

## Allergen Free Events Caterer Qualification Checklist

A few simple questions during the initial meeting with the venue/caterer, and client are usually enough to determine their level of experience with allergen free events.

Some of my favorite “qualification questions” are:

How many allergen-free or gluten-free events have you done to date?

Did you provide just a few special meals, or was the entire event allergen-/gluten-free?

Are you associated with or certified by Food Allergy Anaphylaxis Network, Gluten Intolerance Group, Celiac Sprue Association or the National Foundation for Celiac Awareness, or any other Kitchen Management Training program for preparing and handling for people with food allergies?

How much of your staff has received training?

Do you have a separate kitchen or a kosher kitchen?

If you prepare everything in the same kitchen, what are your best practices and protocols for preventing cross-contamination? (The answer should include separate surfaces, condiments, utensils, ovens, toasters, fryers, grills, pans, boiling, storage, and presentation.)

Do you have a separate room for your bakery? Do you allow gluten-free baked goods from another bakery?

Are most of your dishes pre-prepared, or do you make most things on site from scratch?

If your ingredients are pre-prepared, are the ingredients listed on each package unit, or only a bulk list?

Does your staff have access to the ingredients list if a patron has a question about what is contained in a certain dish?

How do you handle foods with allergens and/or gluten on a buffet?

A seasoned, reputable caterer will gladly answer these questions with ease. If you are not satisfied with the responses you get during the meeting, move to the next caterer on your list.