

Congregation Agudas Achim Austin, Texas



Usage Guidelines for CAA Kitchen & Facilities

CONGREGATION AGUDAS ACHIM

Austin, Texas

GUIDELINES FOR USAGE OF CAA KITCHEN AND FACILITIES

I. GENERAL POLICIES

Congregation Agudas Achim has established the following kitchen and facilities usage standards, guidelines and policies for its members and others who will be using the facilities. CAA is a member congregation of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. As such, we are guided by the practices and mandates of Jewish law as interpreted by the Rabbi of our congregation and formulated by the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. The observance of Kashrut, Shabbat and Holy Days are the basic tenets of Conservative Judaism. We therefore maintain kosher meat and kosher dairy kitchens and observe Shabbat / Holy Days in keeping with these principles.

These guidelines are prepared in order to facilitate food preparation in the kitchen and the planning of events in the facilities of CAA on Shabbat and Holy Days.

A. APPLICABILITY

These guidelines apply to all of CAA, its auxiliaries (Sisterhood, the Religious School, JAL, TAP, USY, KADIMA, and all other programming areas and groups), staff, members, volunteers, guests, vendors and any non-members using the facilities.

B. SHABBAT KIDDUSH LUNCHEONS

In accordance with CAA policy, it is the responsibility of the family having a Shabbat morning simcha (auf ruf, bar/bat mitzvah, naming, etc.) to sponsor a basic Kiddush Luncheon for the entire congregation. A basic Kiddush Luncheon is defined to include a hot or cold type of entrée and whole fruit and sweets. A Kiddush Table with challah, herring, wine, grape juice and schnapps is provided by CAA. There may be no private Shabbat Kiddush luncheons in the CAA facilities. This policy exists to support congregational unity and to limit the divisive effects that might result from private Kiddushim.

C. FACILITY AUTHORITY AND SUPERVISION

The Spiritual Leader of CAA serves as the Mara d'Atra (ultimate halakhic authority) on any Kashrut or Shabbat / Holy Day question for the congregation. The Kitchen / Event Coordinator will be responsible for all practical matters of food preparation and the implementation of the policies contained within these guidelines. The Rabbi will be the final arbiter on all policies and halakhic questions concerning the operation of the kitchen and facilities.

II. FACILITY RULES AND BOOKING POLICIES

A. GENERAL RULES

1. The entire CAA facility and grounds are NON SMOKING areas.
2. No pets are allowed in the facilities.
3. No equipment, furniture, dishes, serveware, glassware or utensils owned by CAA may be removed from the premises of CAA.

B. AVAILABILITY

The facilities of CAA are available for rental. Any member, individual, not for profit organization or business, or any for profit organization or business may rent a portion of the facilities as long as they are not racist, anti-Semitic, Messianic or political, and so long as their tenet or practices do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, age, color or national origin. All points of concern will be addressed by the CAA Spiritual Leader or the CAA Board. CAA reserves the right, in its sole discretion to refuse to rent its facilities to any person, company or organization.

C. RENTAL AND USAGE OF RELIGIOUS SPACES

The CAA main sanctuary or the chapel may be used and rented for appropriate events that involve community service, culture, celebrations, or observances. Only ceremonial food or wine is permitted in the sanctuary or chapel. Any ceremonial food or juice for youth services should be served in the hallways or

foyer, and not within the religious spaces. All points of concern will be addressed by the CAA Rabbi or the CAA Board.

D. DECORATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

No installations or modifications may be made to any part of the social hall or the religious spaces (sanctuary and chapel) and no decorations, equipment, or signage may be attached to any floor, wall or ceiling. Decorations are not permitted in the religious spaces. Decorations and similar items are allowed in the social hall as long as the Rabbi, President or Board of Directors does not deem them offensive to CAA. Limited props or equipment that are consistent with acceptable uses of the religious spaces may be utilized.

