

The major changes to the Rules of the Georgia Food Code are:

1. The definition for potentially hazardous food has been changed to be more specific on types of pathogenic microorganisms and foods that are not considered potentially hazardous.
 2. A Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan is now required for processes that vary from the rules. A proposed HACCP plan must be approved by both the state office and the local county health department before implementation will be allowed. HACCP is a driving force of the food industry. Any process that varies from the rules will have to be proven through sound documentation that it will maintain the food's wholesomeness and safety until served.
 3. The successful completion of an exam accredited by the Conference for Food Protection or other accrediting agencies as conforming to national standards for organizations that certify individuals.
 4. Demonstration of knowledge by the person-in-charge and employees is required.
 5. More specific criteria for Employee Health and for Exclusions and Restrictions for Sick Employees are given.
 6. Hand washing required after restroom use and upon entering food preparation and Single Hand Wash required upon entering kitchen
 7. Fingernails must be no longer than tips of the fingers unless a glove is worn when preparing food.
 8. An allowance for employees to drink from a closed beverage cup with straw is allowed while working.
 9. The required cooling procedure is now: 135°F to 70° in 2 hours and 70°F to 41°F in 4 hours verses from 140°F to 41°F as required under the previous Georgia Food Code.
 10. Bare hand contact of the food service establishment employee with ready-to-eat foods will not be allowed.
- viii
11. Required treatment of raw or partially cooked fish to kill parasites except for some species is specified.
 12. The minimum internal cook temperature for pork is specified as 145°F for 15 seconds.
 13. Date marking provisions for prepared foods held longer than 24 hours are specified.
 14. Time as a public health control is allowed in lieu of temperature when any leftover food after 4 hours will be discarded. Written procedures are required to be on file in the establishment as well as individual labeling of the product so that employees are aware of it.
 15. An adequate thermometer for the food being tested is required.
 16. An advisory notice is required if potentially hazardous foods are offered in raw or undercooked form. More specific requirements for placement are given in the proposed rules than in the 1996 rules.
 17. Frequency of cleaning food contact surfaces is based on room temperature.
 18. A Certified Pest Control Operator is required to apply restricted-use pesticides.
 19. Frequency of inspection will be based on the risk type designated for the establishment and on grade history.

20. Food for *immediate service only* can be reheated to any temperature.
21. Mobile units are required to have unit permit in each county in addition to the county of origin.
22. All unwrapped foods are required to be disposed of at the end of the business day or after a maximum of 24 hours after first being on display.
23. Instructions for consumer advisory notice have been revised to remove the word “death” from its wording.
24. A new risk categorization of establishment inspection and grading system has been provided using grades A, B, C, & U based upon a numerical score.