

# HOME-BASED FOOD BUSINESS DETAILED INFORMATION FORM

Porcupine Health Unit, Environmental Health, Food Safety

When a residential kitchen in Ontario is used to prepare food that will be served to the public, it must fully comply with the requirements of [Ontario Regulation 493/17 – Food Premises](#) during the times it is used for such purposes. If a kitchen cannot safely meet these requirements, the food business will not be permitted to operate out of the space.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN

### Type of food items permitted

Only low-risk food items can be prepared in a residential kitchen. Some example of low-risk foods include:

- Most bread and buns (without meat, cream filling, etc.);
- Most baked goods (with no custard);
- Chocolate, hard candies and brittle;
- Coffee beans and tea leaves;
- Fudge and toffees;
- Pickles, jams and preserves;
- Granola, trail mix, nuts and seeds;
- Cakes (icing that doesn't require refrigeration), brownies, muffins, and cookies.

### Type of food items NOT permitted

Potentially hazardous foods, foods that require time-temperature control to keep them safe for human consumption, are not permitted to be prepared in a home-based food business. Some examples of potentially hazardous foods include:

- Icings that require refrigeration (such as cream cheese icing);
- Custards, cream fillings, or dairy-based desserts;
- Meats, seafood, or foods that contain meat (such as meat pie or sandwich filling);
- Cooked rice and pasta;
- Soy, tofu, and other protein-rich foods;
- Processed or cut fruits and vegetables, such as salads.

### Storage and handling of potentially hazardous food ingredients

Potentially hazardous food ingredients may only be stored outside of the temperature danger zone (4°C to 60°C) for a period of time that is necessary for the preparation, processing and manufacturing of food. This period of time must not exceed two hours.

### Preparation space

Ensure your kitchen has sufficient counter space to hold all your preparation items when you need it to.

### Area for handwashing

Have one sink ready for handwashing with a supply of liquid soap and paper towels and a constant supply of potable (safe) hot and cold water.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN (CONT'D)

### Dishwashing

Cooking utensils used for the food businesses (such as pots, pans, spatulas, etc.) require cleaning and sanitization. Sanitization can be done using:

- a) clean water at a temperature of at least 77°C, or more, for at least 45 seconds;
- b) a clean chlorine solution of not less than 100 parts per million of available chlorine at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds;
- c) a clean quaternary ammonium compound solution of not less than 200 parts per million at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds;
- d) a clean solution containing not less than 25 parts per million of available iodine at a temperature not lower than 24°C for at least 45 seconds;
- e) other sanitizing agents if,
  - i. they are approved for use by Health Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency or the medical officer of health for the intended purpose,
  - ii. they are used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions,
  - iii. a test reagent for determining the concentration of sanitizer is readily available where the sanitizing takes place.

### Sanitizer test strips

Have a test reagent or test strips to measure your sanitizing solution strength.

### Surfaces

All surfaces in the kitchen must be smooth, non-absorbent and easy-to-clean.

### Ventilation

There must be adequate ventilation in the kitchen to ensure elimination of odors, fumes, vapors, smoke, and excessive heating from cooking.

### Lighting

The level of illumination required in the [Ontario Regulation 332/12 \(Building Code\)](#) shall be maintained when the kitchen is in use.

### Storage

There must be adequate and separate storage space for all food items that will be used for preparation of food business items. Personal food items must be kept separate from food items used for your business. This includes both dried goods and refrigerated/frozen goods.

### Equipment

Clean cooking utensils for the business must be stored in a clean, covered location that is separate from the utensils used by family members.

### Water source

A potable (safe) supply of hot and cold running water under pressure must be provided.

If your water source is not from a municipal supply, you may be considered a small drinking water system where [Ontario Regulation 319 \(Small Drinking Water Systems\)](#) applies. This regulation requires owners of a small drinking water system to provide consistently safe water. A public health inspector will help determine what requirements will apply to your home-based food business.

## Sewage disposal

Privately owned sewage disposal systems must comply with the [Ontario Regulation 332/12 \(Building Code\)](#). A sewage system inspector will work with you to complete a Building Alteration/ Change of Use application in order to assess the capacity of your existing septic system.

## Food handler training

Although not required by [Ontario Regulation 493/17 \(Food Premises\)](#) for home-based food businesses, food handler training is strongly recommended for all food handlers. Please contact the Porcupine Health Unit for options to become a certified food handler.

## DO NOT PREPARE FOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS WHEN YOU ARE ILL

[Ontario Regulation 493/17 \(Food Premises\)](#) requires that food handlers must be free from any infectious agent of a disease that may be spread through the medium of food. This means that when you are sick, you need to have a plan for your business because you will not be permitted to handle food that is sold to the public. You also need to consider whether you can safely prepare food for the public when you are taking care of ill family members in the home. You will need to be mindful of ill family members' use of the kitchen space. In a commercial kitchen outside of the home, ill people are not permitted in the space.

## PRACTICE PROPER PERSONAL HYGIENE

- ☑ Do not use tobacco while engaged as a food handler.
- ☑ Be clean and practice good personal hygiene.
- ☑ Wear clean outer garments.
- ☑ Take reasonable precautions to ensure that food is not contaminated by hair.
- ☑ Wash hands as often as necessary to prevent the contamination of food or food areas.
- ☑ Refrain from any other conduct that could result in the contamination of food or food areas.

It is best that you plan so that you do not have to change any diapers while you are working as a food handler; however, if you absolutely need to do this, ensure to wear gloves while changing the diaper and wash your hands thoroughly after removing the gloves.

## CLEAN AND SANITIZE SURFACES THAT YOU WILL TOUCH WHILE HANDLING FOOD

Many germs can stay on hard surfaces for hours, days or even months after they are put there. It's best to assume that food preparation surfaces that are shared with your family members require cleaning and sanitizing prior to beginning your work.

## KEEP FAMILY OUT OF THE KITCHEN

While your kitchen is acting as a commercial space, only the food handlers for the business should be using the space. The space is not permitted to be used as a home kitchen by family members during this time.



# HOME-BASED FOOD BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE

**Business or Food Premise Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DETAIL PLANS** (Please provide detailed plans about how you will use your residential kitchen to safely prepare food for your business.)

How will you keep food items and equipment used for commercial purposes separate from the food items and equipment that your family uses on a daily basis (excluding large appliances such as ovens and dishwashers)?

Do you have any pets? If so, how will you ensure that they are always excluded from the kitchen when commercial food preparation is occurring?

While using your home kitchen as a commercial space, only individuals involved with the business should be using the kitchen. How will you accomplish this?

How much food do you intend to prepare during a normal day at your business?

How many days a week are you intending to operate your food business?

Will you be taking care of family members while you are preparing food for the public? If so, what hygiene practices will you observe to ensure the food remains safe for the public to consume?

Where will you purchase your food ingredients from?

How will you package your food items for pick-up or delivery?

What is your plan if you get sick? How will you communicate this to customers?

What type of sanitizer do you intend to use to sanitize food contact surfaces after cleaning them?

PRINT:

SIGN:

DATE: (YYYY/MM/DD)



**For more information,  
contact your local  
health inspector  
or call 1-800-461-1818.  
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www.porcupinehu.on.ca**

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