

The Role of the Kitchen Manager and Hospitality

- Kitchen Manager provides hospitality for the meet. Hospitality offers meals and refreshments for the officials, coaches and volunteers at the meet. The rule is no swimmers. There are exceptions made for the swimmers of those volunteers whose position is a full day so that feeding their children is difficult (meet director, kitchen manager and possibly others, not those who volunteer for just one session).
- Meals, drinks and snacks are provided. The number of meals varies depending on the number of sessions the meet has. Some offer only breakfast and lunch. Other meets have three sessions a day and offer breakfast, lunch and dinner.
- There is a position of **Kitchen Runner**. The responsibility of this position is to do the shopping for the meet and to be “on call” during the meet to get items that are needed (run for more bottled water, more ranch dressing, etc.). Some Kitchen Managers choose to assume the responsibilities of this position and receive the hours/credits associated with the role. Discuss with the Volunteer Manager whether you would like to have a FAST member in this role, or do it yourself.
- **Hospitality Volunteers.** Each session is assigned two hospitality volunteers who assist the kitchen manager with whatever is necessary. This includes:
 - Offering snacks and drinks on deck during the meet (usually about every 30-45 minutes)
 - Washing dishes
 - Prepping food (chopping, slicing, etc.)
 - Helping set buffet out, watching what needs to be replenished during the meal, and clearing it off
 - At the end of the day, helping set up for breakfast the next morning
 - Tearing down the room at the end of the meet and helping with inventorying supplies

Planning for the Meet

- Learn who the Meet Director is and contact him or her.
- Ask the Meet Director for some information
 - How large will the meet be? The number of teams and the number of swimmers they have will determine how many coaches they are likely to have at the meet. This will help estimate the number of people that will be fed.
 - What is the timing of the meet sessions? This will tell you when you will be setting up the meals. More information about serving meals is below.
 - When the date of the meet is close, it’s nice to get a timeline from the Meet Director so you and your helpers know when your swimmers’ events are up and can go cheer them on!
- Get a general count of supplies. Hopefully you will get an inventory count from the prior Kitchen Manager. If that wasn’t done, then make a visit to the cage in the equipment room where hospitality supplies are stored before the meet. Determine what supplies you will need to purchase (plates, flatware, napkins, cups, etc.). There is a file with a list of supplies

that should come with this file. It is a good tool to use to take inventory at the end of the meet. The list includes things such as:

- Disposable dinner plates, appetizer and/or salad plates, bowls
- Plastic flatware
- Coffee cups, plastic cups (may not be necessary if you are not serving lemonade or tea)
- Napkins
- Plastic table cover roll
- Foil, Ziploc bags, plastic wrap
- “Permanent” supplies that are in the cage include, among other things:
 - Two very large white coolers. Usually bottled water is kept in one and soft drinks in the other in the hospitality room.
 - A smaller blue cooler that is placed at the end of the stand where the announcer is. It is stocked with drinks during the meet so that officials and other volunteers can grab a drink if they don’t have time to get to the hospitality room or missed the opportunity when the hospitality volunteers were on deck.
 - Spigot water cooler. May or not be used for water, lemonade or tea.
 - 4 electric warming trays. Often food in foil trays is placed on the warmers. **Helpful Hint:** Setting up a “double boiler” arrangement by putting some water in a foil tray and then placing the tray of food inside it can prevent the bottom from burning.
 - A slow cooker.
 - Miscellaneous cooking utensils.
 - A 30-cup percolator (instructions are included with this information)
 - Two push top coffee carafes
 - Large plastic bowls
 - Large plastic trays
- Things to bring. There are some “permanent” supplies in the cage, but if there are items you know you will want, consider planning to bring them. Below are items commonly brought by Kitchen Managers, depending on their menu.
 - Extension cords (recommend three prong cords).
 - Possibly a power strip, depending on how many electric things you are using.
 - The City (Epic staff) is usually helpful with things that come up, like use of stapler, extra extension cords, etc.
 - Cutting board(s)
 - Good, sharp knives. There are knives in the cage, but they are not terribly sharp.
 - Dish towels to dry dishes
 - Washcloths
 - Sponge or dish wand to wash dishes
 - Possibly additional serving bowls. For instance, if you are serving things with a lot of accompaniments (like tacos, potato bar, salad bar), you may want to have several small bowls.
 - Additional slow cooker(s)
 - Stock pot
 - Skillet(s)
 - Special serving utensils (ladles, tongs)
- Determine estimate for number of people you will serve. Admittedly, this is difficult to estimate. A good way to estimate:

