

## HEALTH INSPECTION PLACARD REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of Pasadena Municipal Code Chapter 8.13, which requires food establishments to post the most recent health inspection summary report, is to provide patrons with relevant information regarding the sanitation and safety of such businesses in the city.

Beginning July 1, 2014 the Environmental Health Division will begin posting a new inspection summary report that employs a **PASS/CONDITIONAL PASS/CLOSED Placard** as a simple, visible indicator that the public can use to determine the current standing of a food facility in conforming to the California Retail Food Code.

The summary report will be based on the score obtained at the conclusion of a routine inspection or follow-up inspection. This score is determined by the number of violations observed during the inspection. Each food facility inspection begins with 100 points. The point value assigned to each violation is based on the level of food safety risk. Points are deducted from the initial 100 points. This score will be identified on the placard.

One of the following placards will be issued and posted at the conclusion of the inspection:



**85 to 100 points**

An acceptable level of compliance was achieved with any noted major\* violations corrected at time of inspection.

*\*If a major violation cannot be corrected during the inspection, a closure of the facility may be necessary.*



**75 to 84 points**

Minimally acceptable compliance was achieved with any noted major violations corrected at time of inspection. A follow-up inspection will be conducted to ensure continued compliance.

**Below 75 points**

Poor food handling practices and overall food facility maintenance and sanitation is lacking. A Permit Suspension Hearing will be scheduled. A follow-up inspection will be conducted to verify compliance or the permit may be suspended.



**Permit Suspension/  
Imminent Health Hazard\***

The facility was ordered closed as a result of:

- Permit Suspension due to an imminent health hazard, including but not limited to:
  - Vermin
  - Sewage overflow
  - No water or hot water
  - Lack of power
  - No operable bathrooms
  - Fire or other disaster
- Permit Suspension due to non-compliance
- Operating without a Health Permit

### **Moving from a “Conditional Pass” to a “Pass” Placard**

If a food facility is issued a CONDITIONAL PASS placard during a routine inspection, a follow-up will be scheduled within five (5) working days of the initial inspection, or as otherwise arranged with the facility operator, to assure that the violations have been corrected. A score of 95 or above must be obtained during the follow-up inspection to be issued a “PASS” placard.

For facilities that score below 75, a Permit Suspension Hearing will be scheduled to determine if the permit should be suspended or revoked pursuant to California Retail Food Code Section 114405.

Food facilities must score 95 or above with no major violations noted during a follow-up inspection to be issued a “PASS” placard.

If a food facility with a “CONDITIONAL PASS” at the follow-up inspection does not score a 95 or higher and/or has major violations identified, a Permit Suspension or Revocation Hearing shall be scheduled pursuant to California Retail Food Code Section 114405.

### **Permit Suspension Hearings**

If a Permit Suspension Hearing is scheduled for any of the following reasons, a fee in the amount of \$150.00 will be assessed and must be paid at the time of the scheduled hearing:

- Facility scored below 75 or repeat violations were noted.
- Permit suspended due to an imminent health hazard.
- Operating without a health permit.

### **Posting of the Placard**

The placard must be posted so that it is conspicuous to the general public from the time it is issued until the time it is replaced with another placard. The placard must be posted in one of the following places:

- On the front door or in the front window within five feet of the front door;
- In a display case mounted on the outside front wall within five feet of the front door;
- If no windows or display box exists, or if the windows are heavily tinted: place inside the facility, in a visible location, within five feet of the front door, or posted at the service counter; or
- Other location approved by the Environmental Health Specialist.

### **Proper Posting**

The placard is not considered properly posted when:

- It is not in the location approved by the Environmental Health Specialist.
- The placard is missing and the operator has not called for a replacement.
- The placard is defaced, marred, camouflaged, hidden or removed.

### **Keeping the Placard Safe**

The food facility owner is responsible for keeping the placard in the approved location. If the owner finds the placard is missing or altered, it is his/her responsibility to immediately call the Environmental Health Division at (626) 744-6004 and request a new placard.

### **Fines and Penalties**

When an Environmental Health Specialist documents a failure to properly post a placard, an administrative citation may be issued. Fines are assessed pursuant to the Pasadena Municipal Code.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. The County of Los Angeles implemented a grading system (A, B, C) as part of its food inspection program. Why didn't the City of Pasadena adopt a similar system?**

- A. The City of Pasadena opted for a system that utilizes a simple "PASS", "CONDITIONAL PASS" or "CLOSED" instead of an "A", "B" or "C" grade. This system is being adopted by a number of jurisdictions within the State of California. The City's system also provides electronic links to the most recent inspection report thus providing consumers with additional information.

