



# CATERING

## Environmental Health Services Division Frequently Asked Questions

### What is catering?

Catering can be defined as providing food and related services at an off-site location for a defined group of people. Typically, a caterer will contract with a client to provide a pre-determined number of meals to the client, or the client’s guests, at a specified location. Catering commonly occurs in conjunction with *private events* such as business meetings, conferences, and weddings. Catering does not include routine services offered at the same location or meals that are individually purchased.

### Do I need a permit to provide catering services in Davis County?

Anyone who advertises or solicits catering services (i.e. flyers, social media, vehicle signage, etc.) must have a valid permit from a local health department located in Utah. If you have a permit to operate as a food establishment (not a Temporary Food Establishment) from elsewhere within the state, you do not need to obtain an additional permit to cater *private events* in Davis County.

Many people assume those who advertise catering services are legitimate business that are permitted, or otherwise regulated. Therefore, to advertise catering services you must have a valid health department permit. However, those who pay a friend to cook for their private gathering do not typically have this pretense that they are hiring a regulated food service business.

### What is the difference between a Private Event and a Public Event?

- *Private Events* are events which have a defined and limited number of guests, do not offer individually purchased meals, and are not advertised to the public. Examples of private events include weddings, house parties, and church gatherings (promoted only to their congregation).
- *Public Events* are events which are open to the public, where meals are purchased individually, and are advertised to the public. Examples of public events include farmers markets, city festivals, and fundraisers. Food vendors providing food at public events must obtain a Temporary Food Establishment permit or be permitted as a mobile food establishment (i.e. food trucks).

### Can I operate a catering business out of my home?

A catering business must operate from a permitted food service establishment. Food prepared at a private residence or a facility which is not permitted as a food establishment is not allowed to be sold to the public.

The only exception to this would be if the caterer was producing only foods that did not require time or temperature control for safety, and that were prepared in a home kitchen that is currently registered with the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food’s Cottage Food Program.

### What other resources are available?

Entity	Resource or Reference
Utah Administrative Code	Rule R392-100. Food Service Sanitation <a href="https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r392/r392-100.htm">https://rules.utah.gov/publicat/code/r392/r392-100.htm</a>
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food	Cottage Food Production <a href="https://ag.utah.gov/businesses/regulatory-services/cottage-food-production/">https://ag.utah.gov/businesses/regulatory-services/cottage-food-production/</a>

