and need to be replaced.
- Food scoops are stored so the handles are out of the food product.
- Knives may not be stored in between equipment.
- Kitchen utensils may not be stored together with tools/hardware.
- Nonfood-contact surfaces of equipment are kept free of an accumulation of dust, dirt, food residue, or other debris.

WATER AND SEWAGE

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21. All kitchen and restroom sinks are in good repair and supplied with hot and cold water under pressure.

- Hot water at or above 120°F is required at dishwashing sinks during active dishwashing.
- Hot water at hand sinks is required to be at least 100°F. If the handwashing sink uses a pre-mix faucet, the water temperature should be between 100°F-108°F.
- All sinks are properly secured to the wall.

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22. All waste water is properly disposed of through either a sanitary sewer system or an approved septic system.

- Drainage of sewage/wastewater must not overflow or backup from floor sinks/drains in food preparation areas.
 - A backflow prevention device will protect the facility's water supply in the event of a sewage backup.
- Grease trap/interceptor must not be overflowing or clogged.

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23. Water used for handwashing, making ice, handling foods, and washing utensils meets safe drinking water standards and comes from an approved source (permitted well, city water supply, etc.)

- There is adequate, protected, pressurized, potable water available to the facility.
- The water supply is approved and is not contaminated.
- Hoses and connections use for water supply must be food-grade. Green and black garden hoses are not food-grade.
- Ice, if purchased, is from an approved food source.
- If the facility's potable water supply comes from a well, regular water testing should be conducted to ensure the water meets potable drinking water standards.

FOOD HANDLING WORKERS

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24. Food handlers are trained in proper handwashing procedures and they consistently wash their hands with soap and warm water to prevent food contamination.

- Food handlers must wash their hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap and dry their hands with single-use paper towels or a heated-air drying device.
- Food handlers must wash their hands after:
 - Using the bathroom.
 - Sneezing, coughing, eating, drinking, or using a tissue, handkerchief or tobacco products.
 - Handling raw produce.
 - Touching or scratching areas of the face, head or body.
 - Touching dirty dishes or utensils.
 - Handling garbage and garbage cans.
 - Performing janitorial cleanup operations and after handling chemicals or cleaners.
 - Eating food or drinking beverages.
 - Touching any live animal.
 - Any time hands are contaminated.
- Handwashing supplies are available and restocked when needed.

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- Hand sanitizer is not a substitute for handwashing. If used, sanitizer must be food-grade and only used after properly washing hands with soap and warm water.
- Glove use:
 - Glove use is not a substitute for handwashing. Hands must be washed prior to donning gloves and upon removal of gloves. If used, gloves must be food-grade and single-use.
 - Gloves must be changed whenever handwashing would normally be required and may not be reused or washed.
 - Food handlers must wear an impermeable cover and gloves for wounds/lesions on the hand or wrist, or an impermeable cover for wounds/lesions on the arms.

Note: For LSCFO's falling under Categories 1 or 2, hand sanitizer may be used in lieu of handwashing if only prepackaged foods and whole uncut produce are being distributed.

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25. Food handlers are not working when ill or have exposed wounds/sores.

- Food handlers shall not handle food or work in food preparation areas if they are experiencing the following:
 - Diarrhea and/or vomiting.
 - Persistent sneezing, coughing, or runny nose.
 - Food handlers with discharges from the eyes, nose or mouth that cannot be controlled by medication.

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26. The hygiene habits of food handlers will not provide an opportunity to contaminate food.

- Food handlers wear clean outer garments.
- Food handlers preparing, serving, handling food or clean utensils do not cross contaminate food.
- Food handlers handling open foods should restrain and/or cover their hair (e.g., hats, hair nets, pony tail).
- Food handler fingernails are clean, trim and neat. Bacteria can harbor under fingernails.
- Food handlers with false, long or polished fingernails or watches or rings should wear gloves when handling food.

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27. Food handlers do not use tobacco or e-cigarettes or eat during food handling activities or when inside food handling areas.