- Officials – commonly 15-20 per session, there is often overlap between sessions as officials leaving one may grab a meal before they go. Check with the Meet Director to see if there is reason to expect a much different number of officials.
- Coaches – you can get direction from the Meet Director on best guess. The number of coaches expected depends on the number of teams and how many swimmers they are each bringing. Usually the Meet Director can guesstimate how many coaches a team will bring based on the number of swimmers registered for the meet.
- Volunteers – a small percentage of volunteers come into the hospitality room. It depends on how many really know about it. Most are only there for the one session so really don't need/want the meal. Usually there are about 33 volunteers for each session. Again, only a small number of them will visit hospitality (maybe 8 or so?). Check with meet director to see if there are any unusual changes (e.g. one meet we didn't know that a high school boys swim team was volunteering to time and they pretty much ate us out of food! We were not prepared).
- Plan menu
 - The menu is up to you. A few things to consider (but none are hard and fast rules):
 - Officials and coaches generally expect some hot breakfast option at our meets
 - Try to have vegetarian options for each meal
 - It is very popular to have a salad of some sort offered with each lunch and dinner
 - Usually there is something sweet with each meal
 - Make ahead options are easiest
 - While people do trickle in and out, there is definitely a “rush” period
 - If there are “single serve” items, do smaller portions. More people will take a small item and if they want more, they'll take more (i.e. cut breakfast burritos in half, cut brownies into bite size pieces, etc.)
 - It's recommended to do as much preparation as possible ahead of time. It is possible to cook in the small kitchen at EPIC, but the space and timing can create stress. Steps like preparing, chopping, measuring, etc. done in advance can make the weekend pretty stress free. Consider cooking things ahead of time and freezing.
 - There are ideas of meals that have been done are included in this file. There are a recipes for dishes, too. If you have any to share, feel free to add them.
 - In terms of **drinks and snacks**. The following is an idea of common offerings and quantities (this is for a medium size meet) we've gotten most from Sam's or Costco.
 - Water – 10 cases of 40 bottle
 - Coke – 3 cases of 35
 - Diet Coke – 3 cases of 35
 - Sprite – 1 case of 35
 - LaCroix – 5 cases of 24

 - Chex mix – 2 bags (40 oz ea)
 - Trail mix – 4 bags (48 oz ea)
 - Goldfish -- one box (4 lbs ea), contains 3 bags
 - Grapes – 3 pks (3 lbs ea), cut into 4-5 grape chunks
 - M&Ms – 3 bags (56 oz ea), chocolate in general is very popular
 - M&M Peanut -- 2 bags (56 oz ea), chocolate in general is very popular

- Other: we include other items that are left from meals: hard bowl eggs cut in half, 1/3 bananas, dessert bites, etc.

Shopping

- When possible, use the proof of tax exemption to eliminate paying tax. A copy of proof is included in these materials.
- Some Kitchen Managers have been very successful in receiving donations from local stores and restaurants. Some that have been generous in the past are Olive Garden, Whole Foods, Texas Roadhouse, Great Harvest Bread Company (they get rid of whatever bread isn't sold each night, being able to donate it is nice. Make a nice addition to breakfast with the toaster).
- If there are donations, ask the board to send thank you notes to the restaurants that donated. Consider printing out a thank you so all they have to do is sign and mail it.
- We put the logo's of donors in the program. You'll need to find who is preparing the programs. Some restaurants didn't care. You google their logo image and include it anyway. It's valuable to show community members supporting the team.
- A great tip is to use online ordering and pickup. Costco does not offer it, but Sam's Club does (free of charge). It is incredibly helpful to order sodas, waters and other very bulky things online at Sam's. Then when you arrive it's all gathered and ready to wheel out to your car. Now most stores offer online ordering, though many charge.
- Of course, keep all your receipts for reimbursement. If you like, you can request checks from the team ahead of time. Contact Coach Doug for checks.
- There is an ice-maker in the kitchen at EPIC. At this writing, and with only one meet's experience: It is not able to load our two large coolers. It seems to do fine in maintaining it. Plan on purchasing about 6 large bags of ice to start the coolers. Following that, the icemaker may suffice, but watch and be respectful of the fact that all of EPIC uses it and we can't "dominate" it for the weekend.

