

Glen Mar Food Events—FAQs



What is the classification of license that Glen Mar operates under? Glen Mar has a commercial kitchen. It is licensed by Howard County Health Department as high risk and is inspected 2 to 3 times per year by the Food Protection Program of the Bureau of Environmental Health.

What makes a location high risk? The factors are cooking in stages, complex food preparations, and serving children, elderly and at-risk groups.

Is it necessary to be licensed? The Bureau of Environmental Health recommendation recommends all commercial kitchens be licensed if any foodservice events are open to the public.

What does HACCP mean? This is Glen Mar’s Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) safety plan that has been approved by the County. It specifies ways of handling, storing, preparing, processing, cooking, and cleaning for our planned uses with safe health and food handling practices. It is especially important in complex,

multi-stage food preparations and menus to manage critical points and to prevent cross-contamination. Foods that are refrigerated, meats, poultry, eggs, and frozen foods are among those with potential hazards. Certified Foodservice Managers are trained in HACCP safe practices.

Can this decision be reconsidered? Yes, reapplication could be made stating that we no longer plan to do any foodservice events and the kitchen limited to staff only use.

Are churches excluded from compliance with the regulations? The only exclusion is a church member only event where it is possible to assure that no guests or visitors will participate. Any public church event must comply with the regulations.

What constitutes “public” in definition and practice? If there is not a clear way to restrict and/or control who could come, or when a foodservice event is advertised on the website or sign, it is public.

Is there a size limit to closed, restricted groups? No, the group can be of any size. Ability to control participation is the key. Number of participants is not a factor in the determination of “public”, it is membership.

Other churches have potlucks, can we? No, unless it is a members only event. We are responsible to conform to Howard County regulations, even though other jurisdictions may be different. If there were to be a food poisoning or health outbreak, the church is liable.

If we give away food for free, do we have to follow licensing rules? Yes. The primary concern of the County is whether an event is public or not. It is irrelevant that the food is free or has a charge.

What about food prepared at home to be brought to the church and served as enticement to participate in an event, such as samples for a chili cook-off? Food prepared offsite and transported to the church does not meet licensing requirements. However, chili could be prepared in the church kitchen under the supervision of a Certified Foodservice Manager and served to the congregation to promote the event.

What about food prepared at home and brought in at the request of a non-profit organization serving the homeless, such as Grassroots? There is a provision in the law for direct non-profit service to the destitute and homeless, so such food events are exempt and permitted. Food provided for Cold Weather Shelter is approved.

What about a small group, whose meeting is advertised on the website, wanting to bring food items from home for their attendees? When the group members agree to a food event, the event is restricted. Restricted events are able to be held without a Certified Foodservice Manager.

What about cooking outside on our grounds, for example grilling hamburgers, hot dogs, or chicken? Yes, we can, with conditions. There can be no food preparation taking place outside, and all containers and cooking equipment must have a cover. Serving of food has to be covered by a shelter or tent. If the event is advertised, and not able to

be restricted, a Certified Foodservice Manager must be onsite during the preparation, cooking, serving and cleanup of the event.

What if food is to be prepared in the Glen Mar kitchen, cooked, and then frozen for storage until it would be delivered to sick, disabled, and homebound persons? This is not covered under our HACCP plan for foods' safety, and will need State Health Department involvement. In addition to having a Certified Foodservice Manager on site for the preparation and cooking, special types of containers suitable for freezing and reheating are necessary. In serving another high risk population, extra caution is required. A new HACCP would need to be developed and submitted for approval.

Is a Certified Foodservice Manager always required for a public event? No, if foods are individually packaged or are prepared by institutional suppliers and are served "as is", there is not a requirement for a Certified Foodservice Manager. Safe baked goods are also fine to serve or sell. Safe baked goods are dry goods without custards or creams.

Must all public events at the church with food prepared, cooked, and served be supervised and directed by an onsite Certified Foodservice Manager? Yes.

Can training be given by a Certified Foodservice Manager to assistants who then prepare food under her/his license and general supervision? Yes, but the foodservice manager still needs to be onsite, even if not directly supervising.

Is cooking for a closed group event okay in the licensed kitchen when it is for members of the group? Yes, church examples might be a staff lunch, Board meeting, or a closed youth dinner event, which may reserve the kitchen for use without supervision by a Certified Foodservice Manager. Also, it could be allowed if the church chooses to rent to others for a private event.

What about an event that wants to serve special food, and makes arrangements to have it prepared and cooked by a private caterer, but the organizers will serve the food? Sure. A private caterer can prepare and bring food into the church, but Glen Mar must have a copy of their license and certificate of insurance. As to the serving, it depends. If the event takes place promptly after the food is delivered, it should be fine. However, if the food is delivered a day ahead of time and has to be refrigerated and reheated and/or stands for a length of time, other safe food handling practices are required that a certified foodservice manager is best equipped to supervise for safety.

Does use of the kitchen require a reservation? Yes. A request for facility use for the kitchen must be submitted for approval via the online form on the Glen Mar website. A public event will require a Certified Foodservice Manager. Currently, George Dohner serves Glen Mar in this capacity. He oversees processes for proper preparing, cooking, cleaning and storage of foods and use of the refrigerator and freezer. Gas is turned off after each event for safety. Reserving the space communicates the

need for gas to be turned on or gives time for your group to be instructed how to do this.

What training is available? Some standard procedures are available such as fellowship hour setup & cleanup, washing of the dishes, storage where labels indicate, and generally leaving the space better than when you found it. A new group in support of the facility use of the kitchen may be needed to prepare the kitchen when it is reserved and to check it after the event is complete.

Who do we contact if support is needed? Larry Albrecht is the Facility Services Supervisor, and is responsible for turning on the gas for a reserved use of the kitchen. Barbara Julian is the Minister for Operations and will receive suggestions, comments, and compliments about new items, improvements, needed common supplies, and processes for review, consideration, and response. George Dohner is a resource if there is a specific food concern and question.

