

Food Permit Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is a Food Permit?

A: A Food Permit is an online document submitted by RSOs, departments, or outside organizations that details food service plans for open events for FSU students, faculty, staff, or guests on FSU's campus. Food Permits are reviewed by EH&S staff to ensure that food is obtained from an appropriate source and applicable food safety guidelines are being followed.

Q: When is a Food Permit needed?

A: A Food Permit is required any time your organization is hosting an open event on FSU's campus. An "open event" is any meeting, gathering, or social activity that is available to any member of the FSU community and/or the general public. Examples of open events include:

- Info sessions
- Market Wednesday tabling
- 5Ks or other walks, runs, or athletic-type events
- Open meetings

Q: What about other types of events?

A: A Food Permit is not required for closed events. An event is considered "closed" when it is made available only to members of a specific organization. These events are usually limited in size and scope. Examples of closed events include:

- Members-only meeting
- Member service day or retreat
- FSU Department office party
- Thesis defense
- A non-FSU affiliated organization with an on campus contracted facility rental, i.e. private sports tournament at the Rec Sports Plex, concert at Ruby Diamond, etc.

Q: What kind of food can I have at my event?

A: All food items must be fully cooked, fully prepared, and ready to eat from a licensed food service vendor. A licensed food service vendor is a restaurant, caterer, or other food service establishment that is actively licensed or permitted and inspected by a Florida regulatory agency such as the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or Department of Health.

No homemade food items are allowed. In addition, food items must come directly from the vendor in the form in which they will be eaten – that means that no additional preparation such as cutting, mixing, or heating can be done. Food should be served in its original packaging from the vendor.

Examples of permitted food items:

- Pizza from Seminole Pies
- Catered food items from Seminole Dining
- Bagels from Einstein's
- Sandwich trays from a local grocery store or restaurant

Examples of food items that are **not allowed**:

- Homemade baked goods – cookies, cupcakes, muffins
- Veggie tray prepared in a dorm kitchen

- Fruit from a roadside stand

Q: How do I submit a Food Permit request?

A: Food Permit requests are processed through the Nole Central system. When you submit an Event Proposal, you will be asked about your food service plans. If you are serving food at an open event, you will be asked for your food details including the food items you plan to serve, the vendor, and food handling plans. By completing this information on the Event Proposal, you are automatically completing your Food Permit request. There is not a separate form.

Links to Nole Central Event Proposals:

- For RSOs: <https://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu>
- For departments and outside organizations:
<https://nolecentral.dsa.fsu.edu/submitter/form/start/22918>

Please note that all requests must be submitted at least 10 days prior to your event. This gives all reviewers adequate time to review your event plans and contact you for additional information, if needed. If your request is submitted late, your Food Permit may be denied.

Q: What happens next?

A: After you submit your Event Proposal, a member of EH&S staff will review your Food Permit request. EH&S staff may reach out to you for more details. Any questions or comments will be posted on your Event Proposal in Nole Central, so login often to check for communication. Once all the details of your food plans have been reviewed, EH&S will post either an approval or denial of your Food Permit request. EH&S will also post any additional food safety guidelines that may need to be incorporated for your event. For example, if you plan to host a doughnut fundraiser, EH&S will request that you wear food-safe disposable gloves to handle doughnuts.

Q: My Food Permit was approved, what do I need to do?

A: After your Food Permit has been approved, you will still need to wait for Event Proposal approval. Other Campus Partners may have questions or issues with your event that will need to be addressed. *An approval of your Food Permit does not guarantee approval of your Event Proposal.* Once your Event Proposal has been approved, you can move forward with your plans.

It is important that you adhere to your Food Permit plans for your event. If you need to make changes, contact EH&S as soon as possible to update food service plans.

During your event, make sure you follow any additional food safety guidelines posted in Nole Central. You do not need to print a copy of the Food Permit for your event – everything is kept within Nole Central.

Please be aware that EH&S staff may inspect your event to ensure compliance with your Food Permit and any applicable food safety guidelines.

Q: My Food Permit was denied, what do I need to do?

A: A Food Permit request may be denied for inappropriate food items, inadequate food handling plans, food planned from an unlicensed vendor, or submission past the 10 day deadline. EH&S will post details in Nole Central to explain the reason for denial and offer suggestions for future Food Permit requests. If your Food Permit plans can be revised, you may resubmit your Food Permit request for review.

Q: Can I sell food as a fundraiser for my organization?

A: Food Permits are reviewed by EH&S for food safety. EH&S does not give approval to sell food items. Food sales must be reviewed by FSU's Office of Business Services for compliance with food and merchandise contracts

on campus. When you submit an Event Proposal, in addition to your Food Permit information, you will also give information about food and merchandise sales. If you indicate that you plan to sell food, a representative from the Office of Business Services will review your plans. Please be aware that you must receive approval from *both* EH&S and Business Services before you can proceed with a food fundraiser. Food Permit approval from EH&S does not guarantee approval from Business Services to sell food.

Q: I have other questions that aren't listed here.

A: For more information about Food Permits, please reach out to EH&S by phone at (850)644-9117 or (850)644-6895 or stop by our office located at 1200 Carothers Hall.

For more information on Event Proposals, check out <https://union.fsu.edu/ces/eventplanning/event-permit> or contact the Campus Events Services team by phone at (850)644-6083.