



Title: Food Safety Rating Signage at Retail Food Establishments	Page 1 of 3
Number: FLE Policy 2024-01	Effective Date: 7/1/2025
Applies To: Retail Food Establishments in Kitsap County	Supersedes: N/A
Approved: John Kiess, RS, EH Director	Next Review: 6/30/27

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide operators of retail food establishments with a policy and procedure pertaining to Food Safety Rating System.

B. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Kitsap Public Health District (Health District) to minimize the public's exposure to foodborne illness by ensuring local ordinance and state law requirements are being met. Communicating the potential risk of food safety practices observed at routine food safety inspections at the point-of-sale is one method consumers can utilize to inform their decisions. Temporary food establishments, donated food distributing organizations, and commissary kitchens with an Approved Kitchen-type permit are exempt from the requirements in this policy.

C. Definitions

For the purposes of administration and enforcement of this policy and procedure, the following definitions shall apply in addition to those found in Chapter 246-215 Washington Administrative Code (Food Code) and Kitsap Public Health Board Ordinance 2022-02 (Ordinance).

1. **Food Safety Rating Sign (sign):** The physical sign given to a food establishment's person-in-charge to display for public viewing.
2. **Reinspection (also known as a "follow-up" inspection):** A specific evaluation of compliance of violations that were recorded during the previous inspection. These inspections may occur as many times as needed until violations are sufficiently corrected. Permit holders are assessed a fee for additional inspections at the rate published in the Environmental Health Fee Schedule.

D. Implementing Procedures

1. Ratings are determined by a calculation of the food establishment's averaged routine food inspection scores, typically occurring over a two-year period, except food establishments on probation will receive a "Needs to Improve" sign as outlined in section D.2.d.

- a. Low-risk food establishments: An average of the two most recent routine inspections.
 - b. Medium- and high-risk food establishments: An average of the four most recent routine inspections.
 - c. Add-on permits: An average of the two most recent routine inspections.
 - d. The frequency of routine inspections assigned to each Food Service Establishment Permit category is subject to change. The frequency of routine inspections by permit type is outlined in *Permanent Food Establishment Permit Categories & Inspection Frequency* handout. It is the discretion of the Health District to amend the number of routine inspections included in the average score.
2. Rating categories are:
 - a. Best: 100%
 - b. Great: 93.7-99.9%
 - c. Okay: 85.1-93.6%
 - d. Needs to Improve: Food establishments on probation status per the Health District's *Enforcement of Critical Violations* policy.
 - e. New: New establishments will receive their first regular rating category sign following the first routine inspection for low-risk food establishments and the second routine inspection for medium- and high-risk food establishments.
3. At the conclusion of each routine inspection, the Health District will recalculate the establishment's rating category, and a new sign will be provided.
4. Operators shall post the sign provided by the Health District. Signs must be posted:
 - a. Within five feet of the main public entrance or entrance(s) and at each main customer interaction site, such as a Drive-Thru window; and
 - b. In a conspicuous location as directed by the Health District to ensure the sign in its entirety is clearly visible to patrons and passersby; and
 - c. At the conclusion of the inspection, prior to the inspector's departure.
5. Food establishments without their own physical location, such as a caterer who uses a commissary, must post the sign at the customer point-of-sale (e.g., website, table at event).
6. Signs may not be removed, repositioned, or defaced.
7. Operators must request a replacement sign from the Health District immediately in the event their sign is removed or defaced.

E. Enforcement

1. A violation of section D.4-7 is a violation of the critical risk factor labeled "Compliance with valid permit, operating and risk control plans, and required written procedures" (#26) on food inspection reports.
2. Enforcement of violation found within section D.4.-7 will be conducted per FLE Policy 2022-03, the "Enforcement Policy", except that follow-up inspections will always occur without exception.

F. References

- KPHB Ordinance 2022-02, *Food Service Regulations*
- Chapter 246-215 Washington Administrative Code, *Washington State Retail Food Code*
- FLE Policy 2022-03, *Enforcement of Critical Violations*
- Handout, *Permanent Food Establishment Permit Category & Inspection Frequency*

F. Policy Review History

Initial approval 2024