

Public Health – Seattle & King County
Permanent Food Risk Based Inspection Program

A risk based inspection program assigns inspection frequency based on the risks associated with the food service. There are three different risk type categories that can be assigned to a food service establishment and each is based on the type of food, preparation steps, type of food processing and/or packaging that is performed within an establishment.

| Risk Type | Risk Type Category Description and frequency | Placement Examples |
|---|---|---|
| <p><u>Low Risk</u> Category: 1</p> <p>Cold Holding Limited Food Prep</p> <p><i>Cook Step</i> <i>Exceptions:</i></p> <p>Commercially processed microwave dinners</p> | <p>Requires one routine inspection per year to verify proper food source, food storage, and general cleanliness.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Food Preparation Steps: Receive - Limited Prep - Serve</p> <p>Ready to eat pre-packaged potentially hazardous food or pre-packed frozen foods. No opening of packages for heating or service as a risk 1. Except for “venting” prior to heating. See risk 2 category.</p> <p>Espresso and/or blended drinks, no other food prep. Limited prep of potentially hazardous foods (sectioning melon, hot dogs).</p> <p>Heating of individually pre-packaged ready to eat foods for immediate service. Mobile Food Service - limited to espresso or hot dogs only, no other food prep.</p> | <p>Grocery Store, Drug Store, Convenience Store, Gas Station, Coffee Shop, Tavern, Espresso Caterer or Ice Cream Shop Espresso drinks, hot dogs, sectioning melons for retail sale in produce area, heating pre-packaged sandwiches (NO grilling or cutting of foods, NO on-site cooking/baking). Venting commercially packaged foods to heat and serve.</p> <p>Making smoothies w/ commercially prepared mixes (including dairy and commercially prepared frozen fruit), scooping ice cream, nacho cheese.</p> <p>Cart - espresso and/or hot dogs, grilled onions Mobile Truck - frozen food or meat, espresso, hot dogs, cold holding of pre-packaged foods</p> |
| <p><u>Medium Risk</u> Category: 2</p> <p>No Cook Step Food Preparation</p> <p><i>Cook Step</i> <i>Exceptions:</i></p> <p>Pre-packed Raw Meat or Seafood</p> | <p>Requires one routine inspection each year and an educational visit for consultation/training to discuss risk reduction while verifying proper food handling, food source, food storage, and general cleanliness. Risk 2 schools, USDA, National School Lunch Program Schools, receive 2 routine inspections per year.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Food Preparation Steps: Receive - Store - Prepare - Cold Hold - Serve Baking bread, pastries, donut frying, sandwich grilling or toasting for immediate service – no hot holding of foods. School or Institution satellite operation limited to reheating or hot holding of prepared foods – no on-site cooking.</p> <p>Grocery store or market which also sells pre-packaged raw meat or seafood products.</p> | <p>Bakery, Caterer, Sandwich Shop, Deli or Convenience Store, Coffee Shop or Tavern on site baking, sandwich making - food prep w/grilling, toasting and cutting of heated foods (NO hot holding of foods) Making smoothies w/ raw ingredients (fruit, eggs, etc.</p> <p>Cutting, slicing or removing commercially packaged foods from the package for heating or service.</p> <p>Ice Cream Shop - cooking waffle cones or cakes mixes, soft serve</p> <p>Grocery Store with pre-packaged raw meat</p> |
| <p><u>High Risk</u> Category: 3</p> <p>Same Day Service or Complex Food Preparation</p> <p>Meat or Seafood Market</p> <p>Overnight Cooking</p> <p>Time as a Control</p> <p>Approved HACCP</p> | <p>Requires two routine inspections each year and one educational visit for consultation/training to discuss risk reduction techniques while verifying proper food handling, food source, food storage, and general cleanliness.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i> Food Preparation Steps: Receive - Store - Prepare - Cook - Hold - Serve (or) Cool - Reheat - Hot Hold - Serve</p> <p>Food preparation includes cutting or processing raw Meat or Seafood products.</p> <p>Overnight cooking with approved HACCP plan</p> <p>Operation includes an approved HACCP plan.</p> | <p>Restaurant, Coffee Shop, Sandwich Shop, Tavern, Deli, Convenience Store, Bakery Cooking (exceptions as noted above) Cooling Reheating Hot Holding Overnight Cooking Vacuum Packaging Time as a Control</p> <p>Mobile Truck - cooking and/or hot holding</p> <p>Meat or Seafood Market</p> |