



SECTION H

Code of Conduct

A. Introduction:

The Environmental Health Specialist (EHS) must be professional in both actions and appearance. Depending on what work activities must be accomplished during the day, the EHS may need to change clothes before conducting a food service inspection. It is very important that the EHS set the example for food service employees. Appropriate conduct during an inspection will aid in the ongoing working relationship with the management and staff of the food service establishment (FSE). Appropriate conduct and proper attire are also excellent aids to educating FSE employees in food safety.

B. Preparation:

The EHS must do the following:

- Maintain good personal hygiene.
- Wear attire that is appropriate, professional and clean.
- While conducting food inspections, he or she must wear no more than a plain ring such as a wedding band.
- Wear closed toed, rubber soled, non-slip shoes.
- Wear an appropriate hair restraint (defined as the same required of food service establishment FSE employees - hair net or baseball cap type hat). Staff with long hair should style hair in a ponytail or bun with bangs pushed under the hair restraint. The hair restraint should be put on before entering the food preparation area.
- Maintain clean and trimmed nails. Because the EHS will not be putting his/her hands in a food product, it is not mandatory that the EHS wear gloves. However, should the EHS wear decals, false nails, etc., on their fingernails, they will be required to wear gloves as these items may come off and contaminate food. However, it is important that the EHS's hands never touch ready-to-eat food products. Should it become necessary during the inspection, the EHS will use clean and sanitized utensils or single-use or single-service articles to handle unwrapped or non-containerized food items.

The EHS should have all of the necessary forms: inspection report, legal notice and/or citation (ticket) if applicable in the county, food Withhold From Sale Form, etc. (**See Section K of this Manual for these forms**).



The EHS should have the following equipment and supplies prior to conducting an inspection:

- A clipboard reserved for food service inspections
- An appropriate carrying bag or case for equipment
- One thermocouple or thermister thermometer capable of reading -40°F to 500°F with an accuracy of $\pm 2^\circ\text{F}$
- Two stem type bimetallic thermometers capable of reading 0°F to 220°F with an accuracy of $+2^\circ\text{F}$
- One container of pH test strips or pH meter
- One container of quaternary ammonium test strips
- One container of chlorine test strips
- One container of iodine test strips
- One container of individually packaged alcohol swabs
- Two black or blue ink pens
- One flashlight
- One tape measure
- One small ice chest
- One package of pre-sterilized food sampling bags

In addition to the above individual equipment and supplies, each Environmental Health office should have at least one light meter and one black light.

The EHS should review the FSE inspection file and obtain a copy of the last inspection report prior to leaving the office.

C. Initial Interview:

Inspections of the food service establishments should be conducted only during normal operating hours, but at varying times of the workday in order to see the total operation of the facility.

Upon entering the facility, the EHS shall locate the person in charge of the establishment, identify himself and explain the reason for his visit (routine, follow-up, etc). An identification badge should always be worn. If the person in charge refuses to allow an inspection, the EHS shall inform said person in charge as per instructions found in **Rule.10 (2)(d) of Chapter 290-5-14**. If all attempts at gaining access to the establishment fail, he should then leave the premises and inform his supervisor immediately.



D. Leading by Example:

Hands shall be washed correctly according to **Rule .03(5)(a)(b)(c) and (d) of Chapter 290-5-14** before beginning an inspection utilizing the hand sink in the food preparation area, nearest to the entry door. Note that this is good personal hygiene as well as a training opportunity for FSE employees. The EHS should wash his hands again if they become contaminated.

Stems of thermometers shall always be sanitized prior to use and food residue wiped off each time prior to placing the thermometer in a different food item. The EHS should calibrate his thermometer at least weekly and after anytime it is dropped or jarred.

No inspection equipment shall be placed on a food contact surface.

EHS are not to eat, drink or chew gum/tobacco while conducting an inspection.

E. Forms and General Evaluation:

Upon entering the FSE, the EHS shall complete the pertinent information at the top section of the Food Service Establishment Inspection Report including name and address of the FSE, permit #, inspection date, "time in" of inspection, purpose, risk type and previous grade (**See Instructions for Marking the Georgia Food Establishment Inspection Form: Rules and Regulations for Food Service Chapter 290-5-14 document K-4 in Part II - Section K**).

The EHS shall locate the last inspection report, permit, license (if applicable) and the certified food safety manager (CFSM) certificate. If these documents are not posted, request them from the person-in-charge (PIC) and instruct him/her to post them in according to Rule .03(3)(c) 1. and Rule.10 (2)(g) of the 2007 Georgia Food Service Rules and Regulations Chapter 290-5-14. If items are not onsite, indicate this as a violation on the inspection report. Should a CFSM certificate not be available, do further investigation to ensure there is a CFSM employed with the FSE.

The EHS shall evaluate the entire facility based upon the Risk-Factors/Public Health Intervention (RF/PHI) and Good Retail Practice (GRP) item categories designated on the inspection report (**see Part II - Section D – Conducting Risk-based Inspections**). Each violation of a (RF/PHI) and (GRP) item must be marked in its respective category on the Food Service Establishment Inspection (). Observations and corrective actions (**See Instructions for Marking the Georgia Food Establishment Inspection Form: Rules and Regulations for Food Service Chapter 290-5-14 document Part II - Section K of this Manual**) needed shall be documented on the inspection report addendum (s).

The EHS shall calibrate his/her thermometer and document the calibration at the food service establishment if several food products are found out of the required temperature range. This will be very helpful should calibration be questioned during any subsequent enforcement action.



F. Exit Interview:

Upon completion of the inspection, the EHS shall review and discuss the inspection report with the food service establishment's PIC. During the inspection report review, the EHS shall identify violations, recommend methods of correction for violations, and if needed or required, indicate the necessity for a follow-up inspection. Should RF/PHI be out-of-control (or violated), risk control plans are to be utilized to gain long-term compliance and should be jointly developed by the EHS and the PIC (**see Part II - Section D – Conducting Risk-based Inspections**). Further, the EHS shall request the signature of receipt from the food service establishment PIC and shall record the "end time" of the inspection. If the PIC refuses to sign the report, the EHS shall indicate his/her decision by writing "refused to sign" in the signature space and initial this statement (See Rule .10(2)(f) of Chapter 290-5-14 for additional guidance).

The EHS shall give the copy of the inspection report to the food service person-in-charge, thank him for his cooperation, and exit the premises. The EHS shall submit the original inspection report and appropriate documentation to the administrative staff for processing and filing. He shall also document any follow-up inspection on his work calendar as a reminder.