



Middlesex-Essex

Public Health Collaborative

Andover. North Andover. Reading. North Reading. Haverhill. Lynnfield

Food Handler's Manual

A guide to safe & healthy food
handling for food establishments





Contact Info

The Middlesex-Essex Public Health Collaborative works to regionalize public health efforts for the communities of Andover, North Andover, Reading, North Reading, Haverhill and Lynnfield.

If you have questions about safe food handling for your establishment, please reach out to your respective Health Department.

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Purpose

“While the Food supply in the United States is one of the safest in the world, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that each year 48 million people get sick from foodborne illness, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 die from foodborne illness. Preventing foodborne illness and death remains a major public health challenge.

This manual is designed to provide foodservice operators, management and personnel with safe food handling guidelines in order to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses. Foodborne illness may devastate a community and take a serious financial toll on the food industry. **Do your part by following food safety guidelines every day.**



Operator Responsibilities

A food establishment operator is responsible for many actions to ensure safe food service:

- Ensure the designated person in charge has sufficient food safety knowledge
- Submit plans to the Health Department for any remodeling or significant changes in the menu before the change
- Submit a properly prepared HACCP plan prior to implementing any special processes



Person in Charge

In Massachusetts, local health departments enforce the FDA food code. The Food Code outlines responsibilities that each person in charge must oversee. During operations, a designated person in charge is responsible for the following:

- Maintaining a certification as a food protection manager
- Have and demonstrate knowledge of food safety
- Ensure that food supplies are from a reputable and commercial source
- Monitor employee health, hygiene, and hand washing
- Daily oversight of cooking temperatures for potentially hazardous foods
- Daily oversight of food temperatures during cold holding cooling and hot holding
- Routine monitoring of sanitizing methods and equipment
- Ensure that employees are preventing potential contamination of ready-to-eat foods
- Ensure that food employees are properly trained in food safety as it relates to their assigned duties
- Immediately take remedial action and notify the Health Department of any imminent health hazard, such as fire, flooding, loss of electricity or water, sewage back-ups, foodborne illness outbreak, misuse of chemicals, etc.
- Advising consumers about allergens

Why is proper food handling so important?

Viruses and bacteria account for 98% of foodborne illness. Some common viruses that may cause foodborne illness include Hepatitis A and Norovirus. These viruses are primarily passed on from stool to mouth (fecal-oral route), which makes thorough handwashing extremely important. Viruses can be carried by any food. Viruses do not grow on food.

Some common bacterial that may cause foodborne illness include Salmonella sp., E. coli 0157:H7, Shigella, Staphylococcus aureus, Bacillus cereus, Clostridium perfringens, Clostridium botulinum, Campylobacter jejuni, Listeria and many others. Bacteria can grow in "TCS" food if not handled properly. Under optimal conditions, bacteria have rapid growth rates. This makes temperature controls and food safety extremely important.

Time/ Temperature Control for Safety: A food that requires time/temperature control for safety (TCS) to limit pathogenic microorganism growth for toxin formation.

To be a TCS food, a food must be:

1. Moist
2. Non-acidic (pH at or above 4.6)
3. A food source for bacteria (high protein)

Some Common TCS Foods Include:

- All meats
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Cooked Vegetables
- Tofu, tempeh, soymilk
- Cooked beans, pastas, grains
- Cooked rice
- Raw seed sprouts (alfalfa sprouts, bean sprouts, etc.)
- Garlic, onion, or herbs in oil
- Cut melons
- Cut leafy greens



Temperature Controls

Proper temperature controls and food handling practices are extremely important to prevent the growth of bacteria in TCS foods.

The “danger zone” is the temperature range between 41F and 135F. Bacteria grow very rapidly in the danger zone. For this reason, proper cooling, reheating, cold holding, hot holding and cooking temperatures should be carefully monitored.

