



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CITES AFC SUSHI IN KAPAHULU
FOR UNLAWFUL PLACARD REMOVAL AND FOOD CODE VIOLATIONS**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has issued a Notice of Violation and Order against Advanced Fresh Concepts Franchise Corp. (dba AFC Sushi @ Safeway #2747) for \$6,000 for intentionally camouflaging the posted yellow or conditional pass placard and for food safety violations. AFC Sushi @ Safeway #2747 is located at 888 Kapahulu Avenue in Honolulu within the Safeway Supermarket. The company may contest the notice and has 20 days to request a hearing.

“Tampering with a health inspection placard is a serious violation with substantial consequences because this act compromises the public’s trust and their right to know when violations occur during an inspection,” said Peter Oshiro, environmental health program manager. “Fortunately, these types of incidents have been rare since the start of the placarding program and this is only the fourth incident with more than 14,500 inspections completed. Overall compliance with Hawaii’s food industry has been excellent.”

On Jan. 19, DOH conducted a routine inspection of AFC Sushi located in the Kapahulu Safeway and a yellow placard was issued for three major food code violations. AFC Sushi was cited for improper hot holding temperatures, improper cold holding temperatures, and failure to properly label discard times on perishable food items kept at room temperature. On Jan. 23, a health inspector conducted a follow-up inspection and observed the yellow placard was not clearly visible to the public and appeared to have been removed, turned around and reposted. During the inspection, the inspector determined that two major violations were still outstanding and the yellow placard was re-posted. DOH conducted another follow-up inspection on Jan. 24 and all

outstanding major violations were found to be corrected. A green or pass placard was issued and is currently posted at the facility.

Since the start of the state's Food Safety Placarding Program, DOH has conducted more than 14,500 inspections and issued more than 3,000 yellow placards or conditional passes that require the establishments to address violations. To date, only three have resulted in red or closed placards due to non-compliance. Green placards are issued for those establishments with no more than one critical violation, which must be corrected at the time of inspection; yellow cards are issued to those with two or more critical violations; and red placards are issued to those food establishments that need to be immediately closed because they pose an imminent health hazard to the community. Major violations are those conditions known to cause foodborne illnesses as recognized by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Only authorized DOH agents may post or remove a color-coded placard indicating the compliance status of a food establishment.

"There has been an impressive 99.8 percent voluntary compliance rate for Hawaii food facilities that are issued a yellow placard, with the time for correction averaging just two to three days," said Oshiro. "We commend the restaurants, hotels, retail and food manufacturing industry in Hawaii for doing an amazing job in embracing the new Food Safety Placarding Program."

The DOH Sanitation Branch protects and promotes the health of Hawaii residents and visitors through education of food industry workers and regulation of food establishments statewide. The branch conducts routine health inspections of food establishments where food products are prepared, manufactured, distributed, or sold. The branch also investigates the sources of food borne illnesses and potential adulteration of food products; and is charged with mitigating foodborne outbreaks and/or the prevention of future occurrences. Health inspectors work with business owners, food service workers, and the food industry to ensure safe food preparation practices and sanitary conditions.

The public may access food establishment health inspection results online at <http://hi.healthinspections.us/hawaii/>. For more information on the department's restaurant placarding program go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/san/>.

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