

Leaflet on food and beverage stalls and catering facilities at trade fair booths

This leaflet contains explanatory notes on the Technical Guidelines for Trade Fairs and Exhibitions issued by Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH.

Legislative requirements

1. Situations where alcoholic beverages can be served without a licence

A licence to serve alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises is not required in the following cases:

a) Dispensing of samples

Samples are relatively small portions of products intended for consumption for promotional purposes in order to allow potential buyers to taste a drink and to thereby convince them of its quality and persuade them to buy a larger quantity.

Example: A brewer is deemed to be offering a sample if the beer is served just for tasting purposes in very small glasses not typically used to serve beer in the trade.

b) Dispensing of beverages in the context of sales pitches or hospitality

A (mere) act of dispensing in the context of sales pitches or hospitality can be assumed if alcoholic beverages are offered at trade fairs and exhibitions, which do not involve any selling of these beverages, primarily as a gesture of courtesy.

Example: Parties who have just signed a contract drink to their agreement with a glass of sparkling wine offered by the exhibitor.

c) Dispensing of beverages at a private function

An invitation-only event open to a list of named guests is classed as a private function especially at trade fairs and exhibitions which are (also) open to the general public.

Example: An exhibitor of barbecues invites all the relevant distributors in the north of Germany to a special presentation of his or her new products in a dedicated area on the exhibition site. The presentation is only open to invited guests.

2. Situations where alcoholic beverages cannot be served without a licence

Anyone wishing to serve alcoholic beverages at a trade fair or exhibition for consumption on the premises must – except in the cases set out in section 1. above – obtain a licence pursuant to the relevant law (section 12 of German Statute Governing Restaurants (GastG)).

Example: Operators of food trucks which serve alcoholic beverages must apply for a licence.

NOTE:

The general statutory regulations apply.

The requirements set out in youth protection law are particularly relevant.

3. Contact details:

Hamburg office of consumer protection, trade and environment:
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Food regulations

1. Staff requirements

The following requirements are mandatory for all persons who are engaged in making, handling and/or serving food:

- Injuries on hands or arms to be treated appropriately and covered with waterproof dressings
- Clean clothes and, where applicable, protective clothing to be worn (e.g. washable, light-coloured workwear, overall or apron and, where necessary, head covering)
- Hands to be washed thoroughly before starting work and after going to the toilet
- Jewellery to be removed from the hands and arms

The following rules also apply:

- No smoking in the food preparation and serving area
- Certification to be available confirming that staff have been duly trained in line with section 4 of the food hygiene regulations (LMHV)
- Certification to be available confirming that staff have undergone basic briefing in compliance with infection prevention laws

2. Standards required of stalls / catering facilities

Surfaces which come into contact with food must be clean and easy to wipe clean and disinfect. Plain, washable materials must be used.

Pieces of equipment (e.g. grills, ovens, hotplates, work surfaces) must be inside the (sales) stall in a position where they cannot be tampered with by customers.

If food preparation and serving areas and unpackaged food are accessible to customers, measures must be put in place to ensure that the food cannot be adversely affected by customers (e.g. by fitting a sneeze guard).

There must be a sink and a separate hand washing facility with running hot and cold water, soap dispenser and paper towels. The hand washing facility must not be used for other purposes while the stall is open for business and must be kept accessible at all times. A hand sanitiser must be used when handling sensitive food (e.g. fish, meat, egg products) and unpackaged bakery or confectionery products (e.g. chocolate icing, sugar glaze, roasted almonds). Facilities for washing food must be separate from facilities for cleaning equipment and fittings, where both are required.

The floor in the (sales) stall must be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. Outdoor stalls must have overhead, side and rear panels in order to protect the food from exposure to the elements.

3. Special requirements relating to drink dispensing equipment:

The hygiene standards required when operating drink dispensing equipment include proper cleaning of the equipment at the prescribed intervals (DIN 6650) and correct operation of the equipment in order to ensure that the drinks are not contaminated with microorganisms.

Glasses may be washed with commercial combined brush systems (e.g. Spülboy brand) or two sinks next to each other for washing and rinsing, or a glass washing machine. The equipment must be entirely clean and hygienic.

Documentation on the dispensing equipment and the relevant cleaning instructions must be kept up to date and must be available for reference at all times.

4. Food hygiene requirements

Food must be stored in clean, dry and cool conditions and protected from detrimental effects. Perishable food (e.g. meat products, fish products, dairy products) must be refrigerated at the temperatures prescribed by law.

Unpackaged food may not be stored on the floor.

The production of minced meat and processed meat products (e.g. meat cut into strips, marinated pieces of meat) is prohibited at mobile (sales) stands.

5. Price lists and signs

The food and drink prices must be advertised on boards or lists. In the case of drinks, the board or price list must also indicate the quantity of drink.

Any additives subject to labelling requirements and allergens which have been used must be declared.

6. Internal inspections

The internal inspections required by law must be duly carried out and the relevant documentation on incoming deliveries, temperature checks on food which must be kept chilled and, if required, checks on the temperatures at which it is served, cleaning, disinfection and refresher briefings on infection prevention legislation must be kept up to date and readily to hand at all times and must be shown on request.

NOTE:

The general statutory regulations apply.

Further information, especially on mandatory and recommended food temperatures and on hygiene requirements when working with food, can be obtained on the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce website and in the guidelines issued by the relevant professional associations (e.g. guidelines published by the butchers' or bakers' guilds).

7. Contact details:

Please contact the Hamburg office of consumer protection and food inspection if you have any questions in connection with food regulatory issues:

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