



The Quarterly
Food Safety
Newsletter of the
Alexandria
Health Department

Bon Appétit

SUMMER 2009

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Restaurants and Smoking in Virginia FAQs

New legislation **goes into effect Dec. 1, 2009**, to protect restaurant workers and patrons from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. The Virginia Department of Health offers these frequently asked questions and answers about the new law and the department's role.

Can I smoke in a restaurant now?

Yes, if the restaurant has a smoking area. However, a restaurant must provide a non-smoking area that meets the requirements of Alexandria's smoking ordinance.

When does the new law take effect?

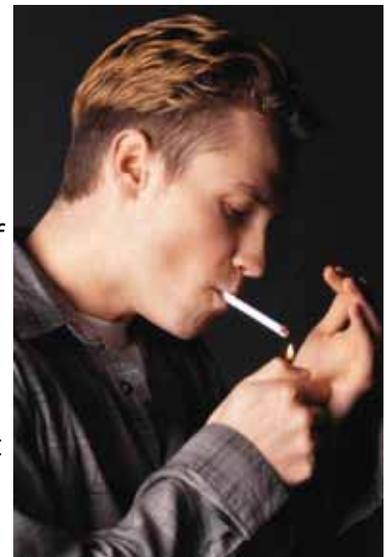
Dec. 1, 2009.

What are the key provisions of the law?

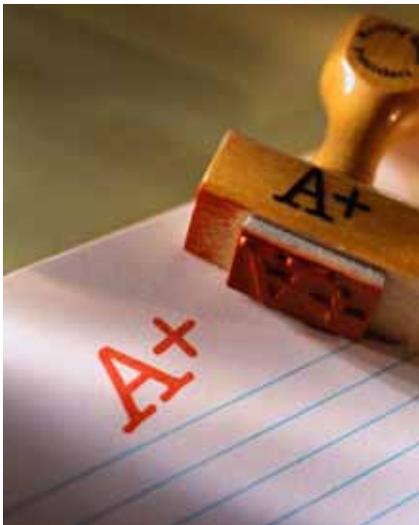
Smoking will be prohibited in restaurants that are open to the public, with a few exceptions.

What kinds of establishments are exempt from the law?

- Any place or operation that prepares or stores food to distribute to people in the same business operation, or of a related business operation for service to the public. Examples include operations that prepare food for catering services, pushcart operations, hotdog stands or other mobile points of service.
- Any outdoor area of a restaurant, with or without a roof covering, provided it is not enclosed by temporary enclosures.
- Any restaurant located on the premises of any manufacturer of tobacco products.
- Any portion of a restaurant constructed so that the area where smoking is permitted is:
 - Structurally separated from the non-smoking areas of the restaurant, and
 - Separately vented to prevent the recirculation of air from the smoking area to the non-smoking area. At least one public entrance must be into an area where smoking is not permitted.



Knowledge Assessment Study Guide



"What is the internal cooking temperature for chicken?"

"Uh, uh..." Your heart races. The environmental health specialist (EHS) is staring at you from behind her clip board. Somewhere a clock ticks loudly, "Tick-tock, tick-tock."

"Chicken...What temperature do you have to cook it to?" asks the EHS again.

"Uh, 145°F? No wait! 165°F." Whew! That was close!

Don't let test anxiety get the best of you. EHSs are trained to ask questions of the person in charge (PIC) to assess their knowledge of food safety. Becoming a certified food manager assures the Health Department that a PIC has learned basic concepts in food safety, but this knowledge can fade over time. When an EHS

conducts a routine inspection, they need to assess whether or not the PIC continues to retain and apply that information. The next time your EHS asks you food safety questions, you do not have to feel unprepared. This new series of articles will provide some commonly asked questions with each installment along with the correct answers. Keep in mind that all of the questions may not apply to your food establishment. For example, if you never serve fish, your EHS will not ask you for the internal cooking temperature of fish. So pay attention. Here are the answers...

Question: What are the internal cooking temperatures of various animal foods such as poultry, beef, fish, eggs, etc.?

Answer: FOR: Raw eggs cooked for immediate service; seafood (includes fish, shellfish, shrimp and lobster); meat (includes meat of cattle, swine, sheep or goats); commercially raised game animals (includes reindeer, elk, deer, bison and rabbit)
COOK TO: 145°F for 15 seconds

FOR: Raw eggs cooked for hot holding; ratites (ostrich, rhea or emu); injected meats; comminuted fish, comminuted meat, and comminuted commercially raised game animals
COOK TO: 155°F for 15 seconds

FOR: Poultry; stuffed fish, stuffed meat, stuffed pasta, stuffed poultry, stuffed ratites, or stuffing containing fish, meat, poultry or ratites
COOK TO: 165°F for 15 seconds

Question: What is the proper temperature for cold holding of PHF/TCS foods?

Answer: 41°F or less

Question: What is the proper temperature for hot holding of PHF/TCS foods?

Answer: 135°F or above

Look for more questions and answers in future issues of Bon Appétit!