**Q. How is the new placard system different than A, B or C letter grades?**

- A. The goal of the food inspection program is to protect the public from foodborne illness that can occur when a food facility does not comply with the California Retail Food Code. By utilizing a simple "PASS", "CONDITIONAL PASS" or "CLOSED" status, consumers are able to quickly assess a food facility's compliance with this code. Food facilities that are issued a "CONDITIONAL PASS" must address any noted violations within 5 days to avoid a permit suspension. This system requires that all food facilities operate with a "PASS" status.

**Q. Which food facilities will be placarded?**

- A. All permanent retail food facilities are required to post a placard. Permanent food facilities include restaurants, food market retail, retail food processing locations, licensed health care facilities, commissaries, and school cafeterias. Consumers can expect to see the new "PASS", "CONDITIONAL PASS" or "CLOSED" placards posted after any routine inspection completed after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Q. How do you determine which placard is issued to a food facility?**

- A. The inspection results are documented on an inspection report. The report has three classifications for violations (see below for definition and point deductions). These are:
- Critical Risk Factors can be identified as either a major or a minor violation
  - Good Retail Practices
  - Compliance & Enforcement
- The placard issued to the facility is based on the number of points deducted, starting from 100pts.

**Q. What is a major violation?**

- A. A major violation as indicated in the California Retail Food Code Section 113725 (a)(2) is a risk factor violation that has been identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as contributing factors in foodborne illness outbreaks. A major violation poses an imminent health hazard that warrants immediate correction and may require closure of the food facility. These include:
- Improper employee hygiene and handwashing
  - Contaminated food items
  - Improper sanitizing procedures
  - Improper food temperatures
  - Food from unapproved sources

The following violations may also be considered as major violations: adulterated food, prohibited food offered to highly susceptible populations, no water, lack of hot water, sewage, and/or vermin.

**Q. What is a minor violation?**

- A. A minor violation does not pose an imminent health hazard, but does warrant correction. Such as, the hot water measures below 120°F but above 110°F at the utensil washing sink.

**Q. What are Good Retail Practice violations?**

A. These are low risk violations that control basic operational and sanitation conditions within a food facility, and if not corrected could be contributing factors to foodborne illness by introducing hazards (biological, chemical, and physical), into the end product, either directly or indirectly.

**Q. How is the score determined by an inspector?**

A. The score is determined by the point values assigned to each violation which are deducted from the initial 100 points:

- Major Critical Risk Factor Violation= 4 pts
- Minor Critical Risk Factor Violation = 2 pts
- Good Retail Practice Violation = 1 pt
- Imminent Health Hazard = 26 pts

**Q. I noticed that a food facility was closed due to an imminent health hazard, what does this mean?**

A. A permit is suspended due to an imminent health hazard when a major violation has been documented and the food facility is unable to correct the violation at the time of inspection. Imminent health hazards include, but are not limited to:

- Vermin
- Sewage overflow
- No water or hot water
- Lack of power
- No operable bathrooms
- Fire or other disaster

**Q. I see that my favorite restaurant was issued a “CONDITIONAL PASS”. How can I determine what violations were noted by the inspector?**

A. A consumer has several options to view the violations that resulted in the issuance of any posted placard. Below are some of the options:

- Scan the QR code located on the placard to search for the food facility and view not only the current score and also the prior history.
- Visit the City of Pasadena Restaurant Inspection database at the following website address: <http://decadeonline.com/main.phtml?agency=PAS>
- Ask the food facility operator to view a copy of the last routine food inspection report.

**Q. Is this true that grading systems only provide a snapshot of the conditions during the inspection?**

A. Yes, any grading system reflects the level of compliance at the time of the inspection. It is for this reason that we have updated the Food Facility Inspection database to include historical information in addition to the posting of all violations noted during each inspection.

**Q. Is it true that a food facility owner is required to show the results of the last routine inspection if a customer requests to see it?**

A. Yes, the California Retail Food Code Section 13725.1 states that a copy of the most recent routine inspection report shall be maintained at the food facility and made available for viewing.