



Environmental
Health & Safety

Food Safety Program

Responsible Administrator: Registered Environmental Health Specialist

Revised: June 2023

Summary: This section outlines the policy and procedures related to the Food Safety Program that is administered through the Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) Department.

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1. Program Description

The UC Riverside (UCR) Food Safety Program is designed to protect the health of our campus community and the general public who visits our facilities from foodborne illness. We are responsible for conducting thorough food safety assessments, approving temporary food events, investigating foodborne illness complaints, providing food safety training, and conducting plan reviews for new construction or renovations on campus.

Adherence to this program brings UCR food facilities into compliance with the California Retail Food Code (“CalCode”) and protects the University from liability resulting from damage incurred by a foodborne illness outbreak.

Implementation and adherence to the requirements of this program are mandatory for all UC Riverside food facilities and special events that are open to the campus community and general public at which food or beverage is served.

The goal of this program:

- The campus Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) serves as a resource person for the campus community for current information on food safety and foodborne illness prevention.
- To focus on the inspection of permanent food facilities on campus property in order to promote the safe and sanitary preparation and service of food and beverages and prevent foodborne illness within the campus community.
- To provide reasonable and adequate guidance in reporting alleged outbreaks of foodborne illness on campus property.
- To provide reasonable and adequate guidance to the campus community in safe food handling techniques at temporary events.

2. Scope

This program focuses on permitting and inspecting permanent food facilities, temporary food facilities, mobile food facilities, and community events in order to promote the safe and sanitary preparation and service of food and beverages, prevent foodborne illness, and protect consumers from adulterated food products on campus property. This program applies to any food facility, student organization, or department engaged in food service in the public setting located on University-owned property, including, but not limited to,

- Permanent Food Facilities
 - Residential dining halls
 - UC-operated food facilities (including mobile food facilities)
 - Independently-operated food facilities

- Any other property owned by the University within Riverside County (e.g., UC Path)
- Non-permanent Food Facilities
 - Temporary events (e.g., special events, tabling, fundraisers, etc.)
 - Sports venues (e.g., Blaine Sport Complex, Student Recreation Center, etc.)
 - Performance venues (e.g., University Theater)
 - Conference venues (e.g., HUB)
 - Any other property owned by the University within Riverside County (e.g., UC Path)

Exceptions: This program does not apply to food service occurring at private events attended primarily by members of an organization or department, and other settings where the general public is not included.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Environmental Health and Safety

Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Agreement with the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health, UCR Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) is responsible to maintain a staff member holding the Registered Environmental Health Specialist (REHS) designation approved by California Department of Public Health (CDPH). The REHS is responsible to enforce the requirements contained within the California Retail Food Code (CalCode) during routine and complaint investigations, plan review, Special Event approvals and inspections, training and consultations. Non-REHS staff can conduct inspections and investigations if supervised by a REHS, however, the non-REHS staff cannot take enforcement action, such as ordering the closure of a food facility or impounding food or equipment. In these cases, it will be necessary for a REHS to be present and to sign the Food Facility Inspection Report.

3.2 Food Service Managers

Food Service Managers are responsible for operating and complying with CalCode in their facilities. They should be engaged in active managerial control of food service workers and food handling, including training for food handlers on how food becomes unsafe. Managers are also required to monitor employee health and report to EH&S whenever two or more food service workers report concurrent gastro-intestinal illnesses (which can be a precursor to a foodborne illness outbreak).

3.3 Food Service Workers

Food Services Workers are responsible to follow CalCode regulations to ensure food is handled safely. They must report illness to supervisors.

3.4 Temporary Food Facility Responsibilities

Student organizations and campus departments hold occasional special events, including weekly food sales, at which food is distributed or sold to the general campus community (i.e. open to the public). A Temporary Food Permit is required for these events. The permit lists the responsible person who will oversee food safety at the event.

3.5 Restaurant or Market Owner

Restaurant or market owners are responsible to operate the facility in compliance with CalCode and retain at least one certified food safety professional on staff. The certified food safety professional is responsible for providing job specific food safety training for all employees who are involved with food preparation and handling.

4. Program Components

4.1 Permanent Food Facilities

4.1.1 Permits and Inspections

- Owners/Operators of permanent food facilities must obtain a health permit from Environmental Health and Safety prior to opening the facility for business. The campus REHS will issue the food facility owner/operator a valid Health Permit when the facility meets CalCode.
- The campus REHS conducts regular inspections of the permanent food facilities to determine if the facility meets CalCode. The restaurant or market owner/operator must score a satisfactory rating (70 % or higher) to retain their health permit.
- Legal enforcement, such as an office hearing or a temporary closure, is used when education and persuasion efforts fail to bring a food facility into compliance.
- Special investigations are conducted in response to reports from the campus community of possible foodborne illnesses or dirty conditions in food facilities.
- Food safety information, resource material, and community education is provided upon request.

