

Exemption from the Ontario Food Premises Regulation for Special Events

An exemption from the Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 493/17: Food Premises applies to religious organizations, service clubs, and fraternal organizations that prepare and serve meals for special events or conduct bake sales. This exemption applies if the exempt group is holding a special event to which the public is invited, where food is made in private homes that are not inspected by the health unit.

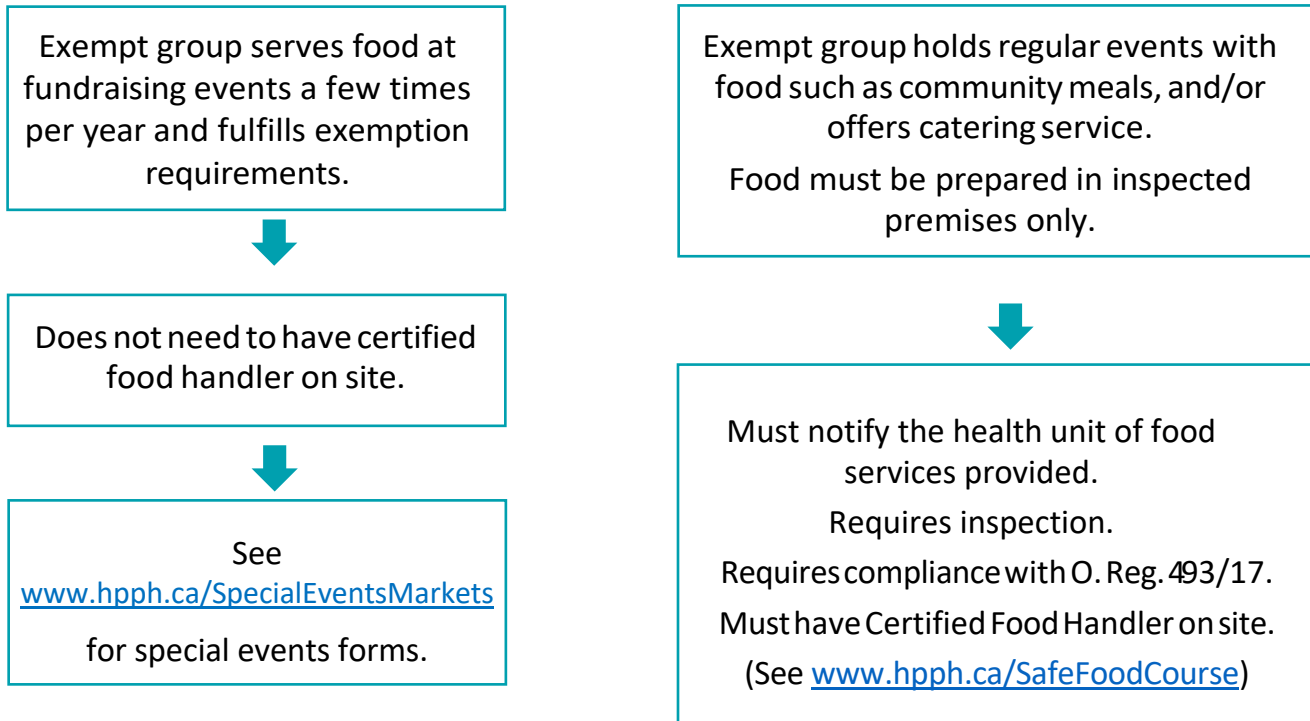
For example, an exempt group holds a ham and turkey dinner twice per year to which they invite the public. Volunteers donate and prepare the food in their own homes and bring it to the special event. The group is eligible for the exemption provided they:

1. Notify the health unit of the event;
2. Post a notice at the event entrance stating that the food has been prepared in uninspected home kitchens; and
3. Keep a list of all the people donating and handling food for the event. The list must contain each donor's name, address and telephone number in full.

Although an exemption to O Reg. 493/17 may apply, an exempt group must still comply with the *Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)* and may be inspected under the Act. The following are requirements for food premises under the HPPA:

1. The food premises must be maintained free of health hazards. A health hazard means a condition of a premises; a substance, thing, plant or animal other than man; or a solid, liquid, gas or combination of any of them, that has or that is likely to have an adverse effect on the health of any person.
2. No person shall sell or offer for sale any food that is unfit for human consumption by reason of disease, adulteration, impurity or other cause.
3. No person shall sell, offer for sale, deliver or distribute milk or cream that has not been pasteurized.
4. No ungraded eggs shall be sold, distributed, or used to make food products.
5. No uninspected meat (unless it is provided as part of an exempt wild game dinner, which requires further discussion with the health unit).

Groups that operate food banks, community meal programs, and/or catering services on a regular basis, such as once a week or once a month, are not exempt from O. Reg. 493/17. They are required to notify the health unit of the event or service provided.



Adapted with permission from Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit by Huron Perth Public Health | FEBRUARY 2024