

POLICY NUMBER: 222.01
DIVISION: Environmental Public Health
POLICY TITLE: Food Safety Program Quality Improvement and Standardization
AGENCY (ies): Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, Nebraska Department of
Agriculture
AUTHORITY: Board of Health
DRAFTED: 04-26-1990
APPROVED: 06-12-1990
REVISED: ~~09-07-2010~~12-18-15
APPROVED: ~~11-09-2010~~

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Board of Health (BOH) has adopted ~~Healthy People 2010 Health Objectives for the Year 2010 for Lincoln & Lancaster County as its Ends Objectives. The the~~ Safe Food Health Objective ~~for the Year 2010 is~~ to "Reduce the incidence of foodborne illness and assure the public is provided safe wholesome food." In order to achieve this objective, it shall be the policy of the BOH that the FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards (FDA Standards) will be used to evaluate the overall quality of the LLCHD Food Safety Program.

The BOH's goal is for the LLCHD Food Safety Program to meet the FDA Standards. Achieving this goal will assure high quality services are provided to the regulated industry and the public's health will be protected. High quality services shall be defined, based on the FDA Standards, to include: assuring adequate regulatory authority; training staff adequately; conducting inspections based on Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Point principles; conducting uniform inspections; investigating potential food borne illnesses rapidly; applying compliance and enforcement procedures fairly; maintaining good industry and community relations; and assuring adequate program support and resources.

Environmental Health Specialists who perform food establishment inspections shall meet and maintain certifications as a Registered Environmental Health Specialists with the State of Nebraska and a Certified Professional - Food Safety with the National Environmental Health Association.

PROCEDURES:

- I. LLCHD shall use the FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards to evaluate the overall quality of LLCHD's Food Safety Program. The Board of Health's goal for LLCHD's program is to meet the FDA Standards.
 - A. When a standard is met, FDA shall be notified and an audit by an FDA trained auditor will be requested. Required paperwork shall be completed and filed with FDA once the audit is completed.

- B. A report on the progress of achieving the FDA standards shall be provided annually to the Board of Health.
- II. As a requirement of LLCHD's contract with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) to do food establishment inspections, NDA conducts a comprehensive evaluation of our food program at either a four or five year interval. NDA evaluation reports will be presented to the Food Advisory Committee and the Board of Health, along with staff recommendations for program improvements.
 - III. The Food Team Training and Standardization Coordinator (Standardization Officer) shall be "standardized" biennially by a NDA Food Service Evaluation Officer.
 - IV. Each Food Team Environmental Health Specialist I (EHS) shall be standardized annually by LLCHD's Food Team Training and Standardization Coordinator. Each Food Team Senior EHS and EHS II shall be standardized biennially by LLCHD's Standardization Officer.
 - A. For each standardization, the Standardization Officer shall observe a minimum of eight inspections with every EHS who conducts food establishment inspections.
 - 1. The Standardization Officer shall select establishments assigned to the EHS that are due for a regular inspection based on intervals prescribed by Policy 222.38. Standardizing inspections shall be conducted at different facility types.
 - 2. The EHS shall take the lead and announce to the owner/manager the purpose of the inspection. The EHS shall conduct the inspection and document violations following Policy 222.30 - Routine Food Establishment Inspection. The Standardization Officer shall accompany and observe the EHS through the entire inspection and exit interview. The Standardization Officer shall discuss food code violations, interpretations, and inspection techniques as needed.
 - 3. The Standardization Officer shall review the inspection records and evaluate if the EHS has completed routine inspections of establishments at the inspection interval established in LLCHD Policy 222.38.
 - B. The Standardization Officer shall prepare a written standardization report. The Standardization Officer shall compare the eight standardization inspection reports to the last regular inspection reports. The report will include comparisons of violations between the two inspections, denote findings, conclusions, and recommendations. Statistical reports of historic inspection information for the EHS shall be reviewed for inconsistencies in marking violations and code interpretations.
 - 1. If significant inconsistency in marking violations is identified, the Standardization Officer shall notify the Food Team Supervisor immediately.

2. The standardization report shall be reviewed and discussed by the Standardization Officer with the individual EHS.
 3. The Standardization Officer shall provide copies of the standardization report to the EHS, Food Team Supervisor, and NDA.
 4. The standardization report shall be used in each EHS's annual performance appraisal. Areas of strengths and areas of improvement shall be included.
- V. The Standardization Officer shall identify inconsistencies and clarify interpretations with the Food Team and NDA as appropriate.
- A. The Standardization Officer shall randomly review copies of inspection reports for code reference number accuracy. Questionable interpretation issues shall be brought to the attention of the EHS.
 - B. The Food Team will meet monthly to discuss interpretations and address quality improvement issues. Any team member may add issues to the agenda. If the Standardization Officer is not sure of the correct interpretation, an NDA Standardizing Officer shall be consulted.
- VI. The Food Team Supervisor will randomly review food inspection reports to verify that the documentation of violations are complete and clearly stated.
- VII. A copy of each completed inspection report shall be sent to the establishment permittee within one week of the inspection. A cover letter (Exhibit 1) shall be included with each mailing. Copies may be sent electronically if requested by the permittee.
- VIII. The Food Team Supervisor shall adjust geographical area assignments among Food Team at a minimum of every three years.
- IX. All Environmental Health Specialists who perform food establishment inspections shall meet requirements and become certified as a Registered Environmental Health Specialists (REHS) with the State of Nebraska within three years of date of hire. In addition, they shall become registered as a Certified Professional - Food Safety (CP-FS) with the National Environmental Health Association within five years from date of hire, or within two years of becoming an REHS. The EHS shall maintain their REHS and CP-FS certifications for as long as they are working in the Food Safety Program.



Policy 222.01 - Exhibit 1

Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
Environmental Public Health Division
3140 "N" Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68510

(Date)

(Permittee name and address)

Dear Food Establishment Permittee:

Enclosed is a copy of the last inspection conducted at:

(Insert name and address of establishment)

Permit Number: (insert file number of establishment)

for which you are listed as the permittee. It is the policy of the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department to mail a copy of an inspection report to all permittees to ensure that you are fully informed of the results of inspections. If you have any questions, please contact the Environmental Health Specialist whose name appears on the inspection form.

Joyce Jensen, REHS, CP-FS
Environmental Health Supervisor
Environmental Public Health Division