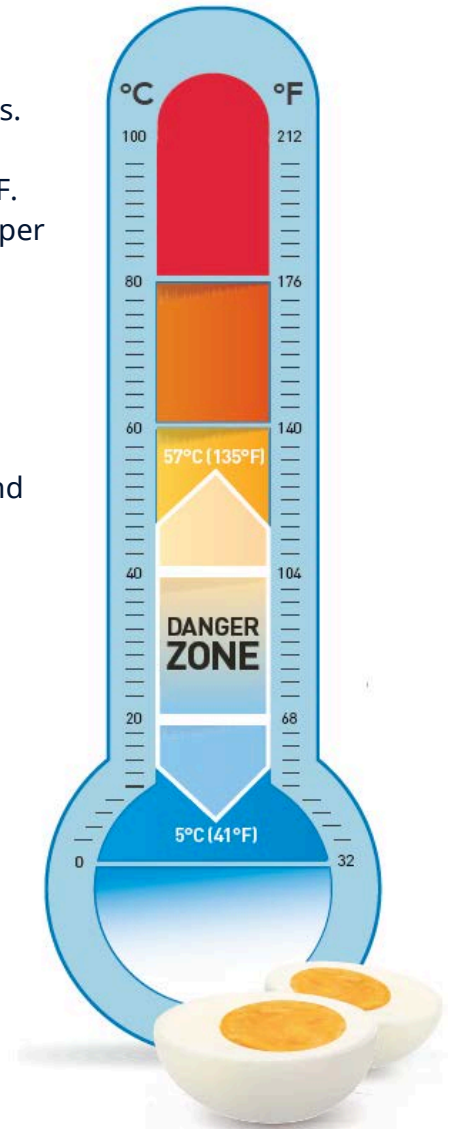
Temperature Logs

We recommend the use of temperature charts or logs to record and verify proper temperatures

- Check and record temperatures every 2 hours
- Monitor both food temperatures and equipment

Key Temperature Ranges

- **Cold Holding:** Cold food must be kept at 41F or less at all times. This includes refrigeration, salad bars and during transport
- **Hot Holding:** Hot food must be maintained hot all 135F or more at all times. This includes steam tables, stove tops, heating cabinets, and during transport



Minimum Cooking Temperatures

All raw products are required to reach an internal temperature reading as follows:

- **Poultry and Stuffing** (including crabmeat or cheese): 165F for 15 seconds
- **Ground Beef and pooled eggs:** 155F for 15 seconds
- **Fish, Shellfish, Eggs, Pork, and ‘other’ meats:** 145F for 15 seconds
- **Rare Beef Steak or Beef Roast:** 130F for 122 minutes

Note; If an animal food will be served raw or undercooked, you must have a “consumer advisory”. For details on consumer advisories, see page

Cooling Procedures

Food must be cooled as quickly as possible to prevent the growth of bacteria as the food drops through the danger zone.

When cooling **hot food**, food must be cooled from 135F to 70 within 2 hours, and then from 70F to 41F in 4 hours or less.



When cooling **food from room temperature**, food must be cooled from 70F to 41F in 4 hours or less.

Cooling Methods

- **Refrigeration**
 - Divide food into smaller portions (small portions cool faster than large portions)
 - Use shallow 2"-4" pans spaced to allow air flow around pans
 - Do not cover until food reaches 41F
 - Use containers that transfer heat e.g. metal pans
- **Ice Bath**
 - Fill ice and water up to the level of food in the container
 - Stir regularly
- **Ice Paddles**
 - Best for soups, gravies, other thin foods
 - Use ice paddle along with the refrigeration method or ice bath method
 - Place in cooling food upon reaching 134F. Hotter foods will crack the plastic
- **Use ice as an ingredient instead of water**



Cooling in shallow pans in walk-in cooler. If cooling on racks, ensure adequate airflow around containers and pans.



When using an ice bath, stir frequently.



Keep ice paddles clean and place into food to aid in the cooling process.

Reheating

After cooling, all leftovers and pre-made foods must be reheated to a minimum of 165F within 2 hours if placing in hot holding. If reheating a commercially prepared food for the first time, reheat to a minimum of 135F within 2 hours if placing in hot holding. For a food that will be consumed immediately, it can be reheated to any temperature.



