

Follow-up on HACCP visits

Traditional inspections that follow a HACCP visit include verification of the agreed upon improvements. If a HACCP visit focused on cooling large quantities of soup, the inspector might ask at a later routine inspection: How does the cook know if the soup is cooling fast enough? Have new procedures been adopted to accomplish rapid cooling? Licensees are encouraged to record temperatures on a temperature log or report form to monitor cooling effectiveness. Records demonstrate an ongoing commitment to producing safe food.

Use of HACCP is a voluntary procedure on the part of food service establishments. While inspectors' follow-up visits will usually be traditional inspections, inspectors will be better informed about a restaurant's cooking procedures and the establishment's managers will be better informed about the health concerns related to their menus.

Approximately one out of every three inspections will be a HACCP consultative visit.

Food Service Establishments already having Formal Food Safety Programs

Establishments that already have formal food safety programs, such as HACCP, may receive unannounced, modified verification visits. These visits include reviewing written food safety plans, recorded food temperatures, deviations and dispositions, and corrective actions. During the visit, inspectors will measure the temperatures found at identified CCPs, review employee training plans, equipment calibration records, hand washing facilities, and managements' efforts to monitor employee hand washing. Recommendations and observations are recorded on a comment sheet and reviewed with the person-in-charge.

Food Safety - A Shared Goal

HACCP offers both the food service industry and regulatory officials an opportunity to share their knowledge and common goals for improving food safety.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Factors Contributing to Foodborne Illness.

For each of the years from 1988 through 1992, the most commonly reported factors contributing to foodborne illness, in order of frequency:

- 1) improper holding temperature
- 2) poor personal hygiene of food handlers
- 3) inadequate cooking
- 4) contaminated equipment
- 5) food from unsafe source

Additional information concerning food safety issues is available on the Internet at sites including:

FDA Main Page with links to others www.fda.gov
CDC Main Page with links to others www.cdc.gov
USDA Main Page with links to others www.usda.gov
USDA FDA Foodborne Illness Educational Materials
www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodborne/foodborn.htm
FDA HACCP Training Programs & Resources Database
www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodborne/haccp/index.shtml
FDA Food Code www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodcode.html

Division of Hotels and Restaurants District Offices

850.487.1395

District 1 - Miami

Suite 111
Augusta Building
8685 NW 53 Terrace
Miami FL 33166-4519

Fax: 305.470.6746

Counties: Dade, Monroe

District 2 - Margate

Suite A
5080 Coconut Creek Pkwy.
Margate FL 33063-3942

Fax: 954.956.5699

Counties: Broward, Martin, Palm Beach

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Bromley Building
3725 West Grace Street
Tampa FL 33607-4826

Fax: 813.356.1613

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Suite 802, North Tower
Hurston Building
400 West Robinson Street
Orlando FL 32801-1757

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GUIDE TO HAZARD ANALYSIS and CRITICAL CONTROL POINT Operational HACCP



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**HAZARD ANALYSIS and
CRITICAL CONTROL POINT
Operational HACCP
for Florida's Public Food Service Establishments**

A New Type of Health Inspection

Beginning in the spring/summer of 1998, inspectors from the Division of Hotels and Restaurants will ask food service licensees to make an appointment for a HACCP (acronym is pronounced "HAS-SIP") visit. A HACCP visit is a food safety conference or interview that focuses on that establishment's menu. This voluntary visit substitutes for one of the required traditional inspections. An appointment is necessary to assure that the appropriate person or persons will have time to talk with the inspector about their menu, selected recipes, and methods currently used to assure food safety.

What is HACCP?

HACCP is a logical system designed to identify hazards and/or critical situations and to produce a structured plan to control these situations.

In a food service establishment, HACCP is a prevention-based food safety program that has two goals:

- (1) Determine the risks to food or a food handling process, and
- (2) Plan procedures to prevent or control these risks.

A HACCP plan anticipates what might happen, plans procedures to eliminate or reduce risks, and takes measures that prevent foodborne illness.

Food managers who want to write a HACCP plan can contact the division's Hospitality Education Program (HEP) for advice and/or consultation at 1-800-704-1076.

What are risks or hazards to safe food production?

Hazards may be:

- (1) biological (the most common cause of foodborne illness)
- (2) chemical, or
- (3) physical (often causing injury)

What is evaluated when analyzing the seriousness or risk of hazards?

