

Outside Food Policy for Congregation Etz Chaim

Written by Rabbi Dan Dorsch, presented to the Rabbinic Advisory Council, July 2017

Please note: All policies apply to the Synagogue Building and the Synagogue Annex.

1. Any outside food or drink items brought into the synagogue (with the exception of our maintenance office) must have an approved *hecksher* ("kosher supervisory symbol") indicating that the product is under rabbinical supervision. The letter "K" does not suffice. Some examples of approved *hecksherim* may be found at the back of this document.
2. Please note that the following items are exempt from this requirement: fresh fruits and vegetables, milk, tea, coffee, American-made cheeses or cheeses indicating the use of either microbial or vegetable rennet, and commercial baked goods containing only dairy ingredients. Fresh fish also do not require a *hecksher*, but must be washed prior to cooking.
3. Meat that is labeled with a "Triangle-K," which is under rabbinic supervision but not "glatt," is acceptable for use in our kitchens (and grills). This includes Hebrew National brand items, as well as Tomer Ground Beef that is carried at Costco.
4. People with homes that are a. at a minimum "ingredient based-kosher," and b. homes where non-kosher meat or fish do not enter at any time, may bring in cooked dairy items to the synagogue for official "potluck meals." Uncooked cold dairy items may be brought from any home. At no time may these items enter our kitchens. Meat prepared outside of the synagogue is not permitted in the building at any time unless it is prepared by an exclusively kosher caterer or restaurant.
5. For all intents and purposes, our preschool classrooms are deemed to be ingredient kosher, for hot and cold dairy items.
6. As per the ruling of the Conservative Movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards (YD:108:1.2012a), pizza made using kosher ingredients brought in from an establishment that serves both kosher and non-kosher pizza may be brought into the synagogue. However, the pizza must be cut at the synagogue and may not enter the synagogue kitchen.
7. Food that is brought in from a strictly vegetarian or vegan restaurant may enter the kitchen and be warmed in our warming ovens in closed, disposable, aluminum containers.
8. All persons cooking in our kitchens in preparation for a family event must be supervised at all times ("*mashgiach temidi*") by one of our synagogue trained *mashgichim*. The *mashgiach* shall be responsible for overseeing insuring kosher certification at delivery, proper use of utensils in the dairy or meat kitchens, supervising the kashrut of the cooking process, and proper clean up of the kitchen space. In the event that a *mashgiach* cannot be present to accept a delivery, a designated and trained member of the synagogue professional staff may accept it in their stead.








9. Under no circumstances may “cooking from scratch” take place on Shabbat in the building. All food items pre-prepped for either a Shabbat or a Saturday night simcha taking place in the synagogue must arrive by no later than 3pm on a Friday.

10. All wines and grape juice products brought into the synagogue for functions must have a *heschker*. “Hard alcohol” is considered kosher, as is all beer, unless it is specifically labeled as containing an unkosher additive or ingredient (e.g. clams, oysters).

11. On Passover, only kosher for passover certified food, ingredients, as well as beverages, may be brought into and eaten in the synagogue and the annex. All synagogue functions, formal meetings, and events held during the week of Passover--whether in or out of the building--may only serve food that strictly meets the above requirements.

12. All questions regarding this policy or any matter of kashrut may be addressed to Rabbi Dorsch, the *mara d'atra* of the synagogue.

Some examples of acceptable Hecksherim:

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations (New York)	
The Organized Kashrut Laboratories (Brooklyn)	
Chicago Rabbinical Council	
Kashruth Council of Canada	
Star-K (Baltimore)	
Triangle-K	
Kof-K	
Kosher Supervision of America-Kehilla Kosher (Los Angeles)	