

USC FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

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USC University of
Southern California

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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1.0 Purpose and Scope

The USC Food Safety Program is designed: (a) to provide the USC community, and its guests, food that is safe and unadulterated, and (b) in accordance with local, state and federal regulations and guidelines.

The USC Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) will conduct periodic safety audits of all USC dining facilities to ensure that:

- All food safety related regulations are met to protect the USC community and its guests from foodborne illness.
- All general safety requirements are met to protect employees staffed at the dining facilities located at the University Park Campus (UPC) and Health Sciences Campus (HSC).

The safety audits will be performed in tandem with the health inspections conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health – Environmental Health Division.



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2.0 Regulations



Federal

- CDC [Food Safety](#)



State

- California Health and Safety Code, Division 104. Environmental Health, Part 7. [California Retail Food Code](#), Section 113700

Los Angeles County

- Los Angeles County Code [Title 8](#)
- Los Angeles County Code [Title 11](#)

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3.0 Definitions

ADULTERATED FOOD PRODUCTS

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

ANSI

American National Standards Institute

APPROVED SOURCE

A producer, manufacturer, distributor, or food facility that is acceptable to the enforcement agency based on a determination of conformity with applicable laws, or, in the absence of applicable laws, with current public health principles and practices, and generally recognized standards that protect public health.

AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION (AHJ)

The organization responsible for enforcing the requirements of the California Retail Food Code. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health-Environmental Health is the AHJ for the food facilities on the USC campus.

CALIFORNIA RETAIL FOOD CODE

A set of laws and regulations whose purpose is to safeguard public health and provide consumers food that is safe, unadulterated, and honestly presented through adoption of science-based standards.

CERTIFIED FARMER'S MARKET

A location that is certified by the State of California through the enforcement officers of the county agricultural commissioners and operated pursuant to Chapter 10.5 of Division 17 of the Food and Agricultural Code and regulations adopted pursuant to that chapter.

COMMUNITY FOOD PRODUCER

A producer of agricultural products on land that is not zoned for agricultural use, but is, otherwise, in compliance with applicable local land use and zoning restrictions, including, but not limited to, restrictions governing personal gardens, community gardens, school gardens, and culinary gardens.

CONSUMER

A person who is a member of the public, takes possession of food, is not functioning in the capacity of an operator of a food facility, and does not offer the food for resale.

FDA

The United States Food and Drug Administration

FOOD

A raw, cooked, or processed edible substance, ice, beverage, an ingredient used or intended for the use or for sale in whole or in part for human consumption, and chewing gum.

FOODBORNE ILLNESS	A common public health problem in which a foodborne pathogen is transmitted to people through food. Also known as food poisoning. Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and diarrhea.
FOOD FACILITY	An operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vends, or otherwise, provides food for human consumption at the retail level.
HAZARD	A biological, chemical, or physical property that may cause an unacceptable public health risk.
IMMINENT HEALTH HAZARD	A significant threat or danger to health that is considered to exist when there is evidence sufficient to show that a product, practice, circumstance, or event creates a situation that can cause food infection, food intoxication, disease transmission, vermin infestation, or hazardous condition that requires immediate correction or cessation of operation to prevent injury, illness, or death.
LACDPH	Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
MAJOR VIOLATION	A violation that may pose an imminent health hazard and warrants immediate closure or other corrective action.
MINOR VIOLATION	A violation that does not pose an imminent health hazard, but does warrant correction.
MOBILE FOOD FACILITY	Any vehicle used in conjunction with a commissary or other permanent food facility upon which food is sold or distributed at retail. It does not include a "transporter" used to transport packaged food from a food facility, or other approved source to the consumer.
PERMANENT FOOD FACILITY	A food facility operating in a permanently constructed structure, including any room, building, place, or portion thereof, maintained, used, or operated for the purpose of storing, preparing, serving, manufacturing, packaging, or otherwise handling food at the retail level.
PERMIT	The document issued by the enforcement agency that authorizes a person to operate a food facility.
PERSON-IN-CHARGE	The individual present at a food facility who is responsible for the operation of the food facility.
POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOOD (PHF)	A food that requires time or temperature control to limit pathogenic micro-organism growth or toxin formation.

PREPACKAGED FOOD

Any properly labeled processed food, prepackaged to prevent any direct human contact with the food product upon distribution from the manufacturer, a food facility, or other approved source.

TEMPORARY FOOD FACILITY

A food facility approved by the enforcement officer that operates at a fixed location for the duration of an approved community event or at a swap meet and only as part of the community event or swap meet.

