



POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION Frequently Asked Questions



Q1: Is food prepared in a safe manner under sanitary conditions?

A1: Absolutely. All food and nutrition supervisors are Certified Food Safety Managers who have successfully completed state mandated training and testing requirements. All food and nutrition employees possess valid food handler cards as required by the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health (DEH). Also, all nutrition centers are inspected twice annually by the DEH.

Q2: Can I sell food I make at home?

A2: No. All food sold or given away to the public must be prepared and stored at a commercial food establishment with a valid public health permit.

Q3: Who inspects school nutrition centers and how often are they inspected?

A3: As required by state law, staff from the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health (DEH) inspects all Food and Nutrition centers twice each year (unannounced).

Q4: Who pays for school nutrition center inspections?

A4: The Food and Nutrition Department pays the DEH \$309.00 for each secondary school, and \$224.00 for each elementary school, for a total of \$9,223.00 annually. These fees cover the costs of two inspections each year for each school nutrition center.

Q5: Can I see the latest inspection report on my child's school nutrition center?

A5: Yes. A copy of the most recent inspection report is available for review at your child's school nutrition center or online at <http://www2.sdcountry.ca.gov/ffis/>. Please call the supervisor in advance and make arrangements before going to the school nutrition center.

Q6: What can I do to prevent food-borne illness at home?

A6: Wash hands and surfaces often, keep raw meats and ready-to-eat foods separate, cook foods to proper temperatures, and refrigerate promptly below 41° F.

Q7: Who needs to have a Food Handler Card?

A7: Any person who handles, prepares, serves, sells, or gives away food for consumption by persons other than his or her immediate family. This requirement does not apply to establishments serving all prepackaged foods.

Q8: When is a Health Permit required?

A8: A health permit is required whenever non-prepackaged potentially hazardous food items are sold directly to consumers.

Q9: Do Student Stores need health permits?

A9: Student stores that serve only commercially prepackaged, non-potentially hazardous food and beverage items do not need health permits. However, student stores that prepare or serve non-prepackaged, potentially hazardous food items must have a health permit and at least one food safety certified employee.

Q10: Can students use a hand sanitizer instead of washing their hands before lunch?

A10: No. Hand sanitizers and hand wipes do not replace proper hand washing (soap, warm water, and friction for 20-30 seconds). Although hand sanitizers can effectively kill some germs on hands, they do little to reduce the surface tension between a child's skin and dirt, grease, and germs. Use hand sanitizers only when kids have no access to soap and water. Proper hand washing will remove 99 percent or more of harmful microorganisms from hands.



POWAY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)



Q11: What is the proper temperature for my refrigerator?

A11: Refrigerators should stay at 41 °F (5 °C) or less. This slows the growth of most bacteria. Freezing at zero °F (minus 18 °C) or less stops bacterial growth.

Q12: How long can leftover food be left out of the refrigerator?

A12: Refrigerate hot foods as soon as possible within two hours after cooking. Discard foods remaining out for more than two hours. Date leftovers to prevent using after a safe time. Generally, leftovers remain safe when refrigerated for three to five days. **If in doubt, throw it out.**

Q13: What is the required temperature for hot and cold food?

A13: Potentially hazardous foods must be held at or below 41 degrees F or at above 135 degrees F. Potentially hazardous foods are foods that are capable of supporting the rapid growth of disease-causing microorganisms (e.g., meat, dairy, poultry, fish, and other high moisture foods).

Q14: Do commercial vendors need health permits to sell food on campus if they already have permits for their restaurants?

A14: Yes. The permit to operate a restaurant does not cover temporary events on campus. A separate health permit is required to sell food items on campus.

Q15: Can commercial vendors sell food at sports events on campus if they have a Temporary Event Permit?

A15: No. The event organizer must obtain a permit from the Department of Environmental Health or coordinate with the Food and Nutrition Department to ensure proper supervision.

Q16: Are food handlers required to wear hair restraints?

A16: Yes. All food handlers engaged in open food handling are required to wear effective hair restraints designed and worn to prevent hair from contaminating food and food-contact surfaces. In general, hair restraints must effectively hold the hair back and reduce the likelihood that stray hairs will fall off of the head during work.

Q17: Why is there a potential problem with potluck meals?

A17: There is the potential for food handling errors at potluck meals. This includes, but is not limited to, leaving perishable food at room temperature too long, cooking large amounts of food ahead of time and cooling it improperly, or failing to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Other factors to consider are, how dishes were prepared prior to the event, and were safe food handling practices followed during transport, storage and serving.

Q18: Is it acceptable for food handlers to handle food with their bare hands?

A18: In general, the answer is no. The food code states that food employees may not contact exposed, ready-to-eat food with their bare hands and shall use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single-use gloves, or dispensing equipment. An exception is made for washing fruits and vegetables. Therefore, employees must use a proper utensil or single-use gloves when handling ready-to-eat foods.

Q19: Can staff handle money and serve food with their bare hands?

A19: Food servers who handle money should not wear gloves; they should use deli tissue, spatulas, or tongs to serve non-prepackaged ready-to-eat food. Food handlers must wash their hands when changing duties, especially after doing anything non-food related - including touching money.