



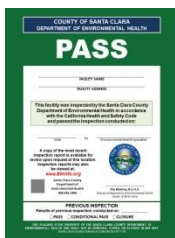
## Food Safety Program – Placarding & Scoring

**BACKGROUND:** On April 29, 2014 the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved an ordinance that requires food facilities to post both a color-coded placard at the facility and a score on the internet indicating the safety and compliance status of that facility at the most recent inspection or reinspection. The color-coded **placard** reflects the level of food safety based on the number of major violations observed at the time of inspection. The **score** reflects the level of compliance with all requirements based on the deduction of points pre-assigned to each violation category from a perfect score of 100. (Please see How Score Is Calculated below.) The Department of Environmental Health (DEH) began posting the placards on October 1, 2014.

The goals of the placarding and scoring program are:

- Reduce foodborne illness
- Increase compliance with food safety law
- Convey inspection results to the public using a system that is readily accessible and easy to understand

**SCOPE** – All retail food facilities that prepare food are subject to the placarding and scoring program. They include but are not limited to restaurants (fast food to full scale), school cafeterias, coffee shops, café’s, bakeries, deli’s, and corporate cafeterias.



**PASS.** When no more than one major violation has been observed and the violation is corrected at inspection, a green **PASS** placard will be issued. Minor violations must be corrected within the time frame indicated on the inspection report. Additional reinspection may be required if any of the violations are not permanently corrected in a timely manner.

SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



**CONDITIONAL PASS.** When two or more major violations have been observed and the violations are corrected at inspection, a yellow **CONDITIONAL PASS** placard will be issued. Beginning in October 2014, a yellow **CONDITIONAL PASS** placard will result in a reinspection conducted within 3 business days to ensure that the major violations remain permanently corrected. If no major violations are observed during the reinspection, a green **PASS** placard will be issued to replace the yellow one. Minor violations must be corrected within the time frame indicated on the inspection report.

SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_



**CLOSURE.** When an imminent threat to health and safety has been observed and the violation(s) can't be corrected at inspection, a red **CLOSED** placard will be issued. The facility is required to be closed. Examples of imminent health hazards include but are not limited to: sewage backup, no hot water, no electricity, rodent/insect infestation, or severe unsanitary conditions. The red **CLOSURE** placard must remain posted and the facility remained closed until a reinspection is conducted to confirm that the imminent health hazard no longer exists. A new placard may be issued at that time after a complete inspection of the facility.

SCORE: \_\_\_\_\_

### HOW SCORE IS CALCULATED

Each violation category is assigned with points based on its public health significance: Major (8), Moderate (3), and Minor (2). These points will be deducted from a perfect score of 100. Since the points are pre-assigned and the final score automatically calculated by the computer, they can't be changed by the district inspector. Scores will only be calculated during routine inspection.

**POSTING** – A Green, Yellow or Red Placard will be issued at the end of each routine inspection and reinspection. The placard must be posted in an acceptable location from the time it is issued until the time it is replaced with another placard. The district inspector will approve the location where the placard will be posted.

- The placard must be posted in a front window or door at the main entrance, facing outward. If it is posted in a front window, it must be within 5 feet of the main entrance.
- The placard may also be posted in a display case (such as a menu display box) mounted on the outside wall within 5 feet of the main entrance to the facility.

If no windows or display box exists, or if the windows are heavily tinted:

- The placard may be posted inside the facility, in a visible location, within 5 feet of the main entrance, or
- The placard may be prominently posted at the service counter, if ordering is done at a service counter/register.

Note: the placard is the property of DEH and may not be defaced, marred, camouflaged, hidden or removed.

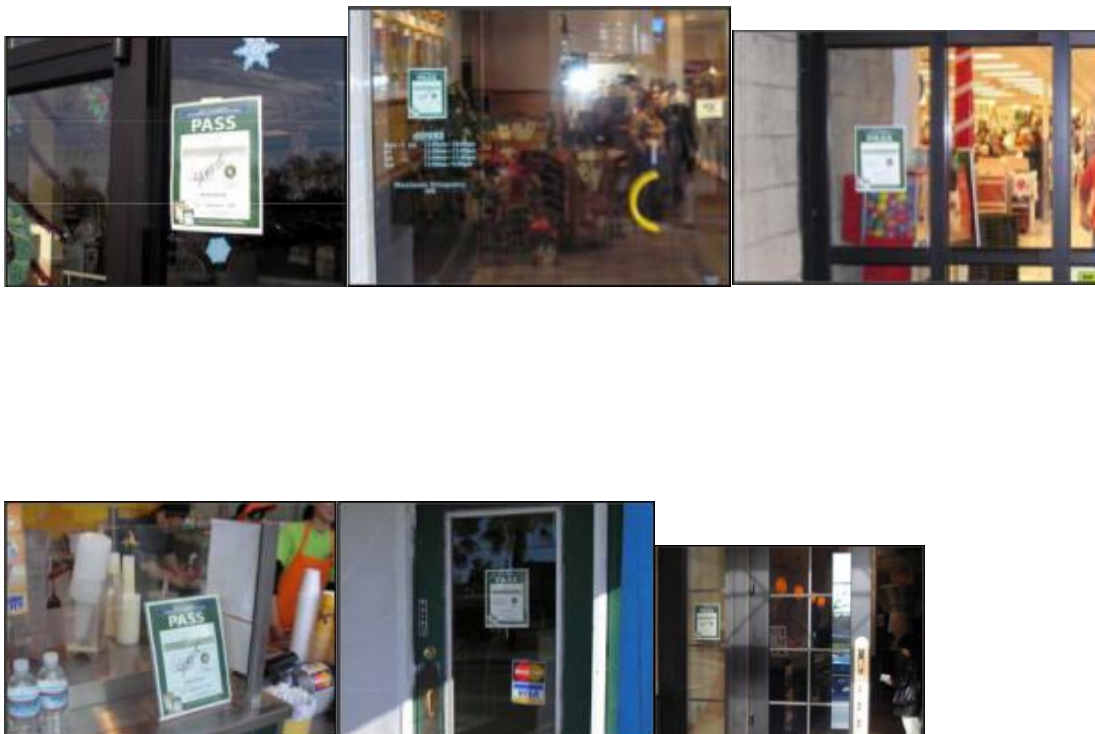
**TRAINING CLASSES** – DEH is offering “How to Get a Green Placard” training classes at no cost to participants. The specific criteria for the placard program, as well as basic food safety training will be reviewed in each class. The goal of these classes is to provide each student with a complete understanding of how to receive and maintain a Green “PASS” placard. Each training class is 60 to 90 minutes. Please check [www.ehinfo.org](http://www.ehinfo.org) for upcoming classes.

