



Food Code Implementation Guidance from the  
Washington State Department of Health  
Division of Environmental Health  
Food Safety Program

# Demonstration of Knowledge



**Food Code References:**  
2-101.11  
2-102.11

**Definitions:  
Person in Charge (PIC)**

The designated individual present at a food establishment who is responsible for the operation at the time.

At least one PIC must be on the premises during operating hours.



**Approved Courses:**

To meet the certification criteria of DOK, the PIC must be certified as a Food Protection Manager through one of the following ANSI-accredited food safety training programs:

➤ *ServSafe*® Food Protection Manager Certification Program

➤ *Thomson Prometric* (Formerly *Experior Assessments*) Food Protection Manager Certification Program

➤ *National Registry of Food Safety Professionals* Food Protection Manager Certification Program



**FOOD CODE REQUIREMENT**

The Food Code requires a designated PERSON IN CHARGE (PIC) to be in the food establishment during all hours of operation. Although all food employees must use safe food handling practices in the establishment, the PIC is required to **demonstrate knowledge** of foodborne disease prevention, application of HACCP principles, and the requirements of the Washington State Retail Food Code to the regulatory authority during inspections.

**DETERMINING COMPLIANCE**

Three measures may be used to determine compliance with the Demonstration of Knowledge (DOK) requirement:

1. **Compliance:** Compliance with the Code is indicated when there are no red, high risk factor violations noted during the inspection; *or*
2. **Certification:** The PIC is certified as a food protection manager (see sidebar for a list of courses approved as of February 2005); *or*
3. **Knowledge:** The PIC correctly responds to questions regarding food safety practices and principles asked by the regulator.

**VERIFYING KNOWLEDGE**

If neither the Compliance nor Certification requirement is met, the PIC must correctly respond to food safety questions asked by the regulatory authority. The questions used to evaluate DOK should be:

- applicable to the operation,
- guided to reveal whether the PIC is able to understand and enforce food safety practices, and
- open-ended.

Questions from a broad range of food safety areas (the areas of knowledge are listed in Food Code Section 2-102.11) may be used to evaluate DOK. At a minimum, questions should focus on the red, high risk factor violations observed during the inspection to ensure the PIC knows how to correct the observed violations, as well as their public health significance. Examples of questions are on the back of this document.

The timing of the questions will vary based on the circumstances of the inspection. If the PIC is able to escort the regulatory authority during the inspection, questions can be asked throughout the inspection. Other times, questions may be asked during the exit interview (the time at the end of the inspection when the inspector explains the violations and corrective actions found during the inspection).

**CRITERIA**

If the PIC's answers indicate that the PIC is unable to recognize hazards or take appropriate preventive and corrective actions (and neither the Compliance nor Certification requirement is met), DOK is out of compliance. DOK is also out of compliance if a PIC is not present during the inspection.

NOTE: This fact sheet is a compilation of major food safety rules regarding the given topic and is not designed to replace reading the Food Code.



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## ***Question Examples for Demonstration of Knowledge***

### **EMPLOYEE HEALTH - [2-201.11(C)(1-3)]**

What do you do when an employee calls in sick?

What do you do if an employee comes to work sick or gets sick at work?

When do you restrict ill employees to non-food handling tasks? ...exclude ill employees from the establishment?

What actions do you take if an employee tells you they have been diagnosed with an illness communicable through food?

### **REASON FOR TEMPERATURE CONTROL - [2-201.11(C)(4)]**

Why do PHFs need to be kept out of the "danger zone?"

Why is it unsafe to keep PHFs at room temperature too long?

### **CONSUMPTION OF RAW FOOD - [2-201.11(C)(5)]**

What are the hazards of serving raw or undercooked PHFs?

What PHFs do you serve raw or undercooked?

### **PHF TIME AND TEMPERATURE - [2-201.11(C)(6-7)]**

What are your cooling procedures for \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with the appropriate food)?

What are your hot holding procedures?

Describe your methods for preparing \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with the appropriate food)?

How do you know if PHFs are cooked to the proper temperature?

To what temperature do you cook \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank with the appropriate food)? Why?

What do you do with foods that aren't at the proper temperature?

What are your reheating procedures?

What temperature do you keep cold foods? How is this verified?

Do you have thermometers for checking the temperature of PHF? How are they calibrated?

### **CROSS CONTAMINATION / HAND CONTACT / HANDWASHING - [2-201.11(C)(8)]**

Why should food employees prevent cross contamination?

What steps do you take to prevent cross contamination?

What do food workers use to handle ready to eat foods?

Where and when do food workers wash their hands?

Describe the employee handwashing procedure.

### **EQUIPMENT AND FOOD SAFETY - [2-201.11(C)(9)]**

Why is it important to have handwash sinks located near all food preparation areas?

What are the food safety hazards associated with equipment that is not clean or in good repair?

### **CLEANING AND SANITIZING - [2-201.11(C)(10)]**

How do you clean and sanitize equipment and utensils?

What kind of sanitizer do you use and how do you determine its strength?

### **WATER SOURCE / BACKFLOW PREVENTION - [2-201.11(C)(11)]**

What is your water source?

What steps do you take to avoid cross connections in this facility?

### **CHEMICALS - [2-201.11(C)(12)]**

How do you store poisonous or toxic materials?

What toxic chemicals are used in the establishment? Where are they stored?

### **CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS (FOR FACILITIES WITH HACCP PLANS) - [2-201.11(C)(13-14)]**

What are the Critical Control Points in your operation and what steps are you taking to ensure they are controlled?

How are you complying with your HACCP Plan?

What records do you have for your HACCP plan?

What is the shelf life of Reduced Oxygen Packaging food?

### **RESPONSIBILITIES - [2-201.11(C)(15)]**

Explain what the Food Code says about the responsibilities of each food employee, the Person in Charge, and the regulatory authority.