

Protocol for Kosher/Halal Menu Preparation and Serving

Vegetable Preparation

A new cutting board and knife dedicated to kosher/halal vegetable (and fruit) preparation is used and maintained in a secure and separate area from all other kitchen utensils.

The preparation area should be a specifically designated area and must be covered with either 2 layers of foil or coated butcher paper.

Vegetable preparation may be done by designated properly trained food service personnel.

Salad Mix

The salad mix should be a triple-washed commercially prepared mix. Triple-washed salad mixes are considered to be kosher/halal and many commercially packaged salad mixes are marked as kosher with an approved certifying symbol.

The proper amount of salad is placed in a Styrofoam bowl, using an appropriately gloved hand, and the bowl is covered with plastic wrap.

Fruit

Whole fruits of the appropriate serving size will be provided as specified on the menu. Any cut fruit, e.g., grapefruit, will be cut using the dedicated knife and cutting board used for vegetable preparation.

Bread

All bread must be kosher parve. Alternatives for breakfast may include kosher bagels. Matzo or other kosher parve bread products such as buns may be used as needed. All bread servings are placed into a plastic baggie.

Milk

All unflavored fluid milk from government inspected dairies in the US is considered kosher by the Orthodox Union and does not require a kosher/halal certifying symbol. While there is another recognized kosher standard for milk within the Jewish community (e.g., Cholorv Yisroel), it is not practical in a correctional setting. All milk served in individual ½ pint or 1 pint containers will be considered kosher/halal.

Beverages

Kosher /halal fruit juice is available in individual serving containers. If a kosher/halal fruit punch mix is used, the single serving amount is placed in a condiment cup with lid and placed on the tray for the recipient to mix with water.

Eating utensils

Appropriate eating utensils may be commercially prepackaged with napkin, salt and pepper or individual components may be used. All trays, bowls, or food containers will be single use and disposable.

Margarine

All margarine must be labeled kosher-parve. To avoid any confusion, margarine labeled kosher-dairy will not be utilized as a part of the kosher menu.

Condiments

All condiments will be prepackaged and have the appropriate kosher certifying symbols.

Meal Preparation and Serving

Breakfast

- Breakfast trays are assembled the previous day.
- All menu items are placed on a disposable Styrofoam tray. Any cut fruit, e.g., grapefruit, is covered with plastic wrap and placed on the tray. The tray is then covered with plastic wrap and stored in the kosher area of the cooler on a designated rack.
- The rack of trays will be taken to the serving area for distribution at serving time.

Lunch

Cold tray

Method #1 for individual or a small number of kosher/halal meals:

- Cold trays can be assembled on the previous day by placing all menu items (other than the prepackaged dinner) on a disposable Styrofoam tray and covering with plastic wrap.
- Trays are stored on the designated rack in the cooler until serving time.

Method #2 for larger number of kosher/halal meals:

- All vegetable sticks and/or salad mix are prepared and packaged as above and maintained in the cooler until used.
- All menu items are brought to the serving area on a properly covered serving cart.
- All cold tray menu items are placed on a disposable Styrofoam tray by food service personnel as the individual offender receives the tray.

Hot tray

Method #1 for individual or small number of kosher/halal meals:

Microwave: The prepackaged meal is removed from the outer box and the food pouch is vented according to package instructions. The meal packet is replaced into the outer box and then placed into the microwave oven. Cooking time should be as instructed on the prepackaged meal. The heated meal in its box is then placed on a disposable Styrofoam tray and given to the offender.

Method #2 for larger number of kosher/halal meals:

For larger numbers of meals that need to be heated at the same time, the meals can be heated in a steamer or in boiling water. All meals heated in the steamer must be meat meals. Each meal packet is removed from the box and placed into a plastic zip lock type bag. Meals will be placed on racks that will allow circulation around all meals to heat them uniformly. Meals may also be heated in boiling water by taking the meal packet out of the box, placing it in a plastic zip lock bag and immersing in boiling water as instructed on the prepackaged meal. The meal packets are removed from the water, placed on a disposable Styrofoam tray and given to the offender along with the cold tray. The plastic bags are not reused.

A combination of methods #1 and #2 may be used as required by food service staff.

All unopened prepackaged meals will be returned to food service staff.

If the meal needs to be reheated in a microwave, the vented meal packet on the disposable Styrofoam tray must be placed back into its box or if the box is not available cover the meal packet with a paper towel while being reheated in the microwave.

Dinner

The dinner cold and hot trays are handled in the same manner as the lunch trays.

Note: During winter months, kosher meals must be heated and served prior to sundown on Fridays and prior to sundown before a religious work proscription holiday.

Shabbat Meals

All Saturday meals will be cold. No cooking or heating of food is permitted.

Method #1: If a small number of kosher meals are being prepared, all Saturday meal trays can be prepared on Friday and stored in the cooler until served.

Method #2: For a larger number of kosher meals, the breakfast trays are prepared on Friday and stored in the cooler until served. The lunch and dinner cold trays are assembled like the cold trays provided for the daily lunch and dinner meals.

Other

Breakfast sack meals will be made by using the Saturday lunch or dinner menu.

Medically required PM snacks for diabetics on the kosher/halal diet will be prepared with kosher /halal items.

During Passover, all prepackaged dinners must be “kosher for Passover” and have the appropriate kosher for Passover certifying symbol.

All meals will be served and eaten in a designated dining area except for breakfast sack meals which may be eaten in another designated area such as individual housing units.

Halal diet meals will be prepared using this protocol with the following exceptions:

- Hot meals may be served on the Sabbath (Saturday).
- Kosher for Passover restrictions do not apply to the Halal diet.
- During the observance of Ramadan, which requires fasting during daylight hours, Halal meals will be provided to offenders before dawn and after sunset.