



Howard County Health Department

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Proper food safety practices are essential to maintaining the health and trust of customers, staff, and the community.

2024 inspections in Howard County identified recurring areas for improvement, particularly regarding equipment sanitation, food temperature control, cross-contamination prevention, plumbing maintenance, and overall facility cleanliness. This checklist is designed to highlight the most common issues and provide daily reminders to help maintain a safe and compliant food operation. Consistent attention to these practices will support regulatory compliance, reduce foodborne illness risks, and promote excellence in food service.

☑	Checklist
	Clean and sanitize all food-contact equipment (grills, fryers, slicers) every 4 hours.
	Keep sanitizer buckets filled, labeled, and properly used.
	Store all single-use items (gloves, cups, lids, etc.) away from contamination sources.
	Maintain clean floors, walls, and ceilings; mop and sanitize daily.
	Repair or replace damaged shelves, counters, or surfaces immediately.
	Keep hot foods at 135°F or higher, and cold foods at 41°F or lower; check temperatures often.
	Label and date all prepared foods; discard expired items promptly.
	Store raw foods below ready-to-eat foods in all coolers and storage units.
	Ensure hand sinks are accessible, stocked with soap, and use properly.
	Fix any leaking faucets, clogged drains, or broken mop sinks without delay.
	Cover all trash bins and empty them regularly to prevent overflow.
	Change gloves between different tasks and wash hands frequently.
	Clean grease traps, hoods, and vents to maintain safe air quality.