

Food Safety Manager Knowledge “Person in Charge” (PIC)

Introduction

FDA's 2005 Food Code defines Person In Charge as: “the individual present at a food establishment who is responsible for the operation at the time of inspection.” The Person In Charge is in charge of food safety in the facility. Michigan Food Law 2008 requires every retail food establishment to have a Person In Charge during all hours of operation.

This person should have a through knowledge of how to control each of the foodborne illness risk factors and the Food Code interventions. If a risk factor is found to be out of compliance, the PIC should have established appropriate control measures and critical limits for monitoring, and assure that correction action procedures are in place and followed. The PIC must be knowledgeable of food safety principles and critical practices and procedures necessary to prevent foodborne illness. It is the responsibility of the PIC to ensure compliance with the Code (Demonstration of Knowledge). Knowledge and application of Food code provision are vital to preventing foodborne illness and injury.

Demonstration of Knowledge

The Food Code requires the PIC to demonstrate knowledge of:

- Foodborne disease prevention
- Application of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and Risk Control principles, and
- Requirements of the Food Code

Three Ways to Demonstrate Knowledge

The most important way a PIC may demonstrate the required knowledge is to comply with the Food Code. That is, during a routine inspection there are no critical violations cited. The second way to demonstrate required knowledge is to become a certified food protection manager by successfully completing an accredited manager certification program. And the third way to demonstrate knowledge is to correctly respond to an inspector's questions about the food operation. This does not mean an inspector will ‘test’ the PIC. However, the PIC must show a working knowledge of those areas of the Food Code specific to the establishment's practices in place.

Does Each PIC Need to Know Everything in the Food Code?

The level of knowledge required of the person in charge depends on the scope of the operations within the establishment. For example, a night manager at a convenience store does not need to demonstrate knowledge of cooking times and temperatures in the Food Code if the store doesn't cook food. However, the PIC at a large restaurant needs to know most Food Code requirements.