4.1.2 UCR Mobile Food Facilities

Mobile food facilities owned and operated by UCR must be reviewed and approved EH&S and must meet all design and operational requirements as outlined in CalCode. UCR Mobile Food Facilities are routinely inspected similar to permanent food facilities.

4.1.3 Food Facility Closures

Food facilities that have been closed or inoperable longer than 90 days are required to be inspected prior to opening.

When a food facility is found to be unsanitary or other conditions exist which constitute an immediate and substantial danger to public health, the facility is closed until the immediate danger to public health has been eliminated. Such conditions include but are not limited to, lack of hot water, sewage back-up, lack of potable water or electricity, rodent or insect infestation, inability to maintain foods at safe temperatures or gross insanitation.

4.1.4 Plan Check

This program reviews the plans for all new and remodeled food facilities on campus property to ensure that these facilities are constructed in accordance with applicable requirements. The following are examples of food facilities that must submit plans to EH&S: restaurants, markets, bakeries, bars/taverns, residential dining cafeterias, convenience stores, and UCR-owned mobile food facilities.

Plans and specifications should also need to be submitted to Planning, Design and Construction or Facilities Services.

4.2 Third-Party Vendors

4.2.1 Temporary Food Facilities

A temporary food facility is any establishment operating temporarily in connection with any event where food is prepared or served for consumption by the campus community or general public. Temporary food facilities consist of a fully enclosed tent or booth and is constructed for the duration of the event. Temporary food events can range in the length of time they are operational. Every temporary food facility at a temporary or occasional event that will be serving food to anyone in the campus community or the public will be inspected by EH&S. Upon successful completion of the inspection, EH&S will issue a UCR Temporary Food Permit for that event and vendor must meet all requirements as outlined in the [Event Checklist](#).

All temporary food facility must be sponsored by a registered student organization or department.

4.2.2 Non-UCR Mobile Food Facilities

Non-UCR mobile food facilities (MFF) must be sponsored by an organization, registered student organization (RSO) or department. The sponsoring organization is required to submit the following:

- Submit a Contracting Out Request via [Human Resources Management System](#) Contract Out module.
 - Contact your [department SAA](#) to request access. Student organization groups should contact their student organization advisor.
- Submit a [Temporary Food Permit](#) request.

Every mobile food facility invited to participate at a temporary or occasional event must be inspected by EH&S prior to the start of the event and during the event. When MFF pass inspections, EH&S will issue a UCR Temporary Food Permit for that event. There is a recharge cost for each mobile food facility. Recharge rates are determined and approved by the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) each fiscal year. For current recharge rate, contact ehs@ucr.edu.

Additional Requirements to Meet

Other departments on campus have requirements that must be met. Contact the following departments to learn more.

- [Risk Management](#) (insurance, waivers of liability, etc.)
- HUB Scheduling (if event is located in one of HUB's [Reservable Spaces](#))
- [Student Recreation Center](#) (if event is located in Student Recreation Center)

4.3 Events

All events open to the campus community or general public are required to obtain a Temporary Food Permit from EH&S at least **7 business days in advance**. This includes weekly food sales, department-hosted events, tabling, etc.

4.3.1 Obtaining a Temporary Food Permit

Any organization (including UCR registered clubs, organization, non-university individuals/organizations, departments etc.) fundraising or hosting an open event where food and/or beverages are distributed and/or consumed by the campus community or general public, either free or for purchase, must obtain a Temporary Food Permit.

To obtain a Temporary Food Permit, the following requirements must be met:

- **Training**
All individuals handling food (preparing, cooking, and/or serving) must complete the [online Food Safety Training](#) prior to submitted a food permit request application.

At minimum, if serving:

- **Hot Foods:** A minimum of three (3) individuals and everyone who is preparing or handling food and/or drinks must be trained
- **Cold Foods:** A minimum of two (2) individuals and everyone who is handling food and/or drinks must be trained

Training is valid for 2 years.

- **Approved Food Sources**

All food and/or beverage sold or distributed on campus must be pre-approved by EH&S and Procurement. Below is a list of approved food sources and prepackaged/bottled drinks.

- [List of Pre-approved Food Sources](#)
- [List of Approved Prepackaged/Bottled Drinks](#)

For more information, contact Matthew Burke at (951) 827-3095.