Reheating Methods

- Stove
- Oven
- Microwave
- Other rapid-heating equipment

When Using a Microwave

- Cover food items
- Stir frequently
- Wait 2 minutes before checking the temperature and serving

Do not reheat food on steam tables or other hot-holding equipment.



Thermometers

All food service establishments must have a thermometer for monitoring food temperatures and refrigerator thermometers for monitoring the temperature inside refrigeration units. Establishments cooking thin foods, such as hamburgers or fish filets, must also have a small diameter thermocouple or thermistor, which takes temperatures at the tip. All must be accurate and calibrated regularly.

To calibrate metal-stem thermometers:

- Place the thermometer stem in a glass filled with ice and water in equal parts
- Wait 15-20 seconds; if thermometer does not read 32F, it must be calibrated

Inaccurate digital thermometers

- Follow manufacturer directions to recalibrate the thermometer
- Some may need to be adjusted by the manufacturer



Employee Hygiene

Handwashing

Proper handwashing is the single most effective way to stop the spread of disease.

When to wash your hands

- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of the arms
- After using the restroom
- After caring for or handling a service animal or aquatic animals
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, using tobacco, eating, or drinking
- After handling soiled equipment or utensils
- During food preparation, as often as necessary
- When switching between working with raw food and ready-to-eat food
- Before donning gloves to initiate a task that involves food
- After engaging in other activities that contaminate the hands



Handwashing sinks shall only be used for handwashing and should be stocked with:

- Hot and cold running water (minimum of 85F)
- Soap
- Paper Towels

Handwash sinks should never be blocked or used for any other purpose (i.e. dumping liquids, rinsing containers, filling sanitizer buckets, filling water pitchers, etc.)

Hand sanitizers only work on clean hands and do not kill Norovirus or Hepatitis A. Thus, they are not required in a retail food establishment. Hand sanitizer should never be used instead of handwashing.

Bare-Hand Contact

Ready-to-eat food should never be handled with bare hands (i.e. salads, fruit, pizza, sandwiches, sushi, etc.). Bare-hand contact can be prevented by using single-use gloves, utensils, deli tissue, etc.)

Ready-to-eat foods: These are foods that do not require further cooking or heating before being served. These foods are most at risk for transmitting fecal-oral diseases (i.e. viruses, including Hepatitis A and Norovirus) that come from contaminated hands.

Some ready-to-eat foods include:

- Salads
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Pizza
- Sandwiches
- Cheese
- Sushi
- Beverages, ice
- Cookies and pastries



Gloves

Here are some tips to remember when using single-use gloves to avoid bare-hand contact:

- Always wash your hands before putting on a new pair of gloves
- Change your gloves and wash your hands whenever the gloves become contaminated:
 - After handling raw meat, poultry, fish, or eggs
 - After touching your face with a glove or sneezing/coughing into the glove
 - After touching unclean dishes or trash cans
 - Whenever changing tasks
- Gloves must be worn over a bandage, cut, burn, or sore
- Gloves should be considered an extension of your hand
- Gloves are not a substitute for good handwashing practices



These are all methods that can be used to avoid bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food. None of these methods replace the need for good handwashing practices.

Sick Employees

Sick employees may be at high risk of contaminating food and utensils with bacteria or viruses. For this reason, sick employees must be **restricted** or **excluded** from working in the kitchen with food and food service equipment.

Employees must be restricted or excluded if demonstrating any of the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Jaundice
- Sore throat with fever
- Infected cuts/lesions on hands, wrists
- Persistent coughing, sneezing, runny nose



Restricted: means to limit the activity of a food employee so that there is no risk of transmitting a disease that is transmissible through food and the employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single-service items

Exclude means to prevent the person from working as a food employee or entering the non-public areas of a retail food establishment. Establishments serving a highly susceptible population must exclude sick employees.

