

Changes to the North Carolina Food Service Sanitation Rules

On September 1, 2012, the North Carolina Food Service rules will experience significant changes. The purpose of this handout is to inform food service establishment owners and managers of the upcoming changes to the current *Rules Governing the Sanitation of Food Service Establishments* 15A NCAC 18A .2600. These revisions and additions were derived from the 2009 FDA model food code to allow for more science-based regulatory inspections in NC. The following are just a few of the changes that will directly affect current food safety procedures and should be given top priority when training food service employees.

BARE HAND CONTACT WITH READY-TO-EAT FOODS (RTE)

Food handlers will not be allowed to touch RTE foods with their bare hands to prevent contamination of food that is not cooked or will not be cooked again before serving. The use of utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single-use gloves or dispensing equipment will be required.

COLD HOLDING

Cold holding units, including prep top units, will be required to maintain a temperature of 41°F or below.

****Note that this will be phased in over a 7 year period (2019)****

COOLING OF POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS

Potentially hazardous foods must be cooled from 135°F to 41°F within a total of 6 hours as follows:

- From 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours
- From 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours

DATE MARKING

All ready-to-eat (RTE), potentially hazardous foods prepared on-site and held in refrigeration for more than 24 hours must be labeled. The label can state the date the item was opened/prepared, or the last date it can be used/sold. These products must not be held for:

- More than 7 days when held at 41°F or less,
- 4 days when held between 42°F – 45°F

MANAGER AND OPERATOR FOOD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE

The person in charge (PIC) **on all shifts** must demonstrate to the regulatory authority his or her food safety knowledge by passing a test that is part of an accredited food safety training program to become a certified food protection manager:

- The current 12-hour course requirement will no longer be required.
- On-line course training will be accepted.
- Exams must be proctored and a passing score must be achieved to become certified.
- The two-point bonus will go away.
- Certification through an accredited program must be renewed every five years.

EMPLOYEE HAND WASHING AND PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Food handlers must wash their hands and exposed portions of their arms in the following situations:
 - a. Immediately before food prep;
 - b. Immediately before working with clean equipment, utensils, and unwrapped single-service/ single use articles;
 - c. After using the toilet;
 - d. After coughing, sneezing or using a tissue;
 - e. After eating, drinking or using tobacco;
 - f. In between working with raw food and RTE food;
 - g. Before putting on gloves to prepare food;
 - h. After handling soiled equipment or utensils;
 - i. After caring for or handling service or aquatic animals;
 - j. As often as necessary to remove soil and contamination to prevent cross contamination when changing tasks; or
 - k. After performing other activities that contaminate the hands or arms.

The Five Key Risk Factors repeatedly identified in foodborne illness outbreaks:

- Improper holding temperatures
- Inadequate cooking
- Contaminated equipment
- Food from unsafe sources
- Poor personal hygiene

QUESTIONS?

Call Environmental Health at (828) 465-8258

Or visit our website:

www.catawbacountync.gov/EnvironmentalHealth/

To view the full North Carolina Food Code:

<http://ehs.ncpublichealth.com/rules.htm>

“Leading the Way to a Healthier Community”

EMPLOYEES WITH ILLNESS

Food service employees must report to the manager, owner or person-in-charge (PIC) when they are sick with an illness that is transmitted through food.

- Food service employees must inform the PIC if they experience the following symptoms:
 1. Vomiting
 2. Diarrhea
 3. Jaundice
 4. Sore throat with fever
 5. An infected lesion or infection on the hands, wrists, or exposed areas of the arm
- Food service employees must inform the PIC if they have been diagnosed by a health practitioner with any of the following illnesses:
 1. *Norovirus*
 2. *Hepatitis A*
 3. *Shigella*
 4. Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*
 5. *Salmonella typhi*
- Food service employees must inform the PIC if they are or have been exposed to the suspected source of a confirmed outbreak (including a household member) of the following:
 1. *Norovirus* within the past 48 hours of exposure
 2. Shiga Toxin-Producing *E. coli* within the past 3 days
 3. *Salmonella* within the past 14 days
 4. *Hepatitis A* within the past 30 days
- The manager shall make sure that a food service employee who reports to work sick with any of the above symptoms or who has been exposed or diagnosed with any of the above illnesses shall be excluded or restricted from work.
- The manager must report to the Health Department when an employee has any of the illnesses listed above.

Employee Health Policy Agreement

- I understand that I must:
 1. Report when I have or have been exposed to any of the symptoms or illnesses listed above; and
 2. Comply with work restrictions and/or exclusions that are given to me.

I understand that if I do not comply with this agreement, it may put my job at risk.

- Food Employee Name (please print)
- Signature of Employee Date
- Manager (Person-in-Charge) Name (please print)
- Signature of Manager (Person-in-Charge) Date

CONSUMER ADVISORY

If an animal food such as beef, eggs, fish, lamb, pork, poultry or shellfish is served or sold raw, under-cooked, or without otherwise being processed to eliminate pathogens, the permit holder shall inform consumers of the significantly increased risk of consuming such foods by way of a disclosure and reminder, using brochures, deli case or menu advisories, label statements, table tents, placards or other effective means. The advisory shall include a disclosure of the food item and one of the three reminders below:

EXAMPLES OF CONSUMER ADVISORY

DISCLOSURE shall include:

- (1) A description of the animal-derived FOODS, such as "oysters on the half shell (raw oysters)," "raw-EGG Caesar salad," and "hamburgers (can be cooked to order)";
- (2) Identification of the animal-derived FOODS by asterisking them to a footnote that states that the items are served raw or undercooked, or contain (or may contain) raw or undercooked ingredients.

REMINDER shall include asterisking the animal-derived FOODS requiring DISCLOSURE to a footnote that states:

- (1) Regarding the safety of these items, written information is available upon request;
- (2) Consuming raw or undercooked MEATS, POULTRY, seafood, shellfish, or EGGS may increase your RISK of foodborne illness; or
- (3) Consuming raw or undercooked MEATS, POULTRY, seafood, shellfish, or EGGS may increase your RISK of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.