- Food handlers may not eat in the food preparation area or serving station. They should eat in a separate room.
- Food handlers may not drink from an open cup in the food preparation area.
 - A food handler may drink from a closed beverage container (with a lid and straw) if the container is handled to prevent contamination of food handler's hands, the container, open food, and food-contact surfaces. In general, beverage containers should not be placed on or directly above a food-contact surface.
- Food handlers may not smoke cigarettes or use e-cigarettes in or around food preparation and storage areas.

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- Food handlers may not chew tobacco while preparing food nor spit into a nearby cup.
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28. Pets and live animals are excluded from food storage, preparation or service areas. Service animals may be allowed.

- Live animals are not allowed in food storage, preparation or service areas.
 - Service animals are not allowed in food preparation areas.
 - A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. It does not include comfort or emotional support animals.
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29. A designated area for employees' and/or volunteers' clothing and personal effects is provided.

- Lockers or other suitable areas are provided for changing and for storage of employee clothing or personal possessions (e.g., jacket, purse, keys, cell phone, medicines, radio or TV). They shall not be located where contamination of food, equipment, utensils, linens and single-use articles cannot occur.
 - Food preparation and food storage areas may not be used to store personal clothing/items or cleaning equipment/supplies.
 - Dressing areas must be maintained clean and uncluttered.
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30. Food handlers are aware of basic food safety measures, as they relate to their given duties.

- While formal food safety training, such as obtaining a Food Safety Manager Certificate or Food Handler Card, is not required, all food handlers must follow food safety procedures.
 - Food handlers should be educated on the following basic food safety information:
 - Foodborne illness, including terms associated with foodborne illness, micro-organisms, hepatitis A, and toxins that can contaminate food and the illness that can be associated with contamination, definition and recognition of potentially hazardous foods, chemical, biological, and physical contamination of food, and the illnesses that can be associated with food contamination, and major contributing factors for foodborne illness.
 - The relationship between time and temperature with respect to foodborne illness, including the relationship between time and temperature and micro-organisms during the various food handling, preparation, and serving states, and the type, calibration, and use of thermometers in monitoring food temperatures.
 - The relationship between personal hygiene and food safety, including the association of hand contact, personal habits and behaviors, and food employee health to foodborne illness, and the recognition of how policies, procedures, and management contribute to improved food safety practices.
 - Methods of preventing food contamination in all stages of food handling, including terms associated with contamination and potential hazards prior to, during, and after delivery.
 - Procedures for cleaning and sanitizing equipment and utensils.
 - Problems and potential solutions associated with temperature control, preventing cross-contamination, housekeeping, and maintenance.
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PEST CONTROL

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- 31. The physical facilities are maintained clean and free of vermin, including rodents (rats, mice), cockroaches, and flies.**
- A rodent, cockroach and fly infestation is evidenced by any of the following: fresh droppings; gnaw marks; nesting materials; grease marks; live or dead bodies in the food preparation, food storage, dishwashing areas, indoor customer dining area, or in the restroom.
 - No evidence of cockroach fecal spots, rodent droppings/rub marks/urine on the floors, walls, or ceilings.
 - No accumulated food debris, grease, mold, or dirt on floors, walls, ceilings including inside of walk-in refrigerator to prevent the attraction of vermin into the food prep and storage areas.
 - Measures implemented to vermin-proof food prep and storage areas:
 - Seal cracks and holes in the walls and ceiling.
 - Maintain doors closed and ensure all doors create a tight seal when closed.

GENERAL SANITATION

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- 32. Floors, walls, and ceilings are clean, well maintained, and in good repair.**
- Floor, wall and ceiling surfaces are clean, in good repair and are durable, smooth, nonabsorbent, and easily cleanable.
 - Mats, if used, are removable and easily cleanable.
 - Wastewater from cleaning floor mats shall drain to sanitary sewer.

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- 33. Toilet facilities are clean, well maintained, and in good working order (fixed facility).**
- Toilet facilities are provided and clean and in good repair.
 - Toilets are accessible to food handlers at all times the facility is in operation.