Any employee diagnosed with the following illnesses must not work in any area of a food establishment in any capacity where there is the likelihood that food, food contact surfaces, or other persons can be contaminated with the pathogenic organism

- Salmonella
- Staphylococcal intoxication
- Shigella spp.
- Siga toxin-producing E. coli
- Hepatitis A
- Strep Throat
- Acute Respiratory infection

Food Worker Policies

All employees must maintain good hygienic practices:

- Employees may consume food and smoke only in areas away from food and utensils
- Drinks may be stored in clean closed containers that do not contaminate hands. Drinks must be stored below and separate from food, prep surfaces, utensils, etc.
- Food workers must wear hair restraints and clean outer clothing
- Food workers must have fingernails kept trimmed and clean; no jewelry shall be worn on hands or arms, except a plain wedding band
- Aprons must be removed before entering the restroom or leaving the food prep area
- Cloth towels and aprons must not be used for wiping hands

Food Preparation

Produce Prep

Increasing numbers of foodborne outbreaks have been occurring in recent years due to contaminated produce. Take the following steps to reduce the risk of foodborne illness due to contaminated produce:

- All produce shall be washed thoroughly in a clean, approved sink using a colander and cold running water
- Wash produce **before** cutting or preparing (including lemons, melons, onions, avocado, mushrooms, cabbage, lettuce, squash, etc)

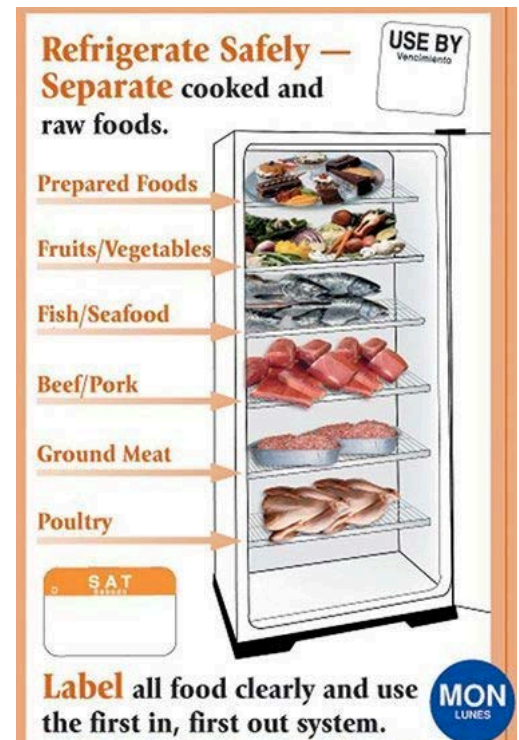


Cross-Contamination

Cross-contamination is the possible spread of bacteria from a contaminated source (raw chicken, meats, fish, eggs; contaminated utensils and equipment, etc) to another food or surface.

Prevent Cross-Contamination:

- Store food properly: Raw meats, poultry, fish, and eggs should be stored on the bottom shelf of the refrigeration, below and separate from all other foods
- Use a drip pan under raw meat, poultry, fish, or egg products
- Change your gloves and wash your hands after handling any raw meat, eggs, poultry or fish
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all cutting boards, knives, utensils, prep tables, sinks, etc. after working with raw meat products and before preparing any other foods
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all work surfaces including cutting boards, sinks, prep tables, slicers, utensils, etc. at least every 4 hours during constant use



Food Quality & Sources

All food in food service establishments must be obtained from an approved source.

- Verify that your supplier has documentation showing that it is an approved wholesale facility.
- All meats, poultry, and eggs must have the USDA stamp of approval on the packaging.
- Fish to be used for sushi or considered sushi-quality must have a letter from your supplier verifying that required freezing techniques have been performed unless you can conduct this step yourself properly and have approval from your Board of Health.
- Shellfish must come from approved harvest sites and have completed the attached tags. Maintain all shellfish tags for a minimum of 90 days after the last portion is served. You should mark the date on each tag when the product was finished.
- Do not use raw eggs in any ready-to-eat food items. Pasteurized eggs may be used as a substitute for raw eggs in ready-to-eat recipes like Caesar salad dressing, dessert mousse, tiramisu, etc.