E. TAKE-DOWN AFTER AN EVENT

All inside or outside decorations, flowers, linens or equipment must be taken down immediately after the event by the renting party and may be stored in an assigned place. The renting party has 48 hours to remove these stored items from the CAA facilities. Please note certain applicable restrictions due to Shabbat / Holy Day Policies as described in Section V.

F. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Because of liability considerations, alcoholic beverage service will only be allowed when an event is catered by a professional caterer permitted to serve alcohol on CAA premises by and in accordance with the rules of the TABC. Alcoholic beverage service will not be allowed for any events catered by Member Self-Catering. "Ritual Alcohol" is allowed for Member Self-Catered events and is defined by limiting the alcohol to one bottle of wine per table.

Service of alcoholic beverages to an underage person is not permitted under any circumstances. Should this situation arise, the underage person will be given a warning and the alcohol removed. Any continued violation of this policy by the person will result in the person being asked to leave the event. The security guard(s) present will assist with this issue.

G. SECURITY GUARDS

Security guard(s) are required for events at any time that include the serving of alcohol (other than "Ritual Alcohol). One (1) security guard is required for the first 250 people, and an additional guard is required for guests in excess of 250, consistent with JCAA campus policy. Security guards will be arranged by the CAA office and the cost will be the responsibility of the renting party.

H. RESPONSIBILITY FOR GUESTS

The renting party is responsible for all behavior of guests including any unacceptable behavior of children, pre teens, teens, or any guests of any age. Should there be unacceptable behavior at CAA, the renting party will be asked to correct the situation or ask the guests to leave.

I. ADVANCE BOOKING

Rental to non-members, organizations and businesses may not be scheduled more than 12 months prior to the event in order to accommodate CAA and member events.

J. BOOKING AN EVENT

Events may be scheduled by completing the "Building Usage / Reservation Agreement" which is available from the CAA Kitchen / Event Coordinator, by affixing appropriate signatures, and by payment of any required reservation deposit. Space will be reserved once the reservation deposit is received and the agreement is signed.

K. REQUIRED DEPOSITS

A reservation deposit will be required for all rentals at the time the "Building Usage / Reservation Agreement" is signed, as defined in that agreement.

A facility damage/cleaning deposit will be required for all rentals as defined in the "Building Usage / Reservation Agreement". The person(s), organization, or business renting the space is responsible for any damage and clean up that is out of the ordinary, and deductions will be made from the facility damage/cleaning deposit to cover such situations.

L. FEES

Fees for rental and usage of facilities will be as shown in the current "Schedule of Fees". No member, individual, or organization may rent the facilities for the benefit of another person or organization in order to achieve lower fees or avoid restrictions. If this occurs, the higher rental fees that pertain to the actual individual or organization will apply.

M. TERMINATION

CAA reserves the right to terminate any rental contract, under the provisions of the "Building Usage / Reservation Agreement" or if policies and procedures are not being observed.

III. KASHRUT POLICIES

A. PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

1. No food items may enter any part of the kitchen or service area until specifically approved by the Kitchen / Event Coordinator or his/her designate. Prepared food may be brought in from any kosher facility approved by the Rabbi upon payment of applicable kitchen usage fees.
2. Raw fruits, raw vegetables, nuts, seeds and eggs may be brought into the CAA kitchen in non sealed packages. Salt, pepper, sugar, tea, coffee and flour do not require any certification, but must be in their original sealed packaging. All other products and ingredients, including dried nuts and fruits, must be in their original sealed packaging and must bear a recognized heksher or receive the approval of the Rabbi of CAA, before entering the CAA kitchen.
3. All meat and poultry products are to be purchased pre-kasherred (soaked and salted) from kosher meat suppliers that are under bona-fide kosher supervision and approved by the Rabbi. In Austin those certified are the HEB Kosher Store and the Kosher freezer cases of Randall's at Balcones/RR 2222. All other sources of kosher meat and poultry need to be pre-approved by the Rabbi at least 7 days prior to any food preparation in the CAA kitchens. The preparation of calves or chicken liver should be discussed with the Rabbi before purchase or preparation. Whole fish that had scales and fins are acceptable and do not require any additional certification. Fish that has been cut must be packaged and carry the appropriate heksher.
4. Randall's bakery at Balcones/RR 2222 is certified kosher and products displayed for everyday use are dairy. You must specify parve bakery goods from Randall's if you are planning a MEAT meal. The HEB Kosher Store bakery provides parve bakery goods.
5. CAA maintains a list of approved food items and ingredients. If there are questions or concerns about Kashrut or the heksher of any food item, it is the responsibility of the caterer or member to provide appropriate documentation to CAA and receive approval. This should be done at least 2 weeks before the ingredient is to be used. Approval must come from the Kitchen / Event Coordinator or the Rabbi.

