



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR NEW FOOD SAFETY RULES

HONOLULU — The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) will hold public hearings in all counties between Dec. 2 and 6, 2013, to introduce new food safety regulations that will affect all restaurants and food establishments in the state. The last substantial change to these rules was made nearly 17 years ago in 1996.

Highlights of the new food safety rules include: adoption of the 2009 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Model Food Code as the basis for the rules; introduction of a highly visible restaurant grading system that will require food establishments to post the results of their last state inspection; move to annual permitting from biennial permitting; and permit fee increases.

“Adoption of the FDA Model Food Code will provide Hawaii with nationally recognized standards based on the most current scientific findings on food safety,” said Peter Oshiro, Sanitation Branch chief. “We look forward to enhancing our current state food regulations with these new and improved rules.”

The new grading system will consist of “PASS” (green), “CONDITIONAL PASS” (yellow), and “CLOSED” (red) placards. A “PASS” green placard will be given to food facilities that have one major violation or less that is corrected prior to completion of the inspection. A “CONDITIONAL PASS” yellow placard will be issued to a facility with two or more major violations during an inspection regardless of whether the violations are corrected on site. Major violations require a follow-up inspection. Follow-up inspections are conducted the next working day after notification from the facility that all major violations have been corrected. A “CLOSED” red placard will be issued if there are imminent health hazards that warrant immediate closure of the facility (lack of

water, lack of electricity, sewage overflows in food preparation areas, sick employees, vermin infestation, etc.).

Major health inspection violations at food establishments are conditions that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the FDA recognize as the main causes of food illnesses (lack of hand washing, poor temperature controls, and contamination by raw/uncooked foods, etc.)

It is anticipated that the fee increases outlined in the new food safety rules will fund 13 additional full-time inspector positions granted by the state Legislature to be filled in fiscal years 2012-2015. The additional staffing will support an expanded inspection schedule that will include a minimum of three on-site inspections each year for high-risk establishments, two on-site inspections each year for medium risk establishments, and annual visits for all other establishments to meet national program standards and reduce foodborne illness.

“The new food safety rules will mean a huge step forward for our program and will result in overall improvements by expanding food safety testing, pesticide monitoring of local produce, and shellfish monitoring, among many other activities that protect public health every day,” added Oshiro.

To view Hawaii Administrative Rules Chapter 11- 50, titled, “Food Safety Code,” go to health.hawaii.gov/san/. Public hearings will be held at the following dates and locations:

Hawaii (Hilo): Monday, Dec. 2, at 1 p.m.
Environmental Health Facility conference room (1582 Kamehameha Ave., Hilo)

Hawaii (Kona): Tuesday, Dec. 3, at 1 p.m.
West Hawaii Civic Center - Liquor Control conference room, 2nd Floor, Bldg. B
(74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Kailua-Kona)

Oahu: Wednesday, Dec. 4, at 1 p.m.
Environmental Management Division conference room, 5th Floor (919 Ala Moana Blvd., Honolulu)

Maui: Thursday, Dec. 5, at 1 p.m.
UH- Maui College Community Services Building (310 Kaahumanu Ave., Bldg. #205, Kahului)

Kauai: Friday, Dec. 6, at 1 p.m.
Lihue Health Center conference room (3040 Umi St., Lihue)

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