



## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

### CATERING GUIDELINES

#### **OHIO REVISED CODE 3717.01(G)**

"Catering food service operation" means a food service operation where food is prepared for serving at a function or event held at an off-premises site, for a charge determined on a per-function or per-event basis.

#### **OHIO REVISED CODE 3717.43(A)**

An application for a catering food service operation license shall be submitted to the licensor for the district where the applicant's base of operation is located.

#### **OHIO REVISED CODE 3717.43(B)**

A mobile or catering food service operation license issued by one licensor shall be recognized by all other licensors in this state.

#### **OHIO REVISED CODE 3717.43(G)**

The person or government entity holding a license for a food service operation shall display the license for that food service operation at all times at the licensed location. A person or government entity holding a catering food service operation license shall also maintain a copy of the license at each catered event.

A licensed food service operator who has checked the "CATERER" box on the food service license application form may prepare and/or serve packaged or unpackaged food at a catered location **providing:**

1. All equipment, utensils, food contact surfaces such as customer used dishes and flatware, cooking/serving utensils, pots and pans, knives, cutting boards, etc. are to be returned to the caterer's licensed location for washing, rinsing and sanitizing, and storage following each event served.
2. All food serving tables, counters, or linens that are accessible by the public/customers must be provided with sneeze guards.
3. Adequate and appropriate equipment is provided for the transfer and holding of foods prepared, so that proper temperatures are maintained during transportation and service (hot foods above 140° F, cold foods below 41° F).

Food service operation license fees are based on Risk Level Classification. A catering operation shall be classified as a Risk Level IV operation, as per Ohio Administrative Code.

The following are examples of activities typically carried out by a licensed catering operation:

- Receptions (i.e., wedding)
- Group events (i.e., parties, picnics, reunions, church socials, business gatherings)

The food is prepared only at the caterer's licensed operation, and transported at the proper holding temperature (41° F or below for cold foods or 140° F or higher for hot foods) to the catered location where the caterer serves the food. If the catered location happens to be a full service licensed operation, the caterer may prepare the food at that licensed food operation.

All rules of Chapter 3717-1 Ohio Administrative Code, and laws governing food service operations and retail food establishments, including approved food sources, wholesomeness of food, food protection, employee health, personal cleanliness and practices, equipment, utensils, food contact surfaces, safety of water supply, disposal of wastes, handwashing facilities, insect control, adequate lighting, and cleanliness of the premises must be observed and practiced at all catered locations, as well as the licensed catering facility.