B. MILK AND MEAT PREPARATION AND SERVING:

1. All caterers, members, and personnel working in the synagogue kitchens will maintain total separation of meat and milk food preparation and presentation. No utensils may be transferred from the milk kitchen to the meat kitchen or visa versa, at any time.
2. Areas marked with BLACK are PARVE. If a PARVE counter or table top is being used during the preparation or serving of meat or dairy, it must be covered with appropriate oil cloth: RED cloth for meat, WHITE cloth for dairy.
3. When caterers are preparing and serving multiple functions on the same day or a day after the other, where the both the meat and dairy kitchen areas will both be needed, (example: a meat Shabbat Dinner and a dairy Kiddush luncheon), all preparation, cooking and cleaning in one kitchen area must be completed before beginning preparation in the other kitchen area for the other event.
4. The outer beverage counter surface in the service hallway, is PARVE. No food, serveware, dishes, utensils, etc. should be placed on the counter. The appropriate meat or dairy pitchers should be used for beverages, even water.

IV. KITCHEN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. ACCESS

The CAA Kitchen is to be kept locked at all times except when appropriately opened by the Rabbi, Kitchen / Event Coordinator or their designates. All cabinets inside or outside the kitchen that contain either food, preparation or serving items should be kept individually locked and inaccessible except when in use.

B. KITCHEN USAGE AND TRAINING

Any person who intends to utilize the kitchen for an event must complete training approved by CAA prior to any usage. Such training is for the purpose of explaining Kashrut and the operation of the CAA kitchen.

Professional Caterers must be specifically approved by CAA and the CAA office and the Kitchen / Event Coordinator will maintain a list of approved caterers. Caterers who do not follow the policies and procedures will lose their privilege to utilize the CAA kitchen and will be removed from the approved list.

Professional Caterers or members performing self-catering must have their representative who has completed training in the CAA kitchen at all times (preparation, cooking and serving). Caterers or members performing self-catering must sign a "Catering Agreement" that will indicate their agreement to comply with the policies and requirements contained in this document.

C. MONITORING

The Kitchen / Event Coordinator or her designate must be available to monitor usage at any time a Professional Caterer or member performing self-catering is utilizing the kitchen.

The Kitchen / Event Coordinator, the Rabbi or their designates have the right and freedom to monitor and inspect all deliveries, food preparation and all ingredients to be used in the CAA kitchen. They may check sealed items before use and may ask to see a bill of sale listing any items and showing the kosher supplier and date.

D. MENU APPROVAL

In order to prevent any last minute Kashrut, Shabbat or Holy Day conflicts, a copy of the event menu and any special ingredients must be submitted to the Kitchen / Event Coordinator at least 14 days before the event.

E. USAGE OF EGGS

Each egg must be broken into a separate dish and examined for blood spots. If free of blood spots, it may be used in preparing food. Any egg with blood spots must be discarded, because that egg is not considered to be kosher.