People evaluate the likelihood of a hazard occurring and the severity of the risk. Significant factors include: adequate refrigeration, cooling procedures; the temperatures food attains during preparation and cooking, and maintains during holding, and service; and the extent of advanced preparation (several hours or days before serving). Food establishment employees who do not practice good personal and professional hygiene increase the risk of foodborne illness. Sick employees who handle foods greatly increase the risk of food borne illness.

Consumers who are elderly, very young, and/or immunocompromised present an increased susceptibility to foodborne illness.

What steps will control the hazards?

Critical Control Points (CCP) are steps or procedures in a food handling process where a hazard can be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to an acceptable level. Temperature controls are often CCPs.

Examples of typical Critical Control Points:

- *Rapid cooling - 2/3 of known foodborne outbreaks involve inadequate refrigeration*
- *Minimum safe temperatures needed for adequate cooking - Well-publicized and tragic deaths due to inadequate cooking of hamburgers remind us of the need for safe cooking temperatures.*
- *Hot holding*
- *Adequate reheating*
- *Safe food sources*
- *Sanitizing*

In addition, CCPs include employee hygiene and hygienic practices, especially when preparing ready-to-eat food. For example:

- *Employee health and hygienic practices, especially hand washing*
- *Eliminating bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food*
- *Employee practices that could contaminate food, especially cross contamination*

Why is the division focusing on HACCP?

HACCP offers a new method of focusing on the contributing factors to foodborne illness, the prevention of which is the primary purpose for regulating food establishments. This sharpened focus increases inspectors' culinary knowledge which allows them to more effectively apply their knowledge of safe food handling practices. Food safety is improved as both regulators and industry communicate more openly and develop greater awareness of one another's knowledge and skills.

Food service industry groups (Florida and National Restaurant Associations and the division's Advisory Council) and the Food and Drug Administration have encouraged the division to implement a modified HACCP approach as part of its regulatory duties.

How is a HACCP visit different from traditional, routine inspections?

The visit is usually made by appointment. Violations are not cited in a typical HACCP visit. Should an inspector find conditions that require an emergency closure, such as sewage backed up throughout a kitchen, the inspector will end the HACCP visit. Since this rarely happens during unannounced inspections, it is even more unlikely to occur when visits are made by appointment. Nonetheless it must be understood that inspectors must not ignore severe and immediate threats to public health.

The focus of a HACCP visit is foodborne disease prevention.

Food Service Establishments that do not have Formal Food Safety Programs

Inspectors discuss food preparation and recipes (secret

ingredients do not have to be revealed in order to understand the food handling processes that occur), identify measurable steps (critical control points) during food handling, consult with licensees on how to make food safe, encourage licensees to increase their own verification of safe food handling, review menus, draw a flow chart that depicts the described and/or observed process, and write recommendations and observations. Inspectors do not copy or remove ingredient specific recipes from food service establishments.

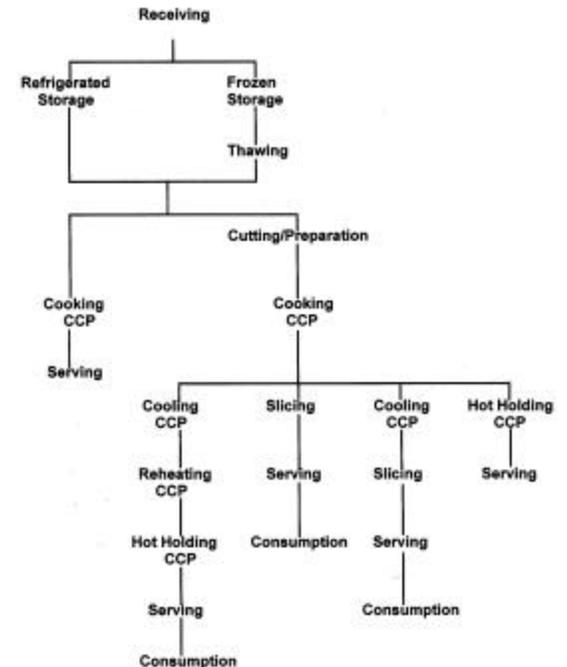
This visit will last longer than most traditional inspections, averaging about three hours.

Inspectors identify measurable steps (critical control points) during food handling to assure safe food.

The typical flow of food-related activities include the following:

- Menu planning and writing recipes
- Ordering and receiving
- Storage
- Thawing of frozen foods, reconstitution of dry foods
- Handling of raw foods
- Cooking
- Handling after cooking
- Hot-holding
- Cooling
- Reheating
- Serving or Packaging

A flow diagram traces each stage (note the CCPs):



Source: 1999 FDA Food Code, Annex 5 HACCP Guidelines