DEALER NAME		CERT. NO.
Dealer Address		
City, State Zip Code		
ORIGINAL SHIPPER'S CERT. NO. IF OTHER THAN ABOVE:		
HARVEST DATE:		
HARVEST LOCATION:		
TYPE OF SHELLFISH:		
QUANTITY OF SHELLFISH:		
THIS TAG IS REQUIRED TO BE ATTACHED UNTIL CONTAINER IS EMPTY AND THEREAFTER KEPT ON FILE FOR 90 DAYS.		
<small>RETAILERS INFORM YOUR CUSTOMERS Thoroughly cooking foods of animal origin such as beef, eggs, fish, fowl, poultry, or shellfish reduces the risk of foodborne illness. Individuals with certain health conditions may be at higher risk. If these foods are consumed raw or undercooked, Consult your physician or public health official for further information.</small>		

Ensure that all food is wholesome and free of spoilage

- Check cans for dents, swelling or leaks upon delivery. Reject them if you find a problem. Do not ever use a swollen or leaking can! Home canned foods may not be used at all.
- Check food temperatures and food quality upon delivery.
 - Reject questionable items
 - Cold food must be 41F when delivered, except for milk eggs and shellfish which can be delivered at 45F.
- Do not use spoiled or moldy food.
- Sell-by or use-by dates should be observed and may not be altered or covered in any way.
- Store food in a protected manner
 - All food should be at least 6" above the floor.
 - Cover and label food in dry storage areas.
 - Never store food beneath or near chemicals wastewater lines, tools, or any other possible source of contamination
 - Store canned goods at 0F.



On-Site Food Labeling

All packaged foods must be labeled in accordance with the Massachusetts and federal labeling regulations, including all foods intended for retail sale that are manufactured in licensed residential kitchens. **What are you required to do?**

Raw Meats and poultry that are packaged on-site for customers must always contain the safe handling label.



Prepared foods that you make on-site and pre-package must contain a label with the following:



- Product Name (common name)
- Business name & Address
- Ingredient list (from most to least by weight)
- Product net weight in ounces or pounds AND grams or liters
- Allergens must appear in one of three ways:
 - List in name or ingredient list
 - List in the ingredient list if it does not clearly identify the allergen. Example: Flour (wheat)
 - List after the word "contains". Example: Contains eggs

Repackaging bulk foods to smaller amounts prior to customer selection requires a label with the following information:

- Common name of food
- Ingredient list (from most to least in weight)
- Net weight in ounces or pounds AND grams or liters
- "Packaged by" (your business address); or the
- Manufacturer's name and address
- Allergens if present as described above



Note: A proper food label is required if any food is pre-packaged and available for self-service (except at a buffet or cafeteria line) or if you are making a health or nutrient claim about the food)

Date Marking Requirements

What is date marking and how is it used? Date marking is a way to ensure that food is still safe to use and is required by law. Date marking is an identification system for ready-to-eat foods, held for more than 24 hours, so you know how old it is. The system identifies when food is to be discarded.

Do my foods need to be date-marked? If you answer “yes” to all 5 of these questions, then the food needs to be dated-marked:

- Does the food require refrigeration?
- If commercially packaged, has the original package been opened?
- Is the food ready to eat? Examples include cold cooked beef, cold pizza.
- Is the food a time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food? Will it grow disease-causing bacteria if left unrefrigerated?
- Will the food be in the establishment for more than 24 hours? This counts even if the food is, or will be, mixed with something else to create a new product.

When to discard food? When food is kept at or below 41F, you should discard the food within 7 days. The day you open the package or prepare the food is considered Day 1.

If the food has an expiration date on it, isn't that the same as a date mark? No, the expiration date indicates the manufacturer's guarantee of quality. Your addition of a date mark will ensure the food's safety. The date marked by your food establishment may not exceed the use-by date.

Does an establishment that goes through food need to date mark? Any food not used or discarded within 24 hours must be date-marked.

