

Food Service Quarterly Newsletter
January-March 2006



As part of LMAS District Health Department's continuing stride to provide news and information to the public that we serve, we are proud to present this quarter's newsletter. Inside you will find information on new and emerging issues in the food service world. We hope that you find the following information beneficial as begin a new and hopefully prosperous year.





License Applications

Food Service license applications for the 2006-2007 licensing year will be going out during the month of March. When filling out your license application, please be sure to make the information legible. This will help the state of Michigan to print the correct information on the licenses and speed up the return time of the licenses to the food establishments. If LMAS District Health Department receives incomplete license applications they will not be accepted and returned to the establishment to be completed. To avoid having your application returned to you, please make sure that you completely fill out the application paying special attention to areas #3 and #6.



Menu Updates/Changes

If you plan on **adding** or deleting items from your food establishment's menu, a copy of the new menu needs to be submitted to the local health department for review. There are two reasons why your local health department needs to review the updated menus. One is to determine if there is enough storage capacity for added items, and the second has to do with the licensing for the establishment. Food establishments are placed into one of five different categories based on the risk that their menu accommodates. These categories are then used for determining license fees for the year. The factors that are examined when determining which category the food establishment will fall into are the number of potentially hazardous foods, the length of hot and cold holding time, the number of foods requiring advanced prep, the number of raw foods, the number of foods going through the cook-cool-reheat process, the number of passes through the danger zone, if the population served is primarily immunocompromised, and if there is processing for wholesale & retail level. If you update your menu please be advised, you must submit a copy to your local health department for review.



Freezing Foods

It has come to the attention of the Environmental Health Sanitarians that there is some confusion in regards to the regulations for date-marking and freezing foods. The 1999 Food Code adopted by the Michigan Food Law of 2000 states under rule 3-501.17:

- ... (B) ... a ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous food prepared in a food establishment (or (D) a container of refrigerated, ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous food prepared and packaged by a food processing plant and subsequently opened) and subsequently frozen, shall be clearly marked:
 1. When the food is thawed, to indicate that the food shall be consumed within 24 hours; or
 2. When the food is placed into the freezer, to indicate the length of time before freezing that the food is held refrigerated and which is, including day of preparation (a) 7 calendar days or less from the day of preparation, if the food is maintained at 41°F or less; and
 3. When the food is removed from the freezer, to indicate the date by which the food shall be consumed which is (a) 7 calendar days or less after the food is removed from the freezer, minus the time before freezing, that the food is held refrigerated if the food is maintained at 41°F or less before and after freezing.

Example: A soup is prepared on January 1, the soup is in use and then properly cooled at the end of the day and marked with the discard date of January 7. Two days later the head chef decides to freeze the remainder of the soup for future use. The date of January 3 is added to the date mark on the soup and the soup is placed into the freezer. The soup is then removed from the freezer and properly thawed on January 20, the date of January 23 is then added to the date marking on the soup as the new discard date. Remember to include the preparation date and the thaw date when counting your 7 days.



Non-Smoking Area Requirements

Nonsmoking areas are regulated by section 12905 of Act 368 of Public Acts of 1978, being section 333.12905 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, as amended by Act 96, Public Acts 1986: Act 297, Public Acts of 1988: and Public Acts of 1993.

Requirements:

- All public areas of a food service establishment including bathrooms, coatrooms, entrances, or other areas used by a patron shall be nonsmoking.
- Establishments with fewer than 50 seats and private clubs, regardless of the number of seats, may designate up to 75% of its seating capacity for smokers.
- Establishments with 50 or more seats may designate up to 50% of its seating capacity for smokers.
- Seats required for nonsmokers shall be identified as nonsmoking (table tents will be sufficient) and shall be in close proximity to each other.

Exemptions:

- Public area does not include the lobby, waiting room, hallways, or lounge areas.
- Requirements do not apply to a private club that is served by a catering kitchen, a separate room in a food establishment used for private banquets, a facility owned and operated by a fraternal organization serving only members and guests, or seats located at a bar or seats at tables that are located adjacent to a bar (lounge area) if meals are not served at those tables.

Note: For the purposes of the Act, meals shall not include snacks, hors d'oeuvres, or appetizers served.