In accordance with the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Amherst Board of Health, the following protocols have been established for all Commencement events that will include the consumption of food, including catered and take-out fare:

- Catered events (using a caterer licensed by the Town of Amherst)
- Take-out food acquired from a local restaurant (which must be less than 30 minutes from event site)
- Events where food is being prepared by someone other than the food preparation staff from Amherst College

**College events where food is to be served must include the submission of a completed Food Information form to Conferences and Events (CASE) in the Communications Office at least 30 days prior to the event.** This deadline allows time to communicate with other college departments, perform the background check on the caterer/or restaurant and arrange for the site inspection by the health department.

**Catered Events**

If students or families utilizing an Amherst College facility will be hosting an event which is to be catered by a “licensed” caterer other than Amherst College dining services:

**Requestor responsibilities** - together with the caterer if there is one, assure that the remaining food/beverage is discarded post celebration

**College responsibilities** - the college will determine if the requested caterer is licensed and approved by the Town of Amherst Board of Health.

**Caterer responsibilities** - for events where food needs to be kept hot and/or cold the licensed caterer shall:

- Complete the Food Protection Questionnaire for Catered Events and return to CASE office
  - [www.amherst.edu/media/view/210628/original/Food%252BProtection%252BQuestionnaire.pdf](http://www.amherst.edu/media/view/210628/original/Food%252BProtection%252BQuestionnaire.pdf)
- Have and provide proof of the appropriate level of insurance ($1,000,000) to serve food at Amherst College
- Have or obtain the necessary Temporary Food Permit, through the town, at a cost of $50
- Provide a server or on-site manager/designee who is Serv-Safe trained
- Remain on site as long as their food is being served
- Maintain appropriate temperatures for potentially hazardous foods (PHFs), both cold (<40 deg F) and hot (>140 deg F), for the duration of the food service
- Post signage (8 ½” x 11”) that indicates that the food may contain nuts, dairy, seafood or other potential food related allergens
- Be expected to appropriately discard/remove from the site any food that is not consumed by the event end

**Exceptions**

- If a caterer is delivering food that is not considered potentially hazardous, such as bagels, donuts and coffee etc., they would not be required to remain on site, or serve this type of food
- If PHF items such as cream and milk are left on site for coffee and tea, these items must remain on ice
- If PHF items such as cheese and/or meat platters, shrimp or similar food is to be served at an event, they must also be kept on ice or refrigerated
- It is the responsibility of the event requester to discard any remaining PHF food/beverage that is not consumed within 1 ½ hours after arrival at the site

**Local Restaurant Take-Out**

Anyone using space and who will be providing food from a local area restaurant (take-out) shall:

- Obtain the take-out food from a restaurant that is less than 30 minutes from the event site and be responsible for verifying that the temperature has been appropriately maintained
- Ensure that the food (including meats, pizza, salads and dressings) is consumed within 1 ½ hours from the time of actual pickup
- Ensure that any uneaten food is disposed of at the end of the 1 ½ hour time frame

**Food Prepared by Families and Students**

When families or students prepare food for commencement events, they shall:

- Not prepare or serve potentially hazardous foods (PHFs) that include, but may not be limited to meat, poultry, fish, uncooked or partially cooked eggs, mayonnaise, custard, or any foods that would require temperature control.
- Post signage (8 ½” x 11”) that indicates that the food may contain nuts, dairy, seafood or other potential food related allergens

For more information on the requirements, contact the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at 413/542-8189.
Addendum 1 - Catering and Take-Out Procedure for Commencement Celebrations at Amherst College (Page 2 of 2)

Food Information for Amherst College Commencement Celebrations

Reservation Name: ____________________________________________
Date of Celebration: _______________________________________________________________________
Tent Site Designation: ______________________________________________________________________

If you are having your celebration catered (they serve the food)

Name of Licensed Caterer: ______________________________________
Address of Caterer: ________________________________________________________________________
Contact Person at Caterer: ________________________________
Telephone Number: ________________________________
E-mail Address: ________________________________

If you are ordering take-out from a local restaurant

Name of Licensed Restaurant: ______________________________________
Address of Restaurant: ______________________________________________________________________
Contact Person at Restaurant: ________________________________
Telephone Number: ________________________________
E-mail Address: ________________________________

If you are preparing your own food

I, __________________________________________ (print name) agree to follow the following guidelines regarding the safe handling of food.

______________________________________________________________________________________
(Signature) ___________________________ (Today's Date) ___________________________

Amherst College Food Preparation Safety for Small Events

• Before preparing any food, aggressively wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds. Hands must be washed after shaking hands, using the restroom, touching face or hair, placing waste into trash containers and between the handling of different food items.

• Keep food preparation areas, including countertops and cutting boards, as well as cooking utensils clean and sanitized. Sanitize by **heat** or **chemical** means.
  - **Heat** – soak items in hot water (171°F+ for 30 seconds) or through a high temperature dishwasher.
  - **Chemical** – soak items in chemical sanitizing solution. Common types are chlorine, iodine and quaternary. All are regulated by state and federal Environmental Protection Agencies.

• Knives, spatulas, spoons and other cooking implements should be clean for each type of food being prepared. Separate or clean these items to avoid cross contamination of meats, poultry and vegetables.

• All fruits and vegetables must be thoroughly washed before cutting or cooking.

• Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF), which includes dairy, eggs, mayonnaise, poultry, sour creams and yogurt must be kept refrigerated until prepared or served.
  - **Raw** meats and poultry must be stored on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator until cooked or otherwise prepared.
  - **PHF** to be served hot must remain hot (>140°F) and **PHF** to be served cold must remain cold.

• If left at room temperature, PHF must be refrigerated or discarded after 1.5 hours. Food items placed into the refrigerator must be covered, dated and labeled to avoid potential contamination and to prevent allergic reactions.

• **Allergies** to certain food items are of significant concern to individuals who may have reactions to same. Food allergies can cause hives, difficulty breathing and even death.
  - **These allergens can include:** dairy, eggs, gluten/wheat, nuts, seafood/shellfish.

To best protect everyone, both those that are consuming, as well as the person(s) preparing, the allergy guidelines strongly recommend the blanket notification that the food being prepared may have any of the above allergens in the fare being served. If you have concerns or questions regarding the above guidelines, please feel free to contact either Amherst College Dining Services at 413/542-2220 or Environmental Health and Safety at 413/542-8189.