



**Needham Public
Health Division**
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Food Safety Excellence Program Overview

The Needham Public Health Division's Environmental Unit is responsible for making sure that retail food service establishments are following proper food safety practices that protect the public and reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses. Standardized Environmental Health Agents perform comprehensive routine risk-based inspections of all permitted retail food service establishments.

We focus on ensuring that food safety best practices, as determined by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), are being followed. If violations are found, the establishment is educated about them and given a timeframe to correct, the duration of which is based upon risk level.

Needham Public Health is strengthening its comprehensive Food Safety Excellence Program through a recent revision of our Food Code Enforcement Policy, which was recently approved by the Needham Board of Health. This policy is aimed to improve restaurant overall compliance with the Food Code in an effort to keep restaurants clean, pest free and safe.

The Environmental Health Unit will use five strategies to encourage more consistent food safety practices among food establishments.

E D U C A T I O N

The Needham Public Health Division (NPHD) will provide mandatory annual forum trainings to food establishments supplemented with written bilingual materials about Food Code standards and food safety best practices.

E N F O R C E M E N T

Health agents identify risks during inspections, write up orders to correct in the form of a standardized inspection report when violations are found, and issue fines when the violations are not found to be corrected within a timely matter. An inspection report score (0 - 100) has been added to gauge overall excellence in food safety best practices. If a food establishment has a pattern of repeating risky violations, and continues to receive low scores, our comprehensive enforcement plan will be initiated.

I N C E N T I V E

To encourage food establishments to comply and to maintain consistent food safety standards, Needham Public Health's Environmental Unit set up a scoring and ticketing/fining system.

E V A L U A T I O N

NPHD has evaluated the Food Safety Excellence Program by piloting it for six months and we were able to incorporate helpful feedback received from food establishments and inspectors. NPHD will continue to assess the program annually by looking at inspection report findings and the scores. In addition, supervisors will assess the quality of the inspection reports to ensure inspections are consistent, thorough, and compliant with the Federal, state, and local regulations.

P U B L I C I N F O R M A T I O N

Needham Public Health will increase public awareness of food safety practices so people can consider those factors as they choose where they will eat and purchase food in town. NPHD will provide regular updates to the community regarding the Food Safety Excellence Program. Our inspection reports will also be posted on the Town of Needham website.

To be directed to the Town website hosting copies of food inspection reports and a link to our revised Food Code Enforcement Policy, please scan this QR Code below. Please Note: Reports from September 1st onwards will be posted.

