

FDA Guidelines

The FDA Food Code is a national guideline for safeguarding public health utilizing the most current scientific knowledge to prevent, reduce or eliminate hazardous food from being served in the United States. Each state adopts all or part of the Food Code to develop their own regulations. Local health departments may choose to adopt state regulations, or establish additional criteria beyond state requirements. In the end, the Model Food Code serves a baseline for food safety, with tremendous variety across different locales.

A cornerstone of the Model Food Code is that any food service establishment (prepackaged food excluded) must have a certified food protection or sanitation manager. Their training provides the foundation of knowledge towards establishing effective food safety policies and procedures. The certified individual(s) must actively enforce the regulations, which must be 100% supported by upper management/ownership. When this is achieved, the likelihood of exposure to biological, chemical and physical hazards is reduced.

For the individual food service establishment, developing customized, sound, proven and up-to-date policies and procedures is a good start. The best food service operations develop a culture of food safety and a strong commitment to training and on-going training accompanied by Active Managerial Control. Training is the least expensive tool in the food service arsenal to prevent exposure to food safety hazards. In my experience in teaching food service operators to become certified food protection managers and performing food safety inspections, when training is overlooked, bypassed, or thought to take too much time, I find those food service operators to be at the highest risk of exposure to potential legal action.

The current and future focus of food safety is on prevention and active managerial control. The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) demonstrates the future vision of regulations. All food service operations leave themselves open to increased exposure if they do not understand and keep up-to-date with the local, state, and FDA guidelines/regulations.

This round table will assist with answering your specific questions. Due to the amount of time, and the complexity of the topic, some questions may need to be addressed shortly following the conference. Please come prepared with your business cards and your questions written down. I will respond to each and every unresolved question by email as a service to you for attending this educational conference.