F. EQUIPMENT

The CAA kitchen is well equipped and self-contained. Should any additional items be needed, Caterers and others should anticipate such needs and notify the Kitchen / Event Coordinator in writing at least 14 days before the date to be used so that purchase or rental can be arranged and the item properly introduced into the kitchen.

If the renting party wishes to purchase new utensils, serveware, glassware or any other equipment, it must be kept in the chair/table storage area in its original packaging until introduced into the kitchen by the Kitchen / Event Coordinator. All new items are to be washed before being used or stored. Certain equipment, serveware or glassware from outside the kitchen of CAA may be kashered by CAA under the supervision of the Rabbi or Kitchen / Event Coordinator in order to be introduced into the kitchen.

Wicker baskets may be brought into CAA and utilized if they have not been previously used for food. They are to be lined with fabric or plastic film during use.

G. PROVIDED SUPPLIES

CAA will provide aluminum foil, plastic wrap, freezer wrap, washing detergents and cleaning supplies for the kitchen, service areas and social hall. CAA does not supply boxes for freezing baked goods or foil pans.

H. CLEANUP AND DAMAGE

Kitchen cleanup is the responsibility of the renting party, and the cleanliness of the kitchen and facilities should be checked by the Kitchen / Event Coordinator or her designate before the crew leaves. Should additional cleaning be necessary, the renting party will be responsible for the cost. The renting party shall also be responsible for the cost of rekasering due to errors in the kitchen, and for the cost of replacement or repair due to unusual damage or breakage.

I. REMOVAL OF FOOD AND EQUIPMENT

1. No CAA equipment, dishes, serviceware, glassware or utensils may be removed from the CAA premises. Food prepared in the CAA kitchen to be taken to another location must be taken out in new disposable containers which are not to be returned to CAA.
2. No food staples or any other food items should be removed from the CAA kitchen if it is intended to use such items at CAA at some other time.
3. CAA, any caterers, and anyone using the CAA kitchen are required to meet applicable government standards including the City of Austin Health Code of Standards. Therefore, food may only be removed under the following conditions:
 - a. All food to be removed must be packaged, sealed and labeled and placed in the refrigerator outside of the CAA kitchen.
 - b. Caterers may determine which items can be safely packaged and removed based on their knowledge of the ingredients, how long items were on the serving tables, and the impact on the growth of bacteria which may be harmful to human consumption.
 - c. Food may not be removed during Shabbat or any Holy Day. Food must be removed within 48 hours of the end of an event and must be coordinated with the Kitchen / Event Coordinator. All food not removed within 48 hours will be disposed of.

J. GRATUITIES

In order to maintain the independence of the Kitchen / Event Coordinator, at no time may she or any other personnel of CAA be permitted to accept remuneration or gratuities with respect to kitchen or facility operations. Of course, while on duty, it is courteous to provide CAA personnel with a meal along with the caterer's staff.

V. SHABBAT AND HOLY DAY POLICIES

A. GENERAL RULES

The Shabbat and Holy Days that are observed by members of Congregation Agudas Achim are one of the main focal points of Jewish life. Agudas Achim encourages members to celebrate their mitzvot in the synagogue. When such events are scheduled for Shabbat or Saturday night, there are Shabbat laws and standards that deal with the preparation and serving of the meal and with the celebrations that will preserve the spirit of Shabbat and Holy Days. It is incumbent on each member, staff person, and company providing services for the congregation to observe and maintain these standards. It is necessary to wait until Shabbat or a Holy Day is over to begin certain tasks. Check with the CAA office for the exact ending time of Shabbat or a Holy Day.