During the Meet

- Set up
 - It usually takes a couple hours to get things set up.
 - The kitchen is not always very clean when we arrive, so you may need to spend a little time wiping things down. If the refrigerator is full, ask one of the staff members from EPIC if they can move things to another refrigerator.
 - To set up the room, there are usually three tables that run along the windows and serve as the buffet. The tables are covered with plastic and then the plastic is put around the sides and front of the tables. The "skirt" hides supplies that can be stored under the tables like drinks, extra plates, napkins, flatware, whatever else.
 - Usually there are three rows of two tables up against the wall that run perpendicular to the buffet table. We cover these tables with plastic as well.
 - At the north end of the room, put other tables and chairs. The officials gather at that end for their pre- and post- session meetings.
 - There is usually a smaller table placed under the white board on the wall by the kitchen. We usually use this for coffee, lemonade or tea (if offered) and orange juice in the morning. We also skirt this table and hide things under it.

- The two coolers are usually put between the door and the small coffee table. One cooler is usually filled with water only, the other with soda and LaCroix.
- Serving. Generally:
 - Breakfast is set up when the officials arrive in the morning. We leave breakfast up throughout most of the morning session. The officials eat right away, and some volunteers will stop in to eat before the start of the meet (though very difficult to predict how many –best guesstimate is 10-15 volunteers). Coaches are on deck early handling warm-ups, so usually wander in and out after the meet has started. We also try to have Hospitality Volunteers run some breakfast offerings out to deck after the meet starts for the coaches, many of whom probably have not made it to the hospitality room.
 - Toward end of first session transition from breakfast to lunch. Lunch is usually out by the time the first session ends because the officials will begin coming in during the break. Some volunteers also eat when they finish their session or as they arrive to begin their session. Again, we generally leave the meal out during the second session because coaches come and go once the meet begins.
 - If there is a third session, transition generally goes as was described above with whatever adjustments make sense depending on the timing of the sessions.
 - **HELPFUL HINT:** Officials, coaches and volunteers wander in and out throughout the sessions. We try to always have something on the buffet table the entire time. In between meals, we leave anything left from the prior meal (within reason)... if there are vegetables left from a vegetable tray, sweets left, etc. Of course, be sure the two coolers of beverages are well stocked.
- Serving deckside
 - As mentioned above, volunteers take the wheeled cart on deck every 30-45 minutes. On the cart there are refreshments for all working on deck (volunteers, coaches, officials). Hints and things the cart usually includes:
 - Dixie cups filled with snacks (doesn't matter the time of day, include salty, chocolate, etc.). Make small portions. The goal is not to feed, but to give a little bite. Small Dixie cups should be just half filled at most.
 - Beverages. Water is usually the most popular.
 - We've seen that some leftovers from meals are popular. For example, after breakfast (or when it's clear there is more food than needed on the buffet), half portions of breakfast burritos, hard boiled eggs cut in half, yogurt, vegetables with a little Ranch. It is a nice way to use food you suspect won't be eaten.
 - Chocolate is especially popular in the afternoon sessions
 - **IMPORTANT:** The cart is not easy (or possible) to get to the far side of the deck. There are officials over there that can easily not be offered refreshments. Be sure to visit that side. It is easiest to use a low cardboard tray (you can get these from the boxes Sam's offers for people to tote purchases), or large foil trays. Volunteers can then take food and beverages over to that side of the pool.
 - **IMPORTANT:** A small cooler needs to be placed at the end of the Announcer stand. In this cooler, keep waters, sodas, etc. It is very popular. When the Volunteers do their deck rounds, ask that they check that cooler to see if it needs to be replenished.

The End of the Meet

- We usually begin tear down about 45 minutes to an hour before the meet is going to end.
- **VERY IMPORTANT.** Have the hospitality volunteers help you take an inventory of supplies that will be returned to the cage. The inventory does not need to be precise, but a good estimate of the number of plates, napkins, cups, flatware, etc. This will prevent the next Kitchen Manager from having to climb into the cage and dig out all the tubs to see what supplies need to be replenished. It will also prevent nearly 1800 plastic spoons being stored because people thought they needed to be purchased (yes it happened). There is an inventory sheet in this packet. Add to it as appropriate.
- We cannot store any food in the cage (though we do usually put creamer and sugar and sweetener in one of the tubs for the next meet), so leftovers get divvied up among anyone who wants it. Ask coaches, volunteers, EPIC staff, etc.
- If you have been in contact with the person who is Kitchen Manager for the next meet, you may be able to give any unopened items to them (soda, water, unopened bags for treats, etc.)
- Break down the tables and stack the chairs.

You're Almost Done

- After the meet, send the inventory list to Volunteer Manager and/or the Kitchen Manager for the next meet.
- Gather receipts and complete the reimbursement form. The form, FAST Reimbursement Request Form (member), can be found on the team website under Team Info, then Documents and Forms.