

COURSE BOOK

FOOD SAFETY ON THE GO



MODULE 2: PROGRAM DIRECTOR



WE ARE
Meals On Wheels
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
So no senior goes hungry.

2012 EDITION

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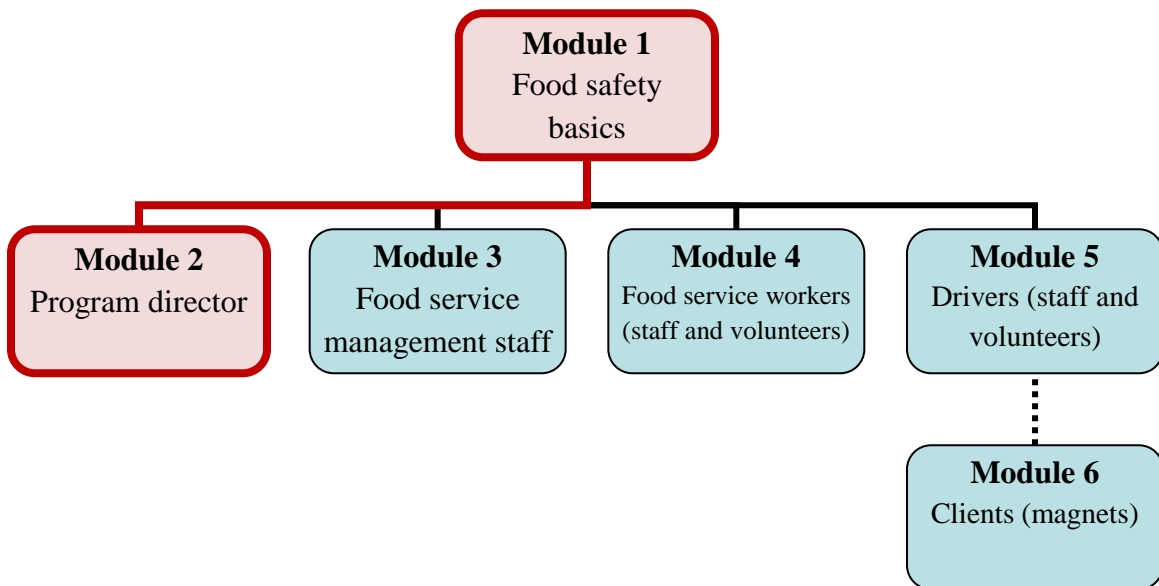
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Introduction

“Food Safety on the Go” is a food safety training program for staff, volunteers and clients of home-delivered meal programs. It is made up of 6 modules. Module 1, Food safety basics, is an overview of food safety for all staff and volunteers. Modules 2 through 5 are for specific individuals within a program: Module 2 is for the program director, Module 3 is for the food service management staff, Module 4 is for food service workers (staff and volunteers), and Module 5 is for drivers (staff and volunteers). Module 6, which is for clients, is in the form of magnets for drivers to give to clients.



The program director should complete Module 1, Food safety basics, and Module 2, Program director. Thank you for participating in the “Food Safety on the Go” training program.

Module 2 – Program director

Length

~20 minutes

Audience

Program director

Purpose

This module discusses the program director's responsibility for food safety in a home-delivered meal program.

1. The program director is responsible for food safety

The person in charge of a home-delivered meal program is responsible for making sure that safe food is provided to clients.

2. Cost of a foodborne illness outbreak

A foodborne illness outbreak can cost a program much more than the cost of properly training staff and volunteers in food safety. An outbreak can have serious health consequences for the infected clients. It can also lead to lawsuits against the program, low morale among staff and volunteers, negative media attention, a damaged reputation, and it may even force the program to close.



3. All staff and volunteers need food safety training

To minimize the risk of foodborne illness, all staff and volunteers in a home-delivered meal program need general food safety training. In addition, staff and volunteers need further food safety training specific to their responsibilities. Staff and volunteers should be trained in food safety as soon as they start working or volunteering at the program, and at least once a year after that. For legal reasons, it is important that a program document that staff and volunteers have completed food safety training.



4. Programs need food safety policies and procedures

To prevent a foodborne illness outbreak, a food safety system needs to be proactive. It is not enough for a program to be reactive and simply correct violations found during inspections. Thorough food safety policies and procedures, including guidelines for personal hygiene and not working while ill, are needed as preventive measures to reduce the risk factors for foodborne illness.

