



County of Santa Clara
Department of Environmental Health

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Department of Environmental Health
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Guidelines to Enhance Food Security in Retail Food Facilities

The potential for contamination of our food supply has always been present; however, the recent rise in terrorist activity has focused new attention to this possibility. To minimize the threat to your customers and to your business, **food security** should now become an important part of your overall **food safety** plan. The following suggestions are offered to retail food facility operators in Santa Clara County to enhance security in your facility and reduce the potential of food contamination from a terrorist incident.

Food Prep & Storage Areas

- Limit access by unauthorized persons to food preparation and storage areas.
- Know your employees and who should be working in each area.
- Lock exterior doors and windows but *do not* block fire exits.
- Identify and eliminate "gaps" in your security. Trusted employees who are familiar with your workflow and procedures may provide useful suggestions.
- Randomly inspect your facility for compliance with security measures.

Food Sources & Supplies

- Know your suppliers and delivery personnel. Be sure delivery vehicles are adequately identified and are from your known suppliers.
- Require delivery personnel to ring doorbells, or knock, to gain access for delivery. Consider use of a sign-in log.
- Assign trained personnel to "check-in" all deliveries and inspect all incoming foods and supplies. Check product condition and quality — inspect for tampering, discoloration,

pinholes in packaging, or any other unusual condition.

- Do not accept unattended shipments that are "dropped" at your door. Do not accept shipments at times when products cannot be inspected.
- Maintain records of invoices and receipts for all food product purchases and deliveries in an easily retrievable filing system.
- Encourage suppliers to develop their own food security plan.

Displays, Salad Bars, Buffets & Retail Areas

- Develop a plan to continually monitor these areas... not just during replenishing or restocking. Any *unattended* self-serve open food display may pose a greater risk than an *attended* display.
- Do not refill a partially empty food container. Instead, replace with a new, clean container of fresh product. Using clean containers helps break the cycle of potential contamination.
- Be sure that customers do not re-use dishes when returning to a self-serve display.

- If you suspect a food item has been tampered with, remove it from sale.
- Develop a written policy describing how returned products are to be handled.

Employees

- Establish and follow a policy for employee screening and background checks. Consider checking references from previous employers.
- All employees should receive adequate food safety training that includes training in food security measures.
- Closely supervise all employees. For example:
 - All employees may not need access to food preparation areas.
 - Place new employees on shifts where oversight by trusted senior employees is provided.
 - Consider restricting personal items from work areas.

Visitors

- Check the identification of all inspectors and others who visit the non-customer areas of your facility. Consider the use of a sign-in log for all visitors.

Who to Call if an Emergency Occurs

- In case of an emergency such as a suspected terrorist act, dial 911 immediately.
- Report any suspected foodborne illness to the Department of Environmental Health at 408-918-3400. To file a report at night, on holidays, or on weekends, call County Communications at 408-299-2507.
- Immediately report any unusual activity to the appropriate authorities.

Additional food safety information is available on the Internet at: usda.gov cdc.gov fda.gov EHinfo.org