



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HOLDS STATEWIDE PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR CHANGES TO FOOD SAFETY CODES

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) will hold public hearings on Hawaii Island, Maui, Oahu, and Kauai from Dec. 5-9, 2016 (see exact scheduling details below) to introduce amendments to the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) Title 11, Chapter 50, Food Safety Code, which outlines standards for all food establishments statewide.

In February 2014, the state passed new food safety rules that significantly changed the food service inspection process by introducing the highly visible “stop-light” placarding system that displays the results of each inspection. The new state rules also adopted the 2009 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Model Food Code as its basis, increased the frequency of permit requirements based on health risk, and increased permit fees to create an online database of inspection records for the public.

“The department is continuing to raise the state’s food safety standards by further updating regulations to increase the focus on prevention and reduce the risk of residents and visitors contracting foodborne illness,” said Peter Oshiro, head of the DOH Food Safety program.

“Updating state requirements and fees and aligning our state with federal standards are essential for creating a world class food safety program in Hawaii.”

The proposed amendments include establishing a new food safety education requirement for persons-in-charge at all food establishments. The new rule will require at least one employee on every work shift be certified at the formal Food Handlers Training level. This will ensure a standard baseline of food safety knowledge for all establishment owners and managers. Studies have shown that food establishments with properly trained persons-in-charge have a lower occurrence of critical food safety violations that are directly linked to food illnesses.

The department is also proposing the adoption of the 2013 FDA Model Food Code. This will provide Hawaii with the most current nationally recognized food code based on the latest scientific knowledge on food safety. Updating the state’s food code will also align Hawaii with national standards and provide consistent requirements for food facilities that operate across multiple states.

Additional proposed changes to the state's food safety rules include:

- Removing the 20 days of sale limit for homemade foods (cottage foods) that are not considered a potential public health risk;
- Removing the restriction on the number of days a Special Event Temporary Food Establishment permit may be valid;
- Establishing a new fee structure for Temporary Food Establishment Permits (\$100 for a 20-day permit plus \$5 for each additional day over 20 to a maximum of one year);
- Streamlining regulations for mobile food establishments (e.g. food trucks) by incorporating the requirements into existing rules for their base operations or "brick and mortar" establishments;
- Revising the fee structure for mobile units with no increase to the total amount currently paid by a mobile operator;
- Allowing placarding during all inspections;
- Allowing the state to refuse permit renewal for non-payment of fines or stipulated agreements more than 30 days overdue; and
- Requiring state approval for the sale of "Wild Harvested Mushrooms."

The draft rules are available for review at <http://health.hawaii.gov/opppd/proposed-changes-to-department-of-health-administrative-rules-title-11/>. Written public comments are recommended and may be submitted at the public hearings or to the Sanitation Branch at 99-945 Halawa Valley St., Aiea, Hawaii 96701 prior to the close of business on Friday, Dec. 16, 2016.

Public hearings on the proposed rules will be held on the dates, at the times, and places noted below:

Island of Oahu

Monday, Dec. 5 (2 - 5 p.m.)
Environmental Health Services Division
Food Safety Education Room
99-945 Halawa Valley St., Aiea

Island of Maui

Tuesday, Dec. 6 (2 - 5 p.m.)
UH-Maui College Community Services Building
310 Kaahumanu Ave., Bldg. #205, Kahului

Island of Hawaii-Hilo

Wednesday, Dec. 7 (2 - 5 p.m.)
Environmental Health Building Conference Room
1582 Kamehameha Ave., Hilo

Island of Hawaii-Kona

Thursday, Dec. 8 (2 - 5 p.m.)
West Hawaii Civic Center, Bldg. G
74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Highway, Kailua-Kona

Island of Kauai

Friday, Dec. 9 (2 - 5 p.m.)
Lihue Health Center Conference Room

3040 Umi St., Lihue

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