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- 34. Toilet facilities have dispensers for single use paper towels (or a heated-air hand drying device), soap dispenser and toilet tissues and are fully stocked (fixed facility).**
- Soap and paper towel dispensers are functional and stocked.
 - Functional heated-air hand drying devices are allowable in place of single use paper towels.
 - Soap and paper towel dispensers are functional.
 - Toilet paper is provided in permanently installed dispensers at each toilet.

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- 35. Outside trash bins are in good repair and the lids are kept closed when not in use.**
- Facilities and equipment necessary to store or dispose of all waste material are present.
 - Waste receptacles are present and lids are maintained closed to prevent vermin.

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- Receptacles and areas designated for refuse, recyclables, returnables, or a redeeming machine for recyclables or returnables, is separate from food, equipment, utensils, linens, and single-service and single-use articles, so that no public health hazard or nuisance is created by refuse.

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36. Hazardous substances (cleaning supplies) are properly labeled and stored below and away from food products.

- Food handlers shall not use or apply unapproved (e.g., household use only) insecticide, pesticide, or rodenticide inside any food preparation or storage area.
- Chemical containers need labels identifying the contents.
- Chemical containers cannot be stored where it may result in contamination of food, utensils, or food-contact surfaces, such as detergent above the drain board of a dishwashing sink where clean utensils are allowed to dry.
- Sanitizer buckets shall be stored below or away from food preparation surfaces.

Note: Food-contact surfaces that have been contaminated by hazardous materials or chemicals is considered a health hazard.

OFFSITE FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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37. Offsite food distribution will meet the requirements of all local jurisdictions.

- Food distribution from an outdoor location (not in or adjacent to the registered location) is allowed for up to four hours per day.
- Contact the local agency, owner, manager, or other appropriate entity to ensure the food distribution is consistent with the location proposed.
- Provide leak-proof container for liquid wastes and dispose of in a sanitary sewer system.
- Provide a solid container for food waste and garbage and dispose of properly.
- Clean up all solid waste in the general serving area at the end of the food distribution.

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38. Food is protected from contamination.

- Keep food containers covered.
- Store food containers at least 6 inches off the ground (may include pallet, shelving, or other storage unit).
- If serving location is under a tree, provide protection to prevent contamination from leaves and debris.
- If food serving location is on dirt, suggest placing a tarp on the ground to minimize dust.
- Open prepared foods should be served to the consumer. Self-service should be avoided.

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39. A temporary handwash station is set up prior to handling unpackaged food at the offsite distribution location.

- Handwash facility must be set up and operational prior to beginning food handling operations. It must consist of:
 - A container – 2 gallons or more - of potable water,

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- 2 = Storage or distribution of commercially prepared and commercially packaged potentially hazardous cold or frozen foods (grocery only, including perishable foods)
- 3 = Reheat or portion commercially prepared foods with no further processing
- 4 = Heat, portion, or assemble a small volume of commercially prepared foods or ingredients that are not prepackaged

- liquid hand soap in a pump dispenser,
- paper towels, and
- a catch bucket or tub for wastewater.

Note: If all food is prepackaged, hand sanitizer may be used in lieu of a handwash station.

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40. Extra serving utensils are provided or a temporary utensil wash station will be set up at the offsite distribution location.

- Provide extra serving utensils in case utensils are dropped on the ground or become contaminated.
- Provide a temporary utensil wash station.
 - Utensil washing stations include three containers filled with potable water. Each container must be large enough to accommodate the largest utensil to be washed.
 - Container # 1 – WASH – with soapy water (use dish soap).
 - Container # 2 – RINSE – with clean and clear water.
 - Container # 3 – SANITIZE – with sanitizing solution.
 - Adequate space to AIR DRY all utensils.

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41. Toilet facilities located near the distribution site when distribution will occur for more than one hour.

- Recommend toilet facilities be located within a reasonable travel distance from the food distribution site if the food distribution will occur for over one hour.

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