Columbus Public Health Food Protection Program

Inspection Procedures

Food Establishment Inspection Reports

Restaurant inspections are normally conducted on a routine basis, depending upon:
The complexity of the menu, which affects the risk levels;
How much food is made from raw products (as opposed to precooked products); and
The restaurant's history of violations and types of violations found during inspections
The possibility of foodborne illness can increase with the number of times that a food product is handled during preparation. For example: restaurants that handle food more frequently are inspected more frequently than a restaurant that serves food such as a sandwich made to order.

The inspection reports for a business can be different depending on the type of inspection that is being performed. Go to the next page to view the various types of inspections that are conducted.

Types of Inspections

Routine Inspection: This is a scheduled inspection, unannounced to the restaurant. An inspector will conduct a complete inspection covering all items in the regulations for compliance.
Follow-up Inspection: This is an inspection for the specific purpose of re-inspecting critical violations that were not in compliance at the time of the routine inspection.
Critical Control Point Inspection: This type of inspection, which is conducted in food service operations, involves analyzing recipes and tracking potentially hazardous foods from the loading dock to the table, to assure all food is safe and wholesome.
Process Review Inspection: This type of inspection, which is conducted in retail food establishments, involves analyzing recipes and tracking potentially hazardous foods from the loading dock to the table, to assure all food is safe and wholesome.
Complaint Inspection: This is an inspection conducted as a result of a complaint received by the Health Department. The specifics of the complaint will be evaluated and discussed with the person in charge.
Foodborne Illness Investigation: Foodborne illness complaints are received and a food inspector conducts an inspection at the facility reported to be involved in the foodborne illness. The inspection focuses on food source, storage practices, food processing techniques, food handling and employee practices.
Training: The inspector visits the restaurant to present a formal training event for the restaurant's staff.

Risk Levels

The number of inspections per year is determined by the risk level that is assigned to the business. Risk levels are assigned according to the potential hazard of foodborne illness.
Risk Level I: One routine inspection per year
Risk Level II: One routine inspection per year
Risk Level III: Two routine inspections per year

Continued...

Risk Levels, continued…

Risk Level IV: Four inspections per year
Two routine inspections and either
Two Critical Control Point (CCP) inspections for food service operations (FSO) or
Two Process Review inspections for retail food establishments (RFE)

Risk level I poses a small health risk to the public. Examples of risk level I activities include, a business that offers for sale or sells: *Coffee, self-service fountain drinks, prepackaged beverages; Pre-packaged refrigerated or frozen potentially hazardous foods; Baby food or formula.*
Risk level II poses a higher health risk to the public than risk level I because of hand contact or employee health concerns but little possibility of foodborne illness exists. Examples of risk level II activities include: *Handling or preparing non-potentially hazardous food; Holding for sale or serving potentially hazardous food at the same proper holding temperature at which it was received; or Heating individually packaged and processed potentially hazardous foods for immediate service.*
Risk level III poses a higher health risk to the public than risk level II because of the following concerns: proper cooking temperatures, proper cooling procedures, proper holding temperatures, contamination issues, or processing a raw food product. Examples of risk level III activities include: *Handling, cutting, or grinding raw meat products; Cutting or slicing ready-to-eat meats and cheeses; Reheating in individual portions only; or Heating of a product from a sealed package and holding it hot.*
Risk level IV poses a higher health risk to the public than risk level III because of concerns associated with: handling or preparing food that includes reheating; offering raw meat, poultry product, fish; serving a primarily high risk people like immuno-compromised or the elderly; or using time instead of temperature as a control for bacterial growth. Examples of risk level IV activities include, but are not limited to: *Reheating bulk quantities of leftover potentially hazardous food more than once every seven days; or Caterers or other similar food service operations that transport potentially hazardous food.*

Violation Types

Critical Violations: Violations of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code, which, if left uncorrected, are more likely than other violations to directly contribute to food contamination, or foodborne illness. Examples of critical violations include poor temperature control of food, improper cooking, cooling, refrigeration or reheating temperatures. Such problems can create environments that cause bacteria to grow and thrive, which puts the consumer at risk for foodborne illness.
Non-Critical Violations: Violations not directly related to the cause of foodborne illness, but if uncorrected, could impede the operation of the restaurant. The likelihood of foodborne illness in these cases is very low. Non-Critical violations, if left uncorrected, could lead to Critical violations. Examples of non-critical violations include a lack of facility cleanliness and maintenance or improper cleaning of equipment and utensils.