It only takes one mistake for a foodborne illness outbreak to happen. To make sure that safe food is delivered to clients, proper food safety policies and procedures are needed throughout the flow of food, which includes purchasing, receiving, storage, preparation, holding and delivery. Safe meal delivery is essential to preventing foodborne illness in clients. For example, meals should not be left at a client's house if the person is not at home. A team effort is needed to develop and follow appropriate food safety policies and procedures throughout the flow of food.



5. Federal, state and local requirements for food safety

In general, food safety regulations for foodservice operations are recommended at the federal level, written at the state level, and enforced at the state, county and city levels.

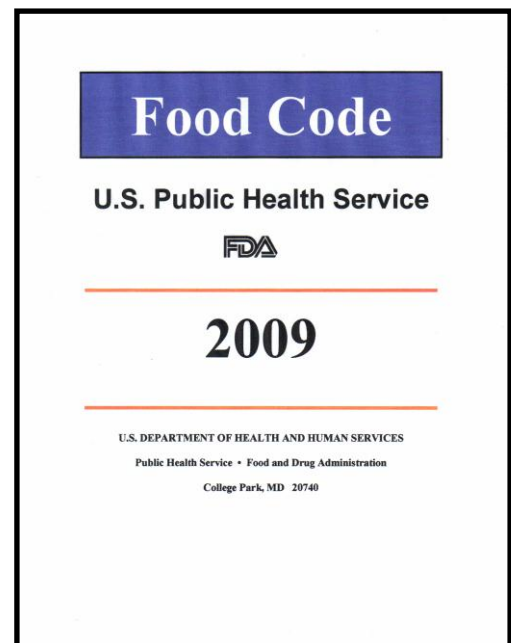
a. Federal food safety recommendations

The federal government issues the Food Code, which is a model for state and local regulators to use to develop or update their food safety rules. A new version of the Food Code comes out every four years. As of 2011, nearly all states and territories have adopted a food code that is based on one of the versions of the federal Food Code.

b. State, county and city health department requirements

In the U.S., most food safety regulations for foodservice operations are written at the state level. State food codes can be found at the following website:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/RetailFoodProtection/FederalStateCooperativePrograms/ucm122814.htm>



Food safety regulations are usually enforced by state, county and city health departments. State, county or city health inspectors, who are sometimes called sanitarians, health officials, or environmental health specialists, conduct inspections of foodservice operations in most states.

Food safety regulations and how these regulations are interpreted can differ from state to state, county to county or even city to city. For example, the hot holding temperature is required to be 140°F or above in some areas, and 135°F or above in others, while the cold holding temperature is 40°F or lower in some areas and 41°F or lower in others.

Programs should find out from their local health departments which regulations apply to them. Programs also need to make sure that their caterers and vendors follow all state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Program directors should work with their caterers and vendors and stay informed of their recent health department food service inspection reports.

c. Older Americans Act (OAA) requirements – if applicable

The Older Americans Act (OAA), which Congress passed in 1965, provides funding for social and nutrition services to older adults and their caregivers. It authorizes a wide variety of service programs through a national network that includes State Agencies on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging, and service providers. The OAA emphasizes the importance of food safety and sanitation in home-delivered meal programs. It requires programs to “comply with applicable provisions of state or local laws regarding the safe and sanitary handling of food, equipment, and supplies used in the storage, preparation, service, and delivery of meals to an older individual.” Nutrition programs funded by the Older Americans Act must fulfill OAA requirements, described in Part C, Nutrition Service:

http://www.aoa.gov/AoARoot/AoA_Programs/OAA/oa_full.asp#_Toc153957692

d. State Unit on Aging and Area Agency on Aging requirements - if applicable

State Units on Aging and local Area Agencies on Aging may have further food safety requirements for home-delivered meal programs. These can differ from state to state, or region to region, so programs need to know their current requirements.

e. Other funding requirements – if applicable

If a home-delivered meal program receives funding from other sources, for example the state agriculture department, these sources may have additional food safety requirements that the program needs to follow.

