



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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County Office Closings, Food and Safety Tips for Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend

PITTSBURGH – As the Thanksgiving holiday weekend approaches, we take this opportunity to announce office closures over the holiday, as well as to provide food and safety tips for residents.

Office Closings

All county offices will be closed on Thursday, November 24, 2016 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday. Additionally, the Marriage License/Passport Office will close at 4:30 p.m., rather than 7:30 p.m., on Wednesday, November 23, 2016.

On Friday, November 25, 2016, the Department of Court Records, the Court of Common Pleas, and the District Attorney's office will be closed for the court-observed holiday. In the Treasurer's office, only the Licensing Division will be open on Friday. In the Court Records office, the Marriage License/Passport Office will also be open on Friday. All other county offices will be open without restriction. All county offices will return to regular business hours on Monday, November 28, 2016.

Food Safety Tips

The Allegheny County Health Department provides the following food safety tips to help ensure that families enjoy a safe and wholesome meal for the Thanksgiving holiday. These common sense tips help you purchase, handle, prepare and store food for the big holiday.

When Purchasing Food:

- Do not purchase foods stored above the load line in open refrigerators or freezers.
- Position raw meat and poultry in your cart so it does not contaminate other food.
- Check expiration dates to assure freshness of meats, produce and dairy products.

When Handling & Preparing Food

- Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling food.
- Before and after each use, clean food preparation surfaces with soap and hot water, and then sanitize with a mixture of bleach and water according to the manufacturer's label instructions.
- Clean and sanitize all knives and utensils before and after each use.
- Thaw foods in the refrigerator or in cold water that is changed every 30 minutes.
- Never thaw foods at room temperature or in standing water, where bacteria multiply rapidly.
- When thawing a turkey in the refrigerator, allow one day for every four or five pounds.
- When thawing a turkey in cold water, allow 30 minutes for every pound.

When Cooking Food

- Cook foods thoroughly. Turkey and stuffing should be cooked to minimum internal temperature of

- 165°F, and may be cooked to an even higher temperature to satisfy personal preferences.
- Use a meat thermometer to check for doneness, inserting it into both the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast, avoiding the bone
 - Don't partially cook a turkey the night before. Cook it continuously, without interruptions.
 - Stuff your turkey immediately before roasting, never the night before.
 - Cook stuffing separately for maximum safety and to avoid overcooking your turkey.
 - While cooking or serving, don't use the same spoon for tasting and preparation.
 - Reheat leftovers to 165°F or until hot and steaming.

When Storing Food

- Refrigerate leftovers as promptly as possible.
- Cut the turkey into smaller pieces after cooking so it can cool more quickly and safely.

For more Holiday Food Safety Resources, visit <http://www.fightbac.org/free-resources/holidayfoodsafetyresources/> and refer to this Safe Holiday Feast Infographic at http://www.achd.net/pr/pubs/pdf/Tday_holiday-infographic.pdf.

Thanksgiving Safety Tips

Did you know that Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires? The average number of home fires on Thanksgiving Day is normally double the average number of fire in homes all other days. To help keep the community safe, Allegheny County Emergency Services offers the following safety tips for everyone to have a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

- If you're roasting your turkey, make sure you set a timer. This way, you won't forget about the bird while you watch the parade or football game.
- If you're frying your turkey:
 - Use a fryer with thermostat controls. This will ensure the oil does not become overheated.
 - Thaw your turkey completely. Ice on the bird will cause the oil to splatter.
 - Don't overfill the pot with oil. If you do, the oil will overflow when you add the turkey causing a fire hazard.
 - Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the fryer.
 - Also, always use the fryer outdoors
- Stand by your stove when you're boiling potatoes or frying onions for stuffing. It is best to stay in the kitchen when you're frying, boiling or broiling. If you're in the kitchen, it is easier to catch spills or hazardous conditions before they become a fire.
- Keep the area around the stove clear of packaging, paper towels and dish cloths; anything that can burn.
- Be sure to clean up any spills as they happen.
- Be prepared. Keep a large pan lid or baking sheet handy in case you need to smother a pan fire.
- Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove so you don't bump them.

Visit the USFA website at <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/> for more information on cooking and turkey fryer safety at <https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/cooking.html>. By following these safety tips, you will have a delicious and fire safe Thanksgiving. Let the firefighters have dinner with their families, not yours.

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