

## **Catering An Event**

Check list courtesy of  
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*“Recovering Procrastinator”*

### **CONSIDER BEFORE YOU START**

- Is it clear what type of event this will be? (casual or formal, business or pleasure, in-door or out-door, meal only or ceremony, after-dinner speaker, dance, other?)
- Do you have access to use any data or info from previous events such as this one?
- How many people will be eating?
- Where will event be catered? Will you bring outside caterers? Will it be off site?
- If using outside caterers, ask for at least three references and check them before signing a contract.
- If the event will be off site, are facilities adequate (available water, refrigerator, freezer)?
- Does the site have adequate general storage and load-in / load-out access?
- Will the event have a theme?
- Will alcohol be served?
- What is the budget?

## **PLAN FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

- **Begin planning as early as possible for best prices.**
- **As soon as you can, give the caterer as much info as possible about the event, including date, time, directions if off site, number of people, and phone numbers of contact persons.**
- **If using an off-site facility, make certain the caterer inspects the location and kitchen facilities.**
- **Discuss with the caterer any dishes that are to be included or avoided, as well as food allergies, vegetarian requests and any religious or ethnic preferences.**
- **Will the meal be sit-down or buffet?**
- **If a buffet, request foods that stay fresh and hold up well.**
- **Are silverware, linens, and glasses included in the quoted price?**
- **Consider whether food will be prepared on site, off site or made in advance and then transported to the event. Again, request foods that stay fresh and hold up well.**
- **Determine who is responsible for clean-up and how much it will cost.**
- **Before committing to a final menu selection, ask the caterer to organize a tasting for you and other decision makers.**
- **If you are allowed to purchase wine from an outside vendor will the caterer charge a corkage fee?**

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- **Inspect the caterer's facility for food storage methods, cleanliness, etc...**
- **Ask to see the caterer's business license and health department certification; reputable firms should have both.**
- **Determine the number of servers necessary including bar tenders. Discuss the professionalism and attire expected.**
- **Provide the caterer with a final head count 48 hours before the event.**