Restaurants and Smoking in Virginia FAQs (cont.)

- Any portion of a restaurant used exclusively for private functions, provided the functions are limited to those areas that are structurally separate and vented separately as described above.

Must a restaurant that is exempted from the ban permit patrons to smoke?

No. The owner or proprietor may voluntarily prohibit smoking in the establishment.

Does the ban prohibit smoking in restaurants operated in private clubs?

No. Private clubs, such as local VFWs and lodges, are exempt. Private clubs are those organizations that:

- Are used exclusively for club purposes or events;
- Operate solely for recreational, fraternal, social, patriotic, political, benevolent, or athletic purposes;
- Have established bylaws, a constitution, or both, to govern its activities; and
- Conducts the organization's affairs and management by a board of directors, executive committee, or similar body chosen by the members at an annual meeting.

Will smoking be allowed in outdoor areas of restaurants?

Smoking will be permitted in outdoor areas of a restaurant provided the outdoor area is not enclosed by any screened wall, roll-up doors or other temporary enclosures.

Are there any "grandfathering" provisions in the law?

Yes. If a restaurant is in existence as of Dec. 1, 2009, it is not required to create an additional public entrance if the only public entrance is through an outdoor area of the restaurant where smoking is permitted.

Does the law affect employees who work in areas where the law permits smoking?

Yes. Wait or bus staff may not be required by the proprietor to work in any area of the restaurant where smoking may be permitted.

How will the ban be enforced? What role will VDH have in enforcing the ban?

During routine restaurant inspections, local health department environmental health specialists will determine compliance with the law, which requires proprietors to:

- Post signs stating "No Smoking" or containing the international "No Smoking" symbol  clearly and conspicuously in every restaurant where smoking is prohibited;
- Remove all ashtrays and other smoking paraphernalia from all areas of the restaurant where smoking is prohibited; and
- Assess, with the assistance of others, whether any separate smoking rooms comply with requirements of the law.

What types of policies and procedures will VDH use to enforce the ban? What happens if a proprietor or patron violates the ban? How will those policies and procedures be developed?

Over the next few months, VDH will work with the Office of the Attorney General and local law enforcement and local governments to develop policies and procedures for enforcing this law. Stakeholders will also be involved in the development of these policies and procedures.

NORTHERN VIRGINIA CERTIFIED FOOD MANAGER LICENSES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FREE 3-HOUR FOOD SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR RESTAURANTS AND FOODSERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS

Northern Virginia – Restaurant and foodservice establishment owners, managers and supervisors in Arlington County, City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, Fairfax City, City of Falls Church, Town of Vienna and Town of Herndon are invited to participate in a Free 3-hour Food Safety Education Program provided by the Office of Northern Virginia Certified Food Manager (NVCFM) Licenses. The Program is presented in English or Spanish and varies among dates and locations.

The purpose of the Free 3-Hour Food Safety Education Program is to:

- 1) Raise awareness of the need for all restaurants and foodservice operations, including those in schools, churches and parks, to comply with local Health Department requirements to be under the immediate control of an individual who possesses a current Northern Virginia Certified Food Manager License during **all** hours of operation. Failure to comply can result in immediate closure of the establishment by the local Health Department.
- 2) Assist restaurant and foodservice establishment owners, managers and supervisors in determining if they need to complete a comprehensive food safety course prior to taking an Approved Food Safety Certification Exam. To acquire or renew a Northern Virginia Certified Food Manager License, everyone must pass an Approved Food Safety Certification Exam. It is not necessary to complete a food safety class prior to taking an Approved Food Safety Certification Exam but many people find this helpful in preparing for the exam.

At the conclusion of the Free 3-Hour Food Safety Education Program, applications for the Northern Virginia Certified Food Manager License will be distributed and information about Approved Food Safety Certification Exams and one-day public and on-site food safety courses and exams will be made available. The Free 3-Hour Food Safety Education Program alternates monthly between locations in Arlington County, Fairfax County / City of Falls Church and the City of Alexandria.

Upcoming Schedule -- Free 3-Hour Food Safety Education Program

Wednesday, July 1 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, September 2 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, November 4 - Spanish
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, July 15 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Location To Be Announced
Fairfax, Virginia

Wednesday, September 16 - Spanish
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Location To Be Announced
Arlington, Virginia

Wednesday, November 18 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Lee Center, Gold Room 2
1108 Jefferson St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Wednesday, August 5 - Spanish
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, October 7- Spanish
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, December 2 - Spanish
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Office of NVCFM Licenses / ORS
Interactive, Inc.
6316 Castle Place, #201
Falls Church, VA 22044

Wednesday, August 19 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Lee Center, Gold Room 2
1108 Jefferson St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Wednesday, October 21- English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Location To Be Announced
Fairfax, Virginia

Wednesday, December 16 - English
9:30 am to 12:30 pm
Location To Be Announced
Arlington, Virginia

Due to limited seating capacity, advance registration is required. To register or for more information, call (703) 533-7600, go to www.orsinteractive.com, or send an email to info@orsinteractive.com