Key points

- The program director, or the person in charge of a home-delivered meal program, is responsible for making sure that safe food is provided to clients.
- A foodborne illness outbreak can cost a program much more than the cost of properly training staff and volunteers in food safety. An outbreak can have serious health consequences for the infected clients. It can also lead to lawsuits, low morale, and a damaged reputation, and it may even cause the program to close.
- For a program to deliver safe food, it is important to train staff and volunteers in food safety as soon as they start working or volunteering at the program, and at least once a year after that.
- To make sure that safe food is delivered to clients, a program needs proper food safety policies and procedures throughout the flow of food, which includes purchasing, receiving, storage, preparation, holding and delivery.
- Food safety regulations for foodservice operations are usually recommended at the federal level, written at the state level, and enforced at the state and local levels.
- Programs need to comply with federal food safety regulations as well as state and local health department regulations. They may also need to meet other food safety requirements, such as OAA requirements, SUA and AAA requirements, and other funders' requirements.
- Programs should find out from their local health departments which regulations apply to them. Programs also need to make sure that their caterers and vendors follow all state and local food safety and sanitation regulations.

Activity: Fill in the blanks

Fill in the blanks with the words on the right.

1. A foodborne illness _____ can cost a program much more than the cost of training staff and volunteers in food safety.
health departments
2. An outbreak can lead to _____ against a program, and it may even cause the program to close.
Food Code
3. In general, food safety regulations for foodservice operations are written at the _____ level.
outbreak
4. The federal government issues the _____ .
lawsuits
5. Programs should find out from their local _____ which regulations apply to them.
state



Glossary

Bacterium: A single-celled organism.

Calibrate a thermometer: Ensure that a thermometer gives accurate readings by adjusting it to a known standard, such as the freezing point or the boiling point of water.

Campylobacter: A group of bacteria, some of which can cause foodborne illness.

Clean: Remove visible soil.

Contamination: The unintended presence of harmful substances or microorganisms.

Cross-contamination: The transfer of harmful bacteria or viruses from one food or surface to another.

E. Coli: A group of bacteria, some of which can cause foodborne illness.

Flow of food: The path food takes through a foodservice operation; it can include purchasing, receiving, storage, preparation, cooking, holding, cooling, reheating, plating and delivery.

Food Code (FDA): A model for state and local regulators to use to develop or update their food safety rules. It is issued by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), a federal government agency.

Food product recall: An action by a food manufacturer or distributor to remove products from commerce that may cause health problems or death.

Food safety: The conditions and practices that preserve the quality of food to prevent contamination and foodborne illness.

Foodborne illness (often called “food poisoning”): Any illness that is caused by eating food that is contaminated.

Foodborne illness outbreak: An incident in which two or more people get the same illness after eating the same food.

Hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP) system: A food safety system that can be used to identify, evaluate and control food safety hazards throughout the flow of food.

Health inspector (may also be called sanitarian, health official or environmental health specialist): State, county or city employee who conducts foodservice inspections.

Hepatitis A virus: A virus that can cause foodborne illness.

Immune system: The body’s defense system against illness.

Infectious dose: The number of harmful bacteria or viruses that are needed to cause illness.

Jaundice: Yellowing of the skin and eyes; a symptom of various diseases including hepatitis A.

Norovirus: A group of viruses that can cause foodborne illness.

Personal hygiene: Maintaining cleanliness of one's body and clothing to preserve overall health and well-being.

Ready-to-eat food: Food that will be eaten without any more preparation, washing or cooking.

Salmonella: A group of bacteria, some of which can cause foodborne illness.

Sanitize: Reduce the number of microorganisms on a surface to safe levels.

Shigella: A group of bacteria, some of which can cause foodborne illness.

Spore: A form that some bacteria can take to protect themselves in unfavorable conditions.

Temperature danger zone: The temperature range between 41 and 135 degrees Fahrenheit; many bacteria that cause foodborne illness grow fastest within this temperature range.

Time-temperature abuse: Allowing food to remain too long at a temperature which supports the growth of harmful bacteria.

Time/temperature control for safety foods (TCS foods): Foods that support the growth of harmful bacteria, and therefore require time and temperature control to limit the growth of harmful bacteria.

Toxin: A poison that is produced by living cells or organisms.

Virus: A very small infectious agent that can only multiply inside a living cell.

Food safety websites

- Food safety for older adults
<http://www.foodsafety.gov/poisoning/risk/olderadults/>
http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Food_Safety_for_Older_Adults.pdf
- Federal food safety gateway
www.foodsafety.gov
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service
www.fsis.usda.gov
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) education resource library and retail food protection
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm239035.htm>
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodSafety/RetailFoodProtection>
- Partnership for Food Safety Education
www.fightbac.org
- Iowa State University Extension food safety project
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsafety/educators/index.cfm?articleID=295&parent=2>
- UC Davis food safety music
<http://foodsafety.ucdavis.edu/index.html#>

Acknowledgments

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