

Skagit County Public Health - March 2022 Food Newsletter

WAC 246-215 Rule Revision - *Key Changes*

Key Changes that apply to ALL Food Establishments:

- **Inspection report posted/available:** all food establishments are now required to notify customers that the most recent establishment inspection report or summary provided is available for review by posting a sign or placard in a location in the establishment that is conspicuous to customers.
- **Verifiable employee health awareness:** the new rule requires the Person in Charge (PIC) to verify workers are trained on employee health. The PIC must make sure workers know the key symptoms (diarrhea, vomiting, and jaundice) and diagnosed illnesses (norovirus, Salmonella, E.coli, Shigella, and hepatitis A) that sick workers must report to PIC.
- **Cleanup plan for vomiting and diarrheal events:** each food establishment must have a written plan specific to their operation for cleanup of vomit and diarrhea spills.
- **Date Marking:** food establishments that store (prepared on-site or unpackaged) ready-to-eat, refrigerated time temperature control for safety (TCS) foods for longer than 24 hours must mark foods to ensure they are used within 7 days.
- **Soap and sanitizer availability:** food establishments need to have soap and sanitizer available during all hours of food preparation.
- **Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM):** At least one employee must be a CFPM with national ANSI certification from one of the six approved providers. The CFPM does not need to be on premises but must ensure all PICs are properly trained and able to ensure Active Managerial Control. This is not in effect until **March 2023**.

Sample plans are offered by WaDOH & SCPH. Sample plans such as *vomit and diarrhea cleanup plan* & *sample date marking plans* are available on SCPH website www.skagitcounty.net/food and Wa DOH website doh.wa.gov/food-safety-rules

FOOD RULE CHAPTER 246-215 WAC Top 10 Changes

1 thru 5 discussed in **January** newsletter

1. **Certified Food Protection Manager, CFPM.**
2. **Employee health, illness, and hygiene.**
3. **Clean up procedures for vomit and diarrhea.**
4. **Bare Hand Contact with Foods.**
5. **Date marking for 7-day shelf life.**

6 thru 10 discussed in **February** newsletter

6. **Refilling reusable consumer-owned containers.**
7. **Dogs in select areas of food establishments.**
8. **Mobile food unit requirements; including commissaries and plan review.**
9. **Donated Foods.**
10. **Food Specific Changes.**

Get a copy of the revised WAC

[Wa State Retail Food Code](#)

Key Changes that affect **SOME** Food Establishments:

- **Cooking hamburger, sausage, and scrambled eggs:** Scrambled eggs for more than one person, ground beef, and sausage must be cooked to 158 F to be considered fully cooked. Food establishments may still cook to alternate temperatures with an approved plan.
- **Shellstock Tags:** food establishments with in-shell molluscan shellfish, such as oysters, clams, or mussels must record both the first and last date of sales/service on the shellstock tags and keep them in an organized system for at least 90 days after the shellfish are sold.
- **Raw Fish Separation:** Raw fish separation required from other raw meats due to allergen cross-contact. Establishments that prepare raw fish and other meats will need to wash, rinse, and sanitize the cutting boards between the fish and other raw animal product.
- **Packaged Fish Thawing:** Food establishments that thaw commercially-packaged frozen fish labelled “Keep Frozen” will need to break the package seal before thawing in refrigerator or immediately after thawing under running water.

New options available to **INTERESTED** Food Establishments:

Bare hand Contact: Establishments with strong active managerial control may apply to have bare hand contact (BHC) with ready-to-eat foods. BHC plans require a written employee health policy, a log of employee health records, annual staff training, adequate handwashing sinks, additional safeguards, record keeping and Skagit County Public Health (SCPH) approval.

- **Consumer owned containers:** Establishments will have the option to allow visibly clean containers to be refilled by both consumers and employees. This will require the food establishment to create a written plan to submit to the SCPH.
- **Partially-cooked fresh fish:** Establishments that want to serve partially-cooked fresh finfish, such as fresh fresh-caught salmon or halibut, may do so with consumer’s request and a modified consumer advisory. *Note: Fresh fish served raw still needs to have proper parasite destruction.*
- **Pet Dogs:** Some establishments may allow customers to have pet dogs on the premises in specific situations under an approved plan from SCPH.
- **Emergency Operating Plans:** Establishments may continue operations during emergency power or water stoppage with pre-approved plan.

Since December several SCPH newsletters provided additional details regarding the Top 10 Food Code Changes in the State Food Code. These changes are effective this month, March 2022 (except for the Certified Food Protection Manager training effective March 2023).

We understand that change can be stressful. Be assured that Skagit County Public Health staff are here to help and work with you. WA State Department of Health (DOH) and SCPH are providing an **educational period from March 1, 2022 until August 31, 2022**. Identified food safety risks need to be corrected, but *points for the revised rule sections will not be assigned* during inspections during the educational period to help transition to the new rule. We will continue educating food establishments about the rule changes during food inspections. Please contact us with questions.

WaDOH & WA Hospitality Association teamed up to produce short staff training videos covering the main food code updates. Check out the videos on the WA Hospitality Association website <https://wahospitality.org/quick-bites/>

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