Levels of Risk in Food Service Operations/Retail Food Establishments

Level 1:
Main concerns: general sanitation, labeling, source of food, storage temperature control, and expiration dates.
- Pre-packaged non-potentially hazardous foods
- Non-potentially hazardous beverages (packaged, fountain, coffee)
- Pre-packaged refrigerated and/or frozen potentially hazardous foods
- Baby food, baby formula

Level 2:
Main concerns: level 1 concerns. Additionally—hand contact, employee health. Permits handling of potentially hazardous foods in situations where there is little or no potential for pathogen growth resulting in foodborne disease should bacteria contamination occur.
- Baking of non-potentially hazardous food
- Manufacturing of confectionary products
- Bulk displays of unwrapped non-potentially hazardous foods
- Re-packaging of non-potentially hazardous food prepared elsewhere
- Warming of food from a commercially processed hermetically sealed container and immediately handled for retail sale or service
- Maintaining hot potentially hazardous foods at proper holding temperature until handled for retail or service if it was received at 140°F or above
- Manufacture and bagging of ice for retail sale
- The operation only prepares and/or services non-potentially hazardous food
- Hand dipping of frozen desserts, frozen dessert dispenser
- Potentially hazardous foods received in individual portions and served immediately
- Foods, prepackaged in individual portions, received from a licensed food operation or off premise commercial processor and served cold/heated individually and immediately served
- Foods received from a licensed food operation or off premise commercial processor in bulk quantities and maintained and served at the same proper temperature as received

Level 3:
Main concerns: includes those of level 1 and 2. Additionally—proper cooking temperatures, proper cooling procedures, proper holding temperatures, contamination issues and/or improper heat treatment in association with longer holding times before consumption, or processing a raw food product to sell as ready-to-eat that requires bacterial load reduction procedures.
- Processing of produce for ready-to-eat sell
- Cutting or grinding of meat products, slicing of lunch meat
- Cook/serve, cook/cool, cook/hot hold, cook/cool/cold hold
- Heating of a product from an intact hermetically sealed package and held hot
- Cook, cool, add additional raw ingredients, cold hold
- Reheat in individual portions only

Level 4:
Main concerns: process controls, concerns of levels 1, 2, 3. Additionally—concerns associated with food or ingredients going through several preparation steps where temperature control is needed to preclude bacterial growth; offering as ready-to-eat raw potentially hazardous meats, poultry products, fish, or shellfish or foods with these raw potentially hazardous items as ingredients; or the use of freezing as a means of parasites destruction.
- Cook/cool/reheat/hot hold
- Cook/hold/cool/reheat (with or without additional ingredients being added)
- Time in lieu of temperature
- Freezing of fish to destroy parasites before sale or service in a ready-to-eat form, raw, raw-marinated, partially cooked, or marinated-partially cooked fish
- Reheating bulk quantities of leftover potentially hazardous foods more than once a week
- Transports potentially hazardous food as a catering food service operation or commissary food service operation
- Serving primarily to a high risk clientele including immune-compromised or elderly individuals in a facility that provides health care or assisted living
- Offers as a menu item raw potentially hazardous meats, poultry, fish, or shellfish or foods with these raw potentially hazardous items as ingredients.