TRANSPORTER

Any vehicle used to transport food pursuant to a prior order from a manufacturer, distributor, retail food facility, or other approved source to a retail food facility or consumer.

USDA

The United States Department of Agriculture

VERMIN

Cockroaches, mice, rats, and similar pests that carry disease.

WARM WATER

Water that is supplied through a mixing valve or combination faucet at a temperature of at least 100°F.

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4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities help employees to:

- Fully understand their role in operations and maintenance at various USC-operated dining facilities.
- Work in unison to ensure that all food is stored, handled and prepared per food safety regulations and to minimize workplace injuries.
- Create a healthy and safe working environment.
- Collaborate with campus partners and outside regulatory agencies to resolve any observed deficiencies in an efficient and effective manner.

Managers / Supervisors

Managers and supervisors will:

1. Serve as the “person in charge” who has knowledge of safe food handling practices and major food allergens as they relate to the specific food preparation activities that occur at the food facility.
2. Obtain and maintain an accredited food safety certification and retain a copy of it at the food facility.
3. Have a copy of their most recent health inspection available on site.
4. Ensure that:
 - a. Employees coming into work are not showing any signs and/or symptoms associated with an acute gastrointestinal illness, or known communicable disease that is transmissible through food.
 - b. Staff follow all required safety policies and procedures.
 - c. Staff are properly trained for their various tasks and that all trainings are documented.
 - d. All equipment is operated and maintained properly per manufacturer’s instructions.
5. Correct any deficiencies noted on all health inspection reports and USC food safety audits.

Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S)

USC EH&S will provide the following services to ensure all USC managed food facilities consistently maintain standards of safe food handling and cleanliness stated in the [California Retail Food Code](#) and provide a safe working environment for all employees:

1. Administer the Food Safety Program.
2. Conduct:
 - a. Periodic safety audits and any related follow-up inspections to ensure all food safety and general workplace safety requirements are met.
 - b. Foodborne illness investigations in partnership with USC Hospitality and USC Risk Management and Insurance.
 - c. Incident investigations to identify root causes and provide preventative measures to minimize further related incidents.
3. Work with USC Hospitality staff and the management team to address any safety concerns that may arise.
4. Provide technical assistance and safety-related training(s) upon request.
5. Generate metrics designed to identify areas of concern in order to partner with USC Hospitality to develop corrective actions to minimize various injuries and illness in USC managed food facilities.

Employees

All employees are required to:

1. Be properly trained to perform their specific tasks and responsibilities.
2. Communicate with their manager/supervisor if showing any signs or symptoms associated with an acute gastrointestinal illness or known communicable disease that is transmissible through food.
3. Follow all required safety policies and procedures.
4. Maintain good personal hygiene by keeping their hands and exposed portions of their arms clean.
5. Report any issues or concerns that may negatively impact food safety or employee health to their manager/supervisor immediately.

LACDPH: Environmental Health

LACDPH: Environmental Health will serve as the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) and provide the following services:

1. Issue Health Permits for USC managed food facilities.
2. Conduct health inspections, any related follow-ups, and other compliance requests.
3. Post Letter Grade/Score Card and Public Notifications.
4. Perform plan review services for any new construction or renovation work in any USC-managed food facility.

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5.0 Food Facilities & Events

Permanent Food Facilities

There are a variety of dining facilities located at both the University Park Campus (UPC) and the Health Sciences Campus (HSC). USC also works with contractors who operate the food facilities located at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and the Galen Events Center for USC sponsored events.

Temporary Food Facilities

Temporary food facilities consist of a food vendor setting up a temporary structure in order to serve food to the campus community and its guests. The food vendors may consist of USC Registered Student Organizations or an approved off-campus food vendor. Temporary Food Facilities will be limited to the number of days they can serve food and must be sponsored by a campus department/organization.

Mobile Food Facilities

Food trucks serving food on campus properties must: (a) seek and receive approval through USC Trojan Event Services and (b) be tied to a campus-sponsored event. Food trucks are not permitted to sell food on campus, otherwise. Food trucks must have a valid health permit from their local jurisdiction.

Certified Farmer's Market

A Certified Farmer's Market must: (a) be approved by the Los Angeles County Agricultural Commissioner and (b) obtain a permit from the LACDPH Environmental Health – Specialized Food Services Program. An approved permit from LACDPH Environmental Health – Specialized Food Services Program must be available upon request by USC EH&S and/or USC-sponsoring department. For more information, visit the [Certified Farmer's Market](#) web page on the LACDPH website.

