

SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC CATERING GUIDELINES



OVERVIEW

Sask Polytech is committed to providing safe, reliable, and cost-effective catering services that support academic, administrative, and student events across all campuses.

When catering is required for an on-campus event, Hospitality Services is given the first opportunity to provide the service. This is known as the Right of First Refusal (RFR).

These guidelines explain:

- How catering requests are handled
- What RFR means in practice
- When Hospitality Services may decline a request
- When external catering may be approved
- How affordability, safety, and operational realities are considered

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to:

- Employees, students, and groups organizing on-campus events
- Institution-funded, department-funded, and student-funded events
- Meetings, conferences, ceremonies, student events, and special functions

These guidelines do not apply to:

- Cafeteria or retail food operations
- Instructional or academic delivery
- Events not hosted on Sask Polytech campuses
- Situations governed by exclusive third-party contracts
- Emergency situations requiring immediate action

All catering must also comply with facilities booking and space-use requirements.

DEFINITIONS

The Right of First Refusal (RFR) means that:

- Hospitality Services is given the first opportunity to accept or decline a catering request.
- External caterers may only be considered after Hospitality Services has declined or an approved exception applies.

RFR is a priority process, not a guarantee of service.

PROCESS

Event organizers must:

1. [Submit catering requests](#) through the Hospitality Services intake process within 5-7 days of the event
2. Provide complete event details (date, time, location, attendance, service level)
3. Meet published notice and planning timelines

Early planning increases the likelihood that internal catering can be provided.

Hospitality Services reviews each request using the following considerations:

- Staffing availability and qualifications
- Food safety and service requirements
- Lead time and event complexity
- Facilities and space-use constraints
- Cost recovery and affordability
- Overall operational impact

If Hospitality Services accepts the request, the event will be catered internally.

If Hospitality Services declines the request, the RFR requirement will be considered fulfilled, and external catering arrangements may proceed in accordance with institutional guidelines.

A decision to accept or decline the request will be communicated within 24 business hours.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to RFR may apply, and Hospitality Services may decline a request, when one or more of the following conditions are present:

1. Capacity Constraints

- Insufficient staffing is available to safely and effectively deliver the service
- Multiple concurrent events exceed operational capacity
- Required skills or certifications are unavailable at the requested time

2. Insufficient Notice

- The request does not meet minimum advance notice requirements
- Final guest counts or event details are not provided by the required deadline(s)
- **Submitting a request late does not automatically grant an exception to use external catering.**

3. Affordability and Cost Risk

- The requested service level would result in disproportionate or unreasonable costs, particularly for student-funded events
- The requested service or delivery would require premium staffing or overtime that is not financially sustainable or aligned with institutional affordability objectives.
- Prior to declining, Hospitality Services will make reasonable efforts to work with event organizers to adjust service levels or scope to support a more sustainable and affordable option.

4. Food Safety or Regulatory Requirements

- Food safety, allergen management, or health regulations cannot be met
- Facilities or equipment limitations prevent safe service

5. Facilities or Operational Conflicts

- Space-use, room configuration, or infrastructure constraints prevent service
- Event timing conflicts with building access or operational hours

6. Emergency or Unforeseen Circumstances

- Unexpected disruptions (e.g., facility closures, utility outages, staffing emergencies)
- Situations where proceeding would pose undue operational or safety risk

EXTERNAL CATERERS

External catering may be considered only when:

- Hospitality Services has formally declined the request under the conditions above, or
- A documented exception has been approved

When external catering is approved:

- Additional food safety, liability, or risk-management documentation may be required
- All approvals must be documented
- Event organizers remain responsible for compliance with facilities and safety requirements

STUDENT-LED and STUDENT-FUNDED EVENTS

Sask Polytech recognizes the importance of affordability and access for student events.

For student-led or student-funded events:

- Hospitality Services will offer scaled and cost-conscious options
- Service levels should align with the nature and funding of the event
- RFR decisions will consider whether requested services would create unnecessary financial barriers

CHARGES, CANCELLATIONS, AND SERVICE EXPECTATIONS

When Hospitality Services provides catering, organizers are responsible for:

- Food and beverage charges
- Delivery and service fees
- Cost recovery charges for missing or damaged equipment
- Cancellation fees where required notice deadlines are not met

Complete pricing, terms and conditions are outlined on the [Hospitality Services Catering website](#).

QUESTIONS

Bobbi Bates,
Manager, Hospitality Services
batesrob@saskpolytech.ca

Aaron Seaman
Catering Coordinator
seaman9093@saskpolytech.ca

<https://foodservices.saskpolytech.ca/catering.aspx>