

Person in Charge

A lack of food safety knowledge can have serious consequences to your customers and your business. Next year, a lack of food safety knowledge will also be reflected on your inspection report.

In the outgoing food rule, the owner and the Person in Charge (PIC) shared many of the responsibilities of the establishment, but were not required to be in the facility at all times.

Beginning May 2, 2005, every permitted food establishment must have a designated PIC on the premises during all operating hours.

The PIC will be required to:

1. have food safety knowledge,
2. take appropriate preventive and corrective actions (including excluding ill food workers), and
3. demonstrate knowledge to the regulatory authority.

1. Food Safety Knowledge

The designation of a PIC during all hours of operation is intended to ensure the continuous presence of someone able to identify and prevent high-risk practices to avoid the transmission of foodborne disease to the community.

The PIC must be able to recognize hazards that may contribute to foodborne illness and be able to take appropriate preventive and corrective actions.

The PIC must have sound knowledge of the basics of proper food handling, the requirements of the food rule, and the operating procedures within the establishment.

2. Preventive and Corrective Actions

The PIC must ensure that all provisions of the food rule are followed, including:

- Food preparation and storage occur in proper areas.
- Employees effectively wash their hands as needed.
- Foods are received in good condition and from approved sources.
- Potentially hazardous foods are properly prepared, cooked, cooled, handled and stored.
- Consumer advisories are posted if needed.
- Proper methods are used to sanitize surfaces, utensils and equipment.
- Ill employees and unauthorized people are excluded or restricted as appropriate. Employees with illnesses transmissible through food are reported to the health authority.
- Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prevented.
- Employees have valid food worker cards and are properly trained for their duties.

3. Demonstration of Knowledge

During an inspection, the PIC will need to demonstrate knowledge to the inspector. Knowledge must be demonstrated in one of three ways:

- **Compliance with the Code.** No “Red” High Risk violations noted on the current inspection report.

or

- **Certification.** Valid certificate from an ANSI-accredited manager certification course (such as *ServSafe*[®]).

or

- **Knowledge.** Correct answers to food safety questions asked by the inspector.

What kind of questions will be asked of the Person In Charge?

If the establishment has “Red” High Risk violations during its inspection and the PIC does not have a valid manager certificate, the PIC must correctly respond to questions regarding food safety practices. The regulatory authority may not ask questions that do not relate to the food handling in your operation.

Depending on the foods prepared at your establishment, the questions will be from areas of knowledge such as these:

Foodborne Disease

- Relationships between foodborne disease, hand-contact, personal hygiene, and cross contamination
- Prevention of transmission by an ill food employee
- The modes of transmission

Potentially Hazardous Foods

- The hazards involved in eating undercooked animal products
- Temperatures and times for receiving, holding, cooling, cooking, and reheating

Contamination Prevention

- Proper food storage and handling
- The procedure for cleaning and sanitizing utensils and other food contact surfaces
- Protecting the water source, including the prevention of cross connections
- Identifying toxic materials and ensuring safe handling, storage, and disposal

Operating Procedures

- Food safety procedures in the establishment
- Explanation of the HACCP plan, if required at the establishment
- The responsibilities of food workers, PICs, and the regulatory authority as stated in the food rule