



Catering Guidelines:

1. Scope

The standards noted in this document, apply equally to all events held in Agudas Israel of St. Louis. Events included - every shul related event that takes place on site, including but not limited to- brissim, sheva berachos, meetings, kiddushes, meals, night seder food, youth events, shalosh seudos, neilas hachag, aufruf bags, candy distributed to kids, etc. These policies also apply to all catered private events that will have access to the kitchen. Please note that our Shul kitchen is also under the auspices of the Vaad Hoer and subject to their standards.

2. Food Standards

Kashrus Standard on Products - Every item brought into the shul must either bear a kashrus symbol approved by the Vaad Hoer or be on the cRc's list of "Recommended Agencies", or it must be listed by the cRc that it is acceptable without a hechsher on it.

Fish and Meat- All fish and meat brought in must be double-sealed or be vacuum-packed with an approved hechsher. Seals should only be broken after bringing them into shul.

In addition:

- Alcoholic beverages must adhere to policies of the cRc/Star-K approved liquor lists (no items aged in sherry casks).
- Peeled eggs, onion, and garlic may not be left overnight (unless they are mixed with other foods).
- Any fruit or vegetable that needs to be checked for bugs, must either- bear an acceptable kashrus symbol or be checked using a method approved by the Vaad Hoer under the supervision of the mashgiach.
- Eggs must be checked for blood spots.

3. Meat, Dairy, Pareve, and Fish

The shul kitchen is only meat and does not have a designated pareve or dairy area.

Pareve - By default, everything should be assumed to have a meat status. If food needs to maintain a pareve status (e.g., gefilte fish), the work should be done on a well-covered meat counter, and any pareve utensils used for this should be washed with cold water over the sink (but they should not be placed in the sink). Rabbi Greenblatt must be consulted whether any items baked in the Shul's oven may be served with dairy foods.



Fish- Fish may be cooked in a clean meat pot or oven. Fish (sushi, gefilte, herring etc.) may be served at a meat event, but they should be clearly marked and be set a little to the side from the meat.

Ovens/Stoves/Hot Boxes- The ovens, stovetops and hotbox should never be used for milk.

Countertops/Preparation Area- Milk food items and utensils should never be placed on the meat counter.

4. Utensils

All utensils used to cook, serve, or display anything must either - belong to the shul, be brand new, or be disposable and never used before.

All new glass and metal utensils and containers must be toiveled. Disposable aluminum pans may be used more than once if it is only going to be for short term use.

5. Control

All food preparation must be done in the shul kitchen or by a caterer/restaurant certified by the Vaad Hoer or other acceptable hashgacha.

All catered events or events being arranged by a 'Party Planner' must have a Vaad approved mashgiach supervising the event.

Supervision includes - giving access to the kitchen, being on the premises before, during and after the event, checking of all foods being served that they have the proper hechsherim, and visiting the kitchen on occasion to supervise the activities.

Cleaning Crew- The cleaning crew should only be given access to the kitchen when there will be some level of Jewish supervision.

6. Food Preparation

No food cooked or prepared outside of the shul kitchen may be served at a shul event unless it comes in with proper hashgacha as noted above. This includes fruit platters, trays of home baked items, etc.

If an individual would like to prepare food using the shul kitchen, the shul office must be contacted after reserving the hall for the specifics and the mashgiach requirements. The shul will need to be advised of the times that the food will be prepared in the kitchen. Access to the kitchen can only be given by Rabbis Frank or Muser. All ingredients will have to be approved before beginning preparation, and hashgacha will be needed on the food preparation.



Agudas Israel

OF ST. LOUIS

אגודת ישראל דסט. לואיס

Shabbos

7. אמירה לעכו"ם

Non-Jews may:

- Clean up after events (for hygiene reasons) even if the room won't be needed until after Shabbos
- Mop floors
- Vacuum Floors during off hours
- Open any bottles or packages
- Wash dishes with hot water

Non-Jews may not:

- Refill hot water urns
- Turn on or adjust any appliance in the kitchen.
- Take pictures of an event

8. בישול

All food must be at least half cooked before Shabbos. Even so, the flames on the stovetop should be covered with a blech, and preferably the oven's control knobs should also be covered. Kishka may be wrapped in foil and put into the cholent before Shabbos.

A warming unit may be used to reheat fully cooked solid food on Shabbos. Cold liquids or foods containing liquid may not be reheated on Shabbos.

Tea bags should not be served/used on Shabbos. If one wants to have tea at a Shabbos event, tea essence will have to be prepared. Instant tea and coffee may also be made on Shabbos.

9. Food Preparation

Fruit and Vegetable Prep-

No carving or sophisticated shaping of food may be done on Shabbos. Some examples of this are:

- Fruits and vegetables may not be made into flowers.
- Chopped liver, egg salad or other foods may not be put into a mold to form a design or shape.

Only simple shaping of foods is permitted.

It is recommended that all salad and fruit preparation be performed before Shabbos, which helps avoid many potential שאילות. When necessary, it may be cut (but not into very small pieces) or peeled on Shabbos, but only immediately prior to the Kiddush/meal. For example, these activities may not be done before davening for the Kiddush after davening.

Slotted spoons may not be used for salads or other foods which are a mixture of solids (vegetables) and liquids (dressing).

Opening Packaging -

Soda cans and bottles with a metal cap should not be opened on Shabbos, but the following may be opened as per the stated conditions:

- Soda Bottles- Bottles of soda with a plastic cap may be opened as long as no lettering is broken in the process. However, a non-Jew may open all containers.
- Tuna Cans- Tuna cans and other cans should ideally be opened before Shabbos. If they need to be opened on Shabbos, the bottom should be punctured first before opening the top in the regular manner and then the contents should be emptied immediately, and the can should be disposed of.
- Boxes- Boxes should only be opened in a destructive manner.
- Packets- Sugar packets may be opened on Shabbos.

In all the above cases, one should be cautious not to tear through any lettering.

- Twist-ties may be used on Shabbos.

10. Miscellaneous

All the Shabbos staff (waiters, caterers, etc.) should also work a little before or after Shabbos, to count as havlaah to allow payment to them for their services.

No deliveries may be made to or from the Shul by the caterer or any outside distributor on Shabbos.