



LAMAR UNIVERSITY

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GUIDELINES FOR POTLUCK MEALS ON THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

EHS & Risk Management has assessed the risk associated with Lamar University Departments and Organizations holding potluck meals to celebrate holidays and other special occasions and has determined that potluck meals will be allowed with the following guidelines:

1. Following four simple steps will help to keep food safe: (1) **Clean** – Wash hands and surfaces often; (2) **Separate** – Don't cross contaminate raw meats with other foods; (3) **Cook** – Cook to proper temperatures; (4) **Chill** - Refrigerate promptly.
2. Select a reliable person to be in charge. The person-in-charge should provide instructions for safe food handling and oversee the preparation, service, and cleanup of the event.
3. For outdoor events, make sure a source of clean water is present. If none is available at the site, bring water, as well as soap and paper towels, for cleaning of hands.
4. If open flame cooking, a fire extinguisher must be on hand and conveniently accessible.
5. Never partially cook food for finishing later because you increase the risk of bacterial growth on the food. Bacteria are killed when foods reach a safe minimum internal temperature. Call the Risk Management & Occupational Safety Coordinator for information on safe internal temperatures.
6. Bacteria multiply rapidly between 40°F and 135°F. To keep food out of this “danger zone”, keep cold food in the refrigerator or in coolers and keep hot food in the oven, slow cookers, or in heated chafing dishes.
7. A microwave oven can be used to prepare food, but care must be taken to make sure food reaches a safe temperature throughout. Stir or rotate food midway through the microwave time to eliminate cold spots. Partial cooking may be done in the microwave only if the food is to finish cooking immediately, either on the range, grill, or in a conventional oven.
8. Leftovers and foods that have been cooked ahead and cooled should be reheated to at least 165°F. Reheat sauces, soups, and gravies to a boil. Reheating leftovers in slow cookers is not recommended because foods may stay in the “danger zone” too long.
9. Never leave food in the “danger zone” over two hours; one hour in temperatures above 90°F. Immediately refrigerate or freeze leftovers. Discard any food left out at room temperature for more than two hours. **When in doubt – throw it out!**
10. Ice used for human consumption must be stored separately from ice used to refrigerate food or drinks.

For further explanations needed, the organizer will receive an approved permit. If you have any additional questions, please contact the EHS & Risk Management department.