

June 26, 2007

Re: New State Retail Food Regulations

Dear City of Long Beach Food Facility Owner/Operator/Manager:

Please read this letter and enclosed attachments carefully as there are new State of CA retail food regulations affecting your food facility beginning July 1, 2007.

This new law, called the California Retail Food Code (or also known as Cal Code), will completely replace the California Uniform Retail Food Facilities Law (CURFFL) which has regulated retail food facilities in California for the last 22 years. A broad based coalition of federal, state, and local regulators and the retail food industry drafted Cal Code. They worked together over the last 5 years to produce a new retail food law that included the best available science to prevent foodborne illness. Cal Code is modeled on the Federal Model Food Code (2001 version) which is used in many other States. On May 15, 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Cal Code (SB 144-Runner) into law, allowing one year for implementation by the local health agencies. For a link to the full text of the Cal Code, please go to:

http://www.crfsc.org/calcode/CalCode_with_SB_744.pdf

While Cal Code is a totally new law, and includes new requirements, it also includes most of the previous requirements of the past law (CURFFL). So, our inspectors will be looking at the same food safety issues as in the past, as well as the new requirements.

Attached is a summary of the major changes in the new Cal Code. Please read this document carefully. Also, as the enclosed flyer details, we will be providing a free Cal Code presentation on September 19, 2007 to highlight the changes in the new law. Some of the major new requirements you will want to take immediate action on include:

- New Employee Health requirements that include designating a person in charge (PIC) at your food facility who is responsible for employee health issues and must exclude or restrict sick employees. The PIC can be changed at any time, and the PIC should be present during all hours of operation. If the PIC has to leave the facility, he/she should designate another person to be the PIC. This new person should be aware of all the PIC responsibilities. In addition, the PIC will need to notify the Long Beach City Health Officer/Epidemiologist at 562-570-4302 if a food employee has been diagnosed with a reportable illness or if they have knowledge that two or more food employees are experiencing symptoms of an acute gastrointestinal illness. Our health inspections will include questions on the PIC.
- New Demonstration of Knowledge requirements that all food employees are required to have adequate knowledge in food safety as it relates to their assigned duties. For example, the cook should know the appropriate cooking, cooling, holding, and reheating temperatures. The dishwasher/warewasher should know the proper wash, rinse, and sanitizing steps as well as the sanitizing concentrations. All employees should be educated on proper handwashing requirements. The certified food handler in each facility should be ensuring that all employees are following the applicable food safety

requirements. Our health inspections will include questions on demonstration of knowledge.

- All raw produce (fruits and vegetables) is required to be washed prior to being cut, combined with other ingredients, cooked or served or offered for human consumption in ready-to-eat form.
- Tableware (forks, knives, spoons, bowls, cups, serving dishes, tumblers, plates, etc) that is preset shall be protected from contamination by being wrapped, covered or inverted. So, for example, a table can be preset if the fork/knife/spoon is wrapped in a napkin, and all other tableware is inverted (glasses, plates turned upset down). Amendment to Cal Code effective 7/20/07 states "If tableware is preset, exposed and unused, extra settings shall either be removed when a consumer is seated or cleaned and sanitized before further use.

Please refer to the attached summary, and the web link provided, to determine the requirements that will affect your food facility. Finally, the official inspection report (OIR), which is signed by the inspector and food facility representative, will have a new look. It has been redesigned to be similar to other OIR's used Statewide in other health jurisdictions. However, there are no changes being made to the inspection summary report (ISR) that is posted in the front window of each food facility.

If you have any questions on the enclosed materials, please feel free to contact me at 562-570-4144, Monica Cardenas at 562-570-4494, or Claro Rufo at 562-4142.

Sincerely,
Jackie Hampton, R.E.H.S.
Food Program Supervisor
Bureau of Environmental Health