



# Alabama Department of Public Health Checklist for Catering Plans and Operations

The Alabama Department of Public Health defines a "caterer" as "a person operating from a permitted food establishment who **contracts with one individual or firm** to provide a predetermined menu and quantity of food at a specific site, off the premises of the permitted food establishment, which is generally different for each event; the site or event not being open to the general public."

This document is intended to provide guidance on how to obtain a food establishment permit for the purposes of catering within the state of Alabama. Catering operations, including food preparation, handling, and food storage, must be conducted in an approved, permitted food service establishment. Food operations cannot be conducted in private residences.

To make the catering plan review process as easy as possible the following information is required as part of the food permit application:

- A list of general foods proposed to be catered, such as "barbeque pork," "grilled chicken," "steamed mixed veggies," or similar general descriptions, including condiments and beverages
- A description of food preparation processes, including methods of cooling and reheating foods that must be time or temperature controlled for safety
- The general types of events to be catered (for example, "weddings," "family reunions," "baby showers," etc.)
- A description of the methods and equipment used for food storage, food display, and food service
- A description of the equipment and vehicles used to transport foods to the events
- Valid Food Protection Manager Certification from an accredited program
- Where/how hand sinks equipped with hot and cold running water under pressure, soap, and paper towels will be accessed during food service at the event site location

- Where/how restrooms will be accessed at the event site location during hours of serving
- A description of cleaning/sanitizing processes for all soiled utensils, equipment, tableware, and linens
- Availability of a probe-type calibrated food thermometer

After being served or sold, leftovers may not be reused by the caterer.

Plan reviews, inspections, and permitting activities are conducted by the local county health department where the food service establishment that serves as the catering base of operations is or will be located. A list of contact information for each county health department can be found at [ADPH.org](http://ADPH.org).



*The mission of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to promote, protect, and improve the health of individuals and communities of Alabama.*