What if you freeze the food? Freezing food “stops” the date-marking clock, but it does not reset it. For example, if food is stored at 41F for 2 days and then frozen, it can still be used for 5 more days when it begins to thaw. The freezing date and the thawing date need to be put on the container along with the new discard date.

What if I mix the food with something else? When foods are mixed together, the date of the oldest food item becomes the new discard date.

Are there any exemptions? Yes! The following foods do not require date marking:

- Deli salads such as seafood, chicken or pasta manufactured at a commercial plant
- Hard cheeses such as cheddar, gruyere, parmesan, reggiano, and romano
- Semi-soft cheeses such as edam, blue, gorgonzola, gouda and monteray jack
- Cultured dairy products such as yogurt, sour cream, and buttermilk
- Preserved fish products such as pickled herring and dried or salted cod
- Shelf stable dried sausages such as pepperoni and salami or salt-cured products like prosciutto that are not labeled “keep refrigerated”
- Commercial acidified dressings such as mayonnaise and Thousand Island
- Uncut portions of processed cured meats still fully packaged in cellulose

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Cleaning is the removal of dirt, soil, and debris.

Sanitizing is the reduction of disease-causing microorganisms.

All food service equipment must be washed, rinsed, and then sanitized:

- At least every 4 hours during continued use
- Every time after raw meat, poultry, fish, or eggs are prepared



Whether washing dishes in a 3-compartment sink or in a mechanical dishwasher, the same steps must be followed. Do not dry anything with a cloth towel!



Sanitizers

Sanitizers are used to reduce the number of pathogens that may be found on food service equipment to safe levels. Chemical sanitizers and hot water sanitization are both approved methods of sanitizing equipment.

Approved chemical sanitizers and concentrations:

- Chlorine (bleach): 50-100 ppm (200 ppm is the maximum concentration permitted; above 200 ppm is considered toxic)
- Quaternary ammonium: Follow manufacturer requirements, the proper concentration may vary by manufacturer
- Iodine: 12.5-25 ppm (above 25 ppm is considered toxic)
- Hot Water Sanitizing: The surface of the dishes must reach 160F. This usually means the dial must reach 180F



Dishes must come in contact with chlorine sanitizers for 10-seconds and quaternary ammonia or iodine for 30-seconds.



Establishments must have the proper test strips for their sanitizer to ensure appropriate concentrations.



Dishtemp simulating disks or strips can be used to ensure hot water sanitizing methods reach the correct temperatures.

Storage

In-use Utensil storage

Utensils in the process of being used for food preparation may be stored:

- In the food with the handle up, out of the food
- On a clean, dry surface
- In water 135F or more
- In an approved dipper well (running water)
- NEVER store in-use utensils in sanitizer or room-temperature water



Storage and use of Wiping Cloths

In-use wiping cloths should be stored in clean sanitizer solution between uses.

Separate buckets of sanitizer must be provided for wiping off:

- Raw meat prep areas
- Non-food contact areas (Counters, dining tables)
- Food-contact areas (Cutting boards, prep tables, etc.)

Wiping a surface with a sanitized cloth is not cleaning and sanitizing. Wiping cloths are to be used to clean up spills and food debris only.



Chemical Storage

Chemical contamination of food may cause serious injury to the consumer. Ensure that all chemicals are stored:

- Below and separate from food and food-contact surfaces (i.e. prep areas, utensils, etc.)
- In a designated chemical storage area.
- In correctly labeled containers. Only chemicals approved for food establishments are permitted on the premises. All chemicals must be used according to manufacturer specifications. Do not use chemical bottles for food (oil, water, etc.) or food containers for chemicals.