- **Additional Requirements to Meet**

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- HUB Scheduling (if event is located in one of HUB's [Reservable Spaces](#))
- [Student Recreation Center](#) (if event is located in Student Recreation Center)

4.3.2 Private Events

An event is considered private and does not require a Temporary Food Permit if the following criteria are met:

- a. Event is invitation only
- b. Internal department meeting or gathering

4.4 Complaints and Foodborne Illness

4.4.1 Complaints

Improper food practices that violate health codes are oftentimes unreported however, when an individual files a complaint, appropriate action is taken to resolve the issue before it leads to an imminent health hazard. To file a complaint, report to EH&S at <https://ehs.ucr.edu/report>.

4.4.2 Foodborne Illness

Foodborne illness (often referred to as food poisoning) is any illness resulting from the consumption of contaminated food. Symptoms of foodborne illness may include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and other symptoms.

There are two types of foodborne illness: infection agent and toxic agents. Food infection refers to the presence of bacteria or other microbes which infect the body after consumption. Food intoxication refers to the ingestion of toxins contained within the food, including toxins produced by bacteria, which can happen even when the microbe that produced the toxin is no longer present or able to cause infection. In spite of the common term food poisoning, most cases are caused by a variety of pathogenic bacteria, viruses, or parasites, that contaminate food, rather than chemical or natural toxins.

Foodborne illness can also be caused by pesticides or medicines in food and naturally toxic substances like poisonous mushrooms or reef fish. Foodborne illness is caused by the consumption of contaminated food that contains pathogenic bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Chemical and natural toxins can also be causes of foodborne illness. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) responds to all reports of suspected foodborne illnesses implicating food sold or served on campus property.

4.4.3 Reporting a Suspected Foodborne Illness:

1. Contact your medical service provider as soon as possible. The physician's diagnosis is a key element in assisting our office in determining whether you became ill from eating food at the facility or from the vending machine on campus.
2. After seeing your physician, contact EH&S immediately at (951) 827-5528 or email ehs@ucr.edu. Please review the Foodborne Illness Investigations information before placing the call; this information is vital for EH&S to properly follow-up on your request.

4.4.4 Investigating Complaints and Suspected Foodborne Illness

Upon receiving a complaint or notification of a suspected foodborne illness, EH&S will conduct an on-site assessment of the food facility for improper food handling practices. Upon completion of the assessment, EH&S will contact the complainant to provide summary of findings and actions.

For foodborne illness investigations, EH&S will use the foodborne illness supplemental questionnaire, which covers symptoms experienced along with a three-day food history log.

All investigations are conducted anonymously. Food facilities will not be provided with the complainant's information.

5. Information and External References

- California Retail Food Code – “CalCode”
- California Department of Food and Agriculture
- California Department of Public Health
- California Environmental Health Association
- Centers for Disease and Prevention Control
- Food Safety Information
- National Sanitation Foundation
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
 - [What You Need to Know about Foodborne Illnesses](#)
 - "[Bad Bug Book](#)" – Foodborne Pathogenic Microorganisms and Natural Toxins Handbook

Other Local Jurisdictions:

- Riverside County Department of Environmental Health
- Orange County Health Care Agency
- Los Angeles County Environmental Health
- San Bernardino County Division of Environmental Health
- Long Beach Environmental Health
- San Diego County Environmental Health

6. Definitions

Adulterated Food Products: Food that contains any poisonous or deleterious substance that may render the food impure or injurious to health

CalCode: Also known as the California Retail Food code, which is an excerpt of the California Health and Safety Code, Division 104 that apply to retail food facilities

Certified Food Safety Professional: an individual who has completed a food protection manager course from an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) accredited training provider.

Foodborne Illness Outbreak: A group of people developing the same illness (symptoms) after ingesting the same food product.

Mobile Food Facility: Hot Trucks/Catering Trucks (Mobile food preparation units), Ice Cream Trucks, Packaged Grocery Vehicles, and Carts.

Occasional Event: An event being held on University property for a limited period of time, including, but not limited to: weekly food sales, banquets, and community events where food/beverage is served at the event.

Owner/Operator: UCR Dining Services and the off-campus vendors operating retail food facilities on campus property.

Retail Food Facilities: permanent food facilities, cafeterias, satellite food facilities and temporary food facilities residing on-campus property.

REHS: Registered Environmental Health Specialist (i.e. Health Inspector).

UCR Sponsoring Organization: A UCR department, service organization, student group or student organization.