

2013 FDA Food Code is Adopted in MA!

The FDA 2013 Model Food Code was adopted in Massachusetts on October 5, 2018, for retail food establishments, along with MA amendments in 105 CMR 590. Industry and regulators alike are looking forward to implementing the new code, which has some significant changes over the previous version used in the state (1999 FDA Model Food Code, with Massachusetts supplement CMR 590.)

These science-based regulations offer more standardization in the restaurant inspection process, with the New risk assignments of Priority, Priority foundation and Core items in the code. Other major changes and benefits include:

Reducing the hot-holding temperature to 135° F, with the benefit of maintaining the moister quality of hot foods, but still ensuring food safety

Classification of cut tomatoes, cut leafy greens and cut melons as TCS (Time and Temperature Control for Safety) foods- refrigerating these foods at 41° F or below will prevent harmful bacterial growth.

Requiring food establishments to have written clean-up procedures in place for vomiting or diarrhea accidents. These procedures should reduce the spread of contagious Norovirus particles from these bodily fluids, and help prevent outbreaks which have been devastating to the industry.

Requiring staff to date-mark prepared ready-to-eat foods with the use-by date, with a limit of 7 days after preparation. This will eliminate confusion on when these foods need to be discarded, and facilitate staff using these foods before dangerous bacterial growth has occurred.