

Food Safety Regulations Amended to Improve Safety and Health

Changes Reflect National Food Code

Regulations governing the state's food code have been amended, improving safety and health standards for food storage, preparation and serving, the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH) announced recently.

The Kentucky Food Establishment Act and State Retail Food Code regulation, which governs food regulations across the commonwealth, has not been substantially revised since 1976. The new version of the administrative regulation adopts changes made in 2005 to the federal food code, putting Kentucky in line with national standards.



"When it comes to food storage, cooking and handling, there are many health and safety issues to consider. By amending these regulations, we are making sure Kentucky is in line with national standards for food safety," said KDPH Commissioner William Hacker, M.D.

Among other improvements, the new code requires that businesses and facilities employ someone who has knowledge of food safety and its relationship to foodborne illness. The changes also require that permit holders take responsibility to exclude or restrict ill workers with communicable diseases such as norovirus, *E. coli*, *Salmonella* or hepatitis A.

Other significant changes require that cold food be stored at 41 degrees Fahrenheit instead of 45 degrees Fahrenheit (business owners will have five years to upgrade equipment); and the use of consumer advisories regarding the consumption of animal foods that are raw, undercooked or not otherwise processed to eliminate pathogens.

"Adopting the federal food code is one more step we can take to improve the health and well-being of our fellow Kentuckians," said Dr. Hacker. "The federal code uses the best and most current science available to ensure that a safer, healthier food supply is reaching the people of our state."

DPH worked collaboratively with the Food Safety-Defense Task Force on the adoption of the federal food code. Task force members included the Kentucky Restaurant Association, the Kentucky Retail Federation, local health departments, DPH food safety branch regulatory officials and representatives from industry and academia.

A one-year implementation date for the new food code is planned to allow food establishment owners and operators to prepare for the changes in regulations. The new code will be effective in May 2010.

State health officials will conduct trainings for local health departments over the next year to educate staff on changes in the new code. The first training will be Sept. 16 at the annual Retail Food Seminar. Business owners should familiarize themselves with the code to assure they will be in compliance by next May.

For more information, the amended code can be [viewed at the Legislative Research Commission's Web site](#). The 2005 federal Food and Drug Administration Food Code can be found [at the FDA's Web site](#).

About the Author

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