### **RESOURCES** –

- The ***California Retail Food Code (CalCode)*** provides for the regulation of health and sanitation standards for retail food facilities and is the primary reference used in food facility inspection.
- The ***Santa Clara County Customized CalCode Users Guide (CCUG)*** provides a reference list of CalCode codes and examples of major and minor violation in each section.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** – Please contact DEH at (408) 918-3400; via email at [dehweb@deh.sccgov.org](mailto:dehweb@deh.sccgov.org) or visit our website at [www.ehinfo.org](http://www.ehinfo.org). You may sign up for our newsletter on our website which will provide the most up-to-date information on the program implementation.

### **EXAMPLES OF PLACARD POSTING**



## AVOIDING MAJOR VIOLATIONS

Major violations are those that have been identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to cause or contribute to causing illness. Major violations may also lead to a **YELLOW PLACARD** or **RED PLACARD**.

### EMPLOYEE HEALTH & HYGIENE:

- Ensure that all hand wash sinks are accessible, stocked with soap and paper towels, and provided with warm water of at least 100°F.
- Employees are required to wash their hands throughout the day and anytime hands may be contaminated.
- Employees may not work in the food facility if they have symptoms associated with an acute gastrointestinal illness (e.g., diarrhea, vomiting in conjunction with diarrhea or other symptoms), been diagnosed with a communicable disease, or have uncontrolled discharge from eyes, nose, mouth.

### FOOD TEMPERATURES for Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF):

- COLD HOLDING: at or below 41° F.
- HOT HOLDING: at or above 135° F.
- Time as Public Health Control (TPHC): When time alone is used as a public health control for PHF left in the temperature Danger Zone for up to 4 hours, food must be time-marked, monitored by a reliable time-coding system, and handled as required after the 4-hour period.
- COOLING: From 135°F to 41°F in 6 hours and during this time, from 135°F to 70°F in 2 hours.
- THAWING: Thaw PHF by one of the following approved ways: under refrigeration, under running potable water at 70°F up to 2 hours, in a microwave oven using “Defrost”, as part of a cooking process.
- COOKING: Eggs, Pork, Seafood: 145° F; Ground Beef: 157° F; Poultry: 165° F.
- REHEATING for HOT HOLDING: reheat quickly from 41°F to 165° F in 2 hours.

### PREVENTION OF FOOD & FOOD-CONTACT SURFACE CONTAMINATION:

- Correctly set up and use the 3-compartment sink for manual warewashing: 1) Wash (washing solution to be 100°F minimum) 2) Rinse 3) Sanitize (100 ppm Chlorine/30 sec., 200 ppm Quaternary ammonium/1min., 25 ppm Iodine/1min., or Hot Water ≥171°F/30 sec.) 4) Air Dry.
- Maintain dishwasher sanitizer concentration at 50 ppm Chlorine (lo-temp) or 180°F of hot water (hi-temp; utensil surface temperature must be at least 160°F) at the final rinse.
- Ensure food prep surfaces are sanitized between preparing foods with different minimum required cooking temperatures to prevent cross-contamination.
- Keep wiping rags in sanitizer buckets with 100 ppm Chlorine or 200 ppm Quaternary ammonium.
- Store raw meat below or away from ready-to-eat foods and produce.
- Ensure all food is obtained from an approved source.

### VIOLATIONS THAT MAY WARRANT THE IMMEDIATE CLOSURE OF A FACILITY:

- Vermin infestation. Keep cockroaches, mice, rats, and flies out of the facility. The use of a licensed pest control service is recommended.**
- Widespread food temperature violations that cannot be corrected at time of inspection.**
- Lack of electricity or lack of water supply (hot or cold running water).**
- Poor sanitation that results in contamination of food or food-contact surfaces.**
- Sewage backing up into facility.**
- Selling food from an unapproved source. Example: Food made in unpermitted facilities.**