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6.0 Health Permits

Permanent food facilities will obtain their health permits through LACDPH Environmental Health. Responsibility to acquire a valid health permit will fall on the food facility management.

USC Registered Student Organizations planning on selling food and/or beverages for a fundraiser event must submit a [Fundraising Approval Request Form](#) to USC Trojan Event Services that will also require approval from USC Hospitality. USC EH&S is currently developing a Temporary Food Permit Program for food sales on campus property by Registered Campus Organizations and campus-sponsored events in collaboration with USC Trojan Event Services.

Mobile food facilities will obtain health permits from their local jurisdiction where their permit resides. This permit must be available for review by USC EH&S upon request.

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7.0 Health Inspections

LACDPH Environmental Health will conduct all official health inspections at all permanent food facilities at USC campuses. Letter grades will be posted by the LACDPH health inspector upon completion of their inspection. LACDPH Environmental Health inspections will focus on “food safety practices and determining compliance with the health and safety code requirements for safe food temperatures, safe food handling, employee hygiene, an adequate supply of water and hot water, and the business is maintained clean...” - see the [LACDPH Restaurant and Retail Food Inspections web page](#) for details.

Any outstanding deficiencies documented on the health inspection report will need to be corrected by the timeline given by the LACDPH health inspector. All food facilities are required to have the most recent copy of their health inspection report available upon request. LACDPH Environmental Health also posts the most recent health inspection reports on their website.

USC EH&S will conduct monthly safety audits for all permanent food facilities at USC UPC and HSC campuses. These safety audits will review food safety and general safety practices in order to:

- Ensure the food facilities meets regulatory requirements.
- Minimize the risk of foodborne illness.
- Minimize the risk of employee injury.

Temporary food facilities must ensure they have received approval from USC Trojan Event Services. USC EH&S will conduct periodic safety audits to ensure that the responsible party is following all required food safety requirements.

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8.0 Training

USC Hospitality managers are required to receive food safety certification from an American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-accredited food protection certification organization. The certificates must be conspicuously posted at the facility where the manager is employed.

Food facility staff are required to satisfy all safety training requirements as part of their [Injury and Illness Prevention Program](#). These training records must be documented and available for review upon request. Trainings may include injury prevention trainings, equipment usage, and/or discussion of safety concerns shared during a staff meeting. Documentation may include a certificate of completion or a signed attendance sheet with a description of the safety training/topic discussed, date training was given, duration, and name of the facilitator.

USC EH&S is developing food safety training for Registered Student Organizations who plan on providing perishable food items at a fundraiser or special event. The training will focus on food safety best practices and proper food handling to minimize potential foodborne illness.

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9.0 Foodborne Illness Reporting

Reporting a Foodborne Illness

Any potential foodborne illness incident that may have occurred upon consumption of a food item from a food facility at the UPC or HSC campuses should be reported to the venue management. A manager or supervisor will contact the individual and work with them to complete the USC Hospitality Foodborne Illness Claim Questionnaire.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, USC Hospitality will investigate and forward a detailed summary to Risk Management. EH&S will work with Risk Management regarding any potential follow up.

Food Allergies

Students with any known food allergies should consult with the Campus Dietician for additional guidance. USC Hospitality has also provided additional information for [Eating Safety in Residential Dining and on Campus with Special Dietary Needs](#).

Food Allergic Reaction Response

If an individual experiences an allergic reaction upon consumption of a food item on campus, the venue staff should be informed and the manager will contact the USC Department of Public Safety (DPS). DPS will assess the situation and determine if further assistance from additional medical personnel is warranted. If so, DPS will initiate contact and coordinate additional response.

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10.0 Resources

Federal

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Food Safety

- <https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html>

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) - Food

- <https://www.fda.gov/food>

State

California Department of Public Health (CDPH) – Food and Drug Branch: Food Safety Program

- <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/Pages/FDBPrograms/FoodSafetyProgram.aspx>

California Retail Food Code

- <http://tiny.cc/cal-food-code>

Los Angeles County

Los Angeles County Public Health – Environmental Health

- <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/index.htm>

USC

EH&S Food Safety

- <https://ehs.usc.edu/occhealth/food-safety/>

Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S)

- <https://ehs.usc.edu/>

Risk Management and Insurance

- <https://risk.usc.edu/>

Trojan Events Services

- <https://trojanevents.usc.edu/>

Hospitality

- <https://hospitality.usc.edu/>
- Eating Safety in Residential Dining and on Campus with Special Dietary Needs:
<http://tiny.cc/usc-eat-safe-spec-diet>

