

Gold Star Award for Food Services

Background

The Flathead City-County Board of Health desires to establish a program that rewards food service establishments in Flathead County for consistently exhibiting a high level of food safety practice. If the conditions for reward are met, the award would be affixed to the score placard provided to the food service establishment after the inspection.

Inspection of food service establishments is required to determine compliance with applicable Montana Code provisions and the Administrative Rules of Montana. Montana Code Annotated § 50-50-101 states that food service establishment regulations are “required to prevent and eliminate conditions and practices which endanger public health.” Inspection services are considered to be risk-based. Inspections that result in noted violations of the Code or Rules represent an elevated risk associated with conditions or practices found within the establishment at the time the inspection was conducted.

The Board has authorized the use of an alphabetic scoring system to convey the risk associated with the food service establishment as observed at the time of inspection. Scores are provided on a placard for posting in the establishment as required per Policy 2010 -01 EH, posted on the Health Department website and provided to the local daily newspaper on a weekly basis.

The Board desires to establish an award to food service establishments that exhibit consistently high scores that are due to documented active managerial controls.

Policy

The Board believes that providing a reward to food service establishments through an award is good public health policy. The award will indicate to the public that the establishment consistently performs well on the department’s food service inspection report and that the scores achieved are due to active managerial controls.

Procedure

Refer to Policy 2010 -01 EH that establishes the scoring methodology established by the Board of Health. This policy will apply to food service establishments in risk category 3 and higher. Award criteria will be met when a food service establishment has three consecutive scores of “A” or higher.

Active managerial control means the purposeful incorporation of specific actions or procedures by industry management into the operation of their business to attain control over foodborne illness risk factors. It embodies a preventive rather than reactive approach to food safety through a continuous system of monitoring and verification (FDA). For the purposes of this policy, the following will be considered active managerial controls:

- Certified food protection managers who have shown a proficiency in required information by passing a test that is part of an accredited program such as ServSafe,
- Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for performing critical operational steps in a food preparation process, such as cooling,
- Monitoring procedures,
- Record keeping,
- Employee health policy for restricting or excluding ill employees, and
- Manager and employee training.

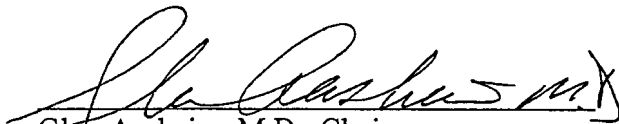
The above list is the minimum managerial controls required for qualification for the Gold Star Award; additional managerial controls are encouraged. In addition, food service establishments that institute active managerial controls will also be expected to develop at least one Hazard Analysis – Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan for high-risk food(s).

The criteria for compliance with each active managerial control and HACCP plan will be provided in guidance manuals developed by the environmental health staff.

The gold star award will be withdrawn if either the food service inspection score drops below “A” or active managerial control cannot be demonstrated.

Policy is to be implemented January 1, 2014.

Adopted by the Board of Health on October 17, 2013



Glen Aasheim, M.D., Chair
Elathead City-County Board of Health