Facility and Equipment

Pests

Control pests in the food service establishment by using:

- A pest control operator
- Approved traps
- Tightly sealed openings, screen doors, and fly fans
- Never apply pesticides in a food service establishment unless you are a licensed pest control operator



Equipment Cleaning & Maintenance

Food service equipment operates best when it is maintained in good condition and kept clean. The build-up of food debris and grease on equipment and in the food establishment may attract pests and otherwise create unsanitary conditions. Regular cleaning schedules should be maintained in order to keep equipment in good condition. Keep in mind cleaning of less obvious places like:

- Ice machines
- Refrigeration interiors and exteriors (including shelves, compressor coils, fan covers, door gaskets)
- Fryers
- Grill equipment
- Ovens
- Hoods
- Steamers
- Beverage machines (boda nozzles, ice chutes)
- All other kitchen equipment



Approved Equipment

All foodservice equipment must be approved for use in a retail food establishment.

- Equipment with an ANSI or NSF certification is approved
- Cast Iron can be used for cooking only
- Ceramic, china, crystal, and hand-painted ceramics must be lead-free
- Hardwoods may be used for cutting surfaces, not for other food-contact surfaces like spoons
- Other material use limitations can be found in Chapter 4 of the FDA Food Code

General Facility Maintenance

Food Service establishments must keep in good sanitary condition, both inside and outside of their facility.

- **Floors, walls, and ceilings** should be maintained clean and in good repair.
- **Lighting** should be maintained and provide the following levels of light:
 - 50 foot-candles of covered or otherwise shatter-resistant light above food preparation and dishwashing areas
 - 20 foot-candles at utensil storage areas and in toilet and lavatory areas
 - 10 foot-candles in other areas, including dry storage areas
- **Garbage and refuse** containers should be kept clean and inaccessible to rodents, insects, and other vermin.
- All **sewage** systems must be properly operating. Sewage back-ups create an imminent health hazard and must be immediately remedied:
 - Notify Local Health Department
 - Contact a licensed plumber
 - Close the kitchen or area with the back-up until it is repaired
- **Restrooms** should be kept clean and stocked with toilet paper, soap, and paper towels or approved hand-drying devices
- **Clean linen** must be stored in a clean, dry area and protected from contamination (chemicals, wastewater lines, etc.)
- **Laundry facilities (washer/dryer)** must be kept clean and located separately from food preparation areas. After washing, linen should be thoroughly dried in a mechanical dryer. Dirty linen baskets must be used for storage of dirty linen and should be maintained in good condition.
- Any water fixture that has a **threaded faucet** and hose attachment must have an **approved backflow prevention device**.
- **The plumbing** should be in good condition and free of leaks, duct tape, plastic wrap, or other unapproved repair materials.
- **Mop sinks** must be provided at all retail food establishments and used for disposal of mop water and chemicals. These sinks may not be used for any other purpose (dishwashing, food preparation, handwashing). They must be kept clean and in good condition.
- **Grease Traps** must be kept clean and operating properly. They must be regularly pumped by an approved waste disposal company or in a method that does not contaminate the facility or outside area.

Self-Inspection

Self-inspections are a great tool for management and staff to make sure their facility is following good practices. This also helps to prepare the facility for regular inspections by the Health Department. Reach out to your Health Department if you have questions about how to conduct a self-inspection.

Consumer Advisory

If an animal food is served or sold raw or undercooked, or is in a ready-to-eat form without otherwise being processed to eliminate pathogens, you must notify the consumer of the significantly increased risk of consuming such foods. If you have a menu, the items that will be undercooked or raw must be marked with an asterisk (*). On the bottom of the menu there must be a corresponding * with one of the following messages:

- “Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or raw eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness”
- “Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions”

Allergens

Food allergies are very serious. There are 9 major food allergens:

- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Seafood
- Shellfish
- Wheat
- Soy
- Tree nuts
- Peanuts
- Sesame



Be aware of where these ingredients are used in your food items. The 2022 FDA food code requires that food operators provide written notification of the presence of major food allergens as an ingredient.

For more information on how to safely prepare items for customers with food allergies, please go to www.foodallergy.com. If you have a customer with an allergic reaction, always call 911.

Thank you!

Your role in food safety is important. As a food worker or manager, it is your responsibility to make sure that the food you serve is safe to eat. By reading this manual, you are taking an active role in learning how to safely prepare and serve food for the public.