

NWTC Student Club Food Safety Guidance

Applies to all recognized student clubs hosting events involving preparation, serving, or sale of food.

Purpose

To ensure safe food handling practices at student organization events while supporting fundraising and engagement activities in a way that protects the health and safety of the NWTC community.

Scope

Guidance applies to bake sales, food fundraisers, free food distribution, and any student-led activity involving preparation, serving, or sale of food. While Wisconsin food safety requirements are generally governed by state law and Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP), local implementation and permitting requirements can vary by county.

Student clubs, college departments, and event organizers should review county-specific requirements before conducting any food-related fundraising activity. Even when regulations appear similar, counties may have unique permitting requirements, inspection processes, or operational restrictions that create compliance issues.

General Food Safety Requirements

- Wash hands before preparing or serving food and after handling raw meat, trash, money, or using the restroom.
- Use gloves or utensils when handling ready-to-eat foods.
- Do not prepare or serve food when ill.
- Keep food protected from contamination by covering or wrapping food items.
- Separate money handling from food handling whenever possible.
- Food and ingredients must be obtained from licensed grocery stores, restaurants, distributors, or approved commercial food producers.
- Clearly identify major allergens when known, including milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish.
- Homemade products should include an ingredient list whenever practical.
- Food must be transported in clean containers and maintained at safe temperatures during transport.
- Separate raw meats from ready-to-eat foods at all times.
- Use separate utensils, cutting boards, and serving equipment whenever possible.

Lower-Risk (No Certification Required)

- Commercial baked goods prepared and packaged in a commercial-grade kitchen.
- Individually wrapped store-bought snacks.
- Shelf-stable beverages such as bottled water, soda, and canned drinks.

Moderate-Risk Foods (Advisor Review Recommended)

- Store bought deli sandwiches and wraps.
- Refrigerated desserts such as cheesecakes and cream-filled items.
- Cheese, dairy products, and other refrigerated foods requiring temperature control.

Higher-Risk (Certified Food Handler Supervision Required) see below for details*

- Hamburgers, hot dogs, sausages, chicken, and other foods requiring cooking or grilling.
- Foods requiring reheating, hot holding, or temperature monitoring.
- Pre-cooked products heated on-site for service.
- Proper cooking, holding, and storage temperatures

- Cleaning and sanitizing practices

The certified individual is responsible for monitoring and enforcing the food safety guidelines outlined in this document, as well as any additional requirements or best practices established by ServSafe.

Prohibited Foods

Home-canned foods are not permitted for sale or distribution.

Temperature Control Requirements

- Cold foods must be maintained at 41°F or below.
- Hot foods must be maintained at 135°F or above.
- Ground beef must be cooked to 155°F.
- Poultry must be cooked to 165°F.
- Food should not remain in the temperature danger zone (41°F–135°F) for extended periods.

***Food Safety Certification Requirements**

[ServSafe Food Handler](#) is a nationally recognized food safety training and certification program developed by the National Restaurant Association. The course provides foundational food safety knowledge, including:

- Basic food safety principles
- Personal hygiene requirements
- Prevention of cross-contamination
- Food allergen awareness

Most people can successfully complete the training with **1 to 3 hours of preparation**, especially if they have some prior experience with food service, event planning, or food handling. The ServSafe Food Handler assessment consists of **40 questions** and is **not timed**, allowing participants to work at their own pace. ServSafe reports that most participants complete the assessment within **approximately 90 minutes or less**, and a passing score is **75%**.

Student Involvement will assist club advisors in obtaining the necessary study materials and registering for the certification exam. Once certification is achieved, Student Involvement will maintain a record of the advisor's certification information.

Event Planning

All club events must receive prior approval from Student Involvement, including the completion and submission of a [Club Event Form](#). As noted above, Student Involvement will verify that a certified staff member is identified on the form and will be present for the duration of the event.

Failure to submit a Club Event Form, hosting an event without prior approval, or failing to comply with the food safety requirements and guidelines outlined in this document may result in disciplinary action against the club.

Club Advisor Responsibilities

- Verify approved food sources.
- Monitor food temperatures when applicable.
- Ensure safe food handling practices are followed.
- Stop food service if unsafe conditions are observed.

Leftover Food

Remaining prepared food should be discarded at the conclusion of the event unless maintained in accordance with food safety standards and approved by the supervising certified food handler.

Questions

For guidance on food safety or information on [ServSafe Food Handler](#) certification, contact Student Involvement at student.involvement@nwtc.edu or 920-498-5483.