B. SETUP PERMITTED UNTIL 3 PM ON FRIDAY OR EREV OF A HOLY DAY

1. All items such as food, flower arrangements, centerpieces, balloons, assembled decorations or serviceware to be utilized during Shabbat or a Holy Day must be delivered to CAA and brought into the building prior to 3:00 PM before Shabbat or the Holy Day begins.
2. Any creation or construction of decorating items, props, or equipment or inflation of balloons to be used on Shabbat or a Holy Day or for an activity immediately after Shabbat or a Holy Day ends, must be completed prior to 3:00 PM before Shabbat or the Holy Day begins and then stored in the designated area.
3. Cooking for a meal for Shabbat or a Holy Day or for a meal immediately after Shabbat or a Holy Day ends must be completed prior to 3:00 PM before Shabbat or the Holy Day begins. Cooking and

preparation for a meal to be served on the Erev of Shabbat or a Holy Day may continue after candle lighting as long as initiated prior to candle lighting.

4. Photos must be taken and people and equipment must be out of the building by 3:00 PM before Shabbat or a Holy Day begins.
5. If it is desired to bring props, musical equipment or amplifiers (for bands or DJ's), P.A. equipment, special lights, photography or videography equipment into the facilities prior to Shabbat for early setup, this must be completed prior to 3:00 PM before Shabbat or a Holy Day begins.

C. WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED ON SHABBAT OR HOLY DAYS?

1. No deliveries may occur and no items may be brought into the facilities during Shabbat or a Holy Day. This includes props, musical equipment, amplifiers, P.A. equipment, special lights, photography or videography equipment.
2. No cooking of food items from scratch is permitted on Shabbat or Holy Days. Microwave ovens and electric mixers may not be used on Shabbat or Holy Days.
3. Blowing up of balloons, cutting flowers, and any type of assembly of centerpieces or floral arrangements (for example, by use of tape, wire, string, etc.) will not be allowed during Shabbat or a Holy Day. The product called *super high float* will allow balloons to stay buoyant for days on end. No food, flowers, decorations or equipment may be removed from the facility or the campus during Shabbat or a Holy Day.
4. No testing of camcorders, video equipment, amplifiers, P.A. systems, musical equipment or special lighting may take place during Shabbat or a Holy Day. This applies to band leaders, D.J.s and all others.
5. No photography or videography of any kind is permitted during Shabbat or a Holy Day, either in the building or on the CAA grounds.
6. Use of CAA phones or cell phones in the building are not permitted during Shabbat or Holy Days.
7. Writing, typing or use of computers is not allowed in the facilities during Shabbat or Holy Days.
8. Radios, CD players, instruments or any other source may not be used to produce music during Shabbat or Holy Days.

D. WHAT IS PERMITTED DURING SHABBAT OR HOLY DAYS?

1. Food that has been previously cooked thoroughly may be warmed in ovens. This means that all foods must be properly and completely cooked before Shabbat. Ovens without controls to turn them on automatically may only be turned on by non-Jewish individuals who receive instructions as to duties and temperature setting prior to Shabbat.
2. Automatic coffee and tea makers may be used to prepare beverages.
3. Food that has been previously prepared, baked or cooked may be trayed during Shabbat. Cold foods such as fruit, vegetables, punch, etc. may be prepared and plated.
4. Flowers that have been previously cut may be arranged (but not assembled with the use of non-flower materials as described above).
5. Dishes and serveware may be cleared and washed.
6. Decorations or equipment already in the building in accordance with Shabbat policies may be setup. Setup involves tasks such as placement of tables, chairs, linens, pre-arranged centerpieces or balloon clusters. Setup does not include creation or construction. Setup instructions for CAA staff, caterers, party planners, decorators, or others preparing for the function must be written, discussed and given to the appropriate people before Shabbat or Holy Day at 3 PM.

7. While it is stated above that no creation, building or construction of decorations or floral arrangements or centerpieces, or the blowing up of balloons, will be permitted on Shabbat, there are situations where time constraints are an issue. In order to maintain the spirit of Shabbat or Holy Day on these occasions, CAA will allow individuals to perform limited creation or construction that could not be completed prior to Shabbat after 4:00 PM with prior permission of the Rabbi. However, as stated above, all materials must have been previously stored in the building, and flowers and supplies must have been cut by Friday at 3:00 PM.