

## Church Exemption from the Ontario Food Premises Regulation (Including the requirement to have a certified food handler on site)

An exemption from the Ontario Food Premises Regulation applies to religious organizations that prepare and serve meals for special events or conduct bake sales. This exemption applies if the religious organization is holding a special event that the public is invited to, where food is made in private homes that are not inspected by public health.

An example would be twice a year a church holds a ham and turkey dinner that they invite the general public to. Church members donate and prepare the food in their own homes and bring it to the special event. The church is eligible for the exemption provided that they:

1. Notify the health unit of the event
2. A notice that the food has been prepared in uninspected home kitchens is posted at the entrance to the venue where the dinner is being held
3. A list of all persons donating potentially hazardous food for the event is kept and contains the names of the donor, address and telephone number in full

If you do not fulfil the conditions of the exemption, you are not exempt and must comply with the Ontario Food Premises Regulation.

Churches that operate food banks, dinners for seniors, soup kitchens, offer catering serves etc. on a regular basis such as once a week, once a month etc. are not exempt from the regulation and must meet all applicable sections of the regulation including the requirements for notification and to have a certified food handler on site. These food service premises are subject to a risk assessment and routine inspections.

Church serves food at fund raising events a few times per year and fulfills exemption requirements



Does not need to have certified food handler on site



See [Health Unit Website](#) for forms and templates to complete

Church holds regular events with food such as soup kitchen, diners club, and/or offers catering service.  
Food must be prepared in inspected premises only



Must Notify the Health Unit of food services provided.  
Does require inspection.  
Does require compliance with Food Premises Regulation.  
Must have [Certified Food Handler](#) on Site