

Operator's Guide  
for  
**Food Premises**  
February 2020



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Northwestern  
Health Unit

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[www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca)

# OPERATOR CHECKLIST:

- Read this package
- Review with staff
- Call a public health inspector with any questions
- Be prepared to post signage in 2020

## Background

The Northwestern Health Unit is following the example of other Ontario health units by implementing an evidence-based, on-site disclosure system for operators of food premises, personal service settings, recreational camps, and recreational water facilities. Previously, the results of health inspections were posted online and available through a Freedom of Information request. Now, establishments must publicly display signs that indicate how well they adhere to the laws that protect consumers from infections and food-borne illnesses.

## Does this apply to me?

All food premises that serve or sell food to the public in the Northwestern Health Unit region must display an inspection sign. Specific food premises include:

- Restaurants, bars, grocery stores, public banquet facilities
- Institutional food service establishments – i.e. hospitals, daycares
- Mobile food premises – i.e. hot dog carts, chip trucks
- Home-based food businesses

Personal Service Settings, Recreational Camps and Recreational Water Facilities must also comply with on-site disclosure; see the *Operator's Guide for Personal Service Settings* or the *Fact Sheet for Recreational Camps and Recreational Water Facilities* for more information. ChooseWise on-site inspection signs are not required for one-time special events or farmers' markets. Special event operators must display their Food Vendor Permit. Signs issued to home-based businesses do not have to be visible from outside the premises, but must have their inspection sign available and visible to their customers.

## Why on-site disclosure?

**Meeting legislative requirements.** All food premises are required to operate under the minimum requirements of the *Ontario Food Premises Regulation, O. Reg. 493* under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, which states that "every operator of a food premise shall ensure that the results of any inspections ... are posted in accordance with the inspector's request". This new system also complies with new *Ontario Public Health Standards* that require inspection results to be easily accessible to the public.

The new inspection system requires the public disclosure of inspection results at the premises, rather than just online results. This new process is being implemented for the benefit of both the operators and the public.

**Our top priority is health and safety.** In some areas, on-site disclosure of inspection results has corresponded with less incidences of food-borne illness. It reduces the number of uninspected premises and increases public awareness of health and safety inspections.

**Consumers want more information about what they put in their body.** This new system delivers clear and easy-to-understand information that empowers consumers to make informed choices about their safety.

**A positive score can enhance customer trust**, which can be returned in the form of a positive economic impact. A positive score can be an effective marketing tool for businesses.

## WHAT THE PUBLIC WILL SEE

Following an inspection, the health inspector will provide the operator with one of the following signs to be posted at the entrance to your premises. The sign posted will reflect the level of compliance with the regulations, based on the results of the most recent inspection.



**PASS** **CHOOSE Wise**  
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION PROGRAM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_

This establishment was inspected by a public health inspector in accordance with Ontario's Health Protection and Promotion Act on:

[STICKER OF DATE]

*K. Young-Hoon*  
Kit Young Hoon, MBBS, MPH, MSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

Inspection results posted on this placard describe what the public health inspector observed on the date and time of the inspection. This placard is not intended to guarantee the conditions of a premises at all times and should not be relied upon for that purpose.

**To access inspection reports:**

- Visit our ChooseWise website at <http://choosewise.nwhu.on.ca/>
- Call the Northwestern Health Unit at 1-800-830-5978
- Scan the Quick Response (QR) code here




**CONDITIONAL PASS** **CHOOSE Wise**  
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION PROGRAM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_

This establishment was inspected by a public health inspector in accordance with Ontario's Health Protection and Promotion Act on:

[STICKER OF DATE]

This premises was found to have non-compliance issues.  
**A re-inspection will be conducted to verify compliance.**

*K. Young-Hoon*  
Kit Young Hoon, MBBS, MPH, MSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

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**THIS ESTABLISHMENT IS CLOSED** **CHOOSE Wise**  
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTION PROGRAM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Municipality \_\_\_\_\_

**BY ORDER OF THE NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT**  
Under Section 13 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7.

The Northwestern Health Unit has determined that the safety of this premises cannot be guaranteed and it will remain closed until the safety of this premises can be assured.

*K. Young-Hoon*  
Kit Young Hoon, MBBS, MPH, MSc, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health

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## HOW THE PROCESS WILL WORK

During an inspection, the health inspector will input the infractions they observe into an electronic database. At the end, the inspector will use the database to calculate a score based on the number of non-critical, critical, and health hazard closure infractions that were identified. Scores **begin at 100** and points are deducted based on the type of infractions. Point deductions may be reduced if certain infractions are corrected during the inspection (CDI). A breakdown of points can be found below.

The inspector will then review the score with the operator and provide a sign that corresponds with the inspection status. The operator is required to post the sign **at all public entrances**, clearly visible to the public from outside the building (an exception exists for home-based businesses). The inspector may assist in finding a good location, or change the location of a sign that does not fit the criteria.

It is the operator's responsibility to ensure their inspection sign is **visible at all times**, and not altered, defaced, or obstructed. Failure to do so may result in a fine. If the sign is lost or damaged, operators must contact their inspector to request a replacement. One sign holder will be provided to each premises, which will not be replaced by the Northwestern Health Unit.

The ChooseWise website will continue to provide a more detailed, online version of the results, and the public can still ask for a hard copy through a Freedom of Information request.

The **first sign you receive will be a temporary one** to advise consumers that this is coming soon and to watch for new signs. It will be delivered by mail to operators to be posted in all public entrances. If this temporary sign is not displayed by the end of February 2020, it may result in an infraction during the premises' next inspection.

### Inspection Frequency

There will be no change to the current frequency of inspections. Frequency depends on the **risk level** of the premises, which is calculated based on:

- type of facility
- type of patron
- number of food preparation steps
- past compliance history
- food safety plans
- Safe Food Handler training of staff

#### INSPECTION FREQUENCY

**Low risk:** at least every 12 months

**Medium risk:** at least every 6 months

**High risk:** at least every 4 months

Operators are not informed of inspections prior to the inspection date.

## SCORING

CATEGORY	POINTS
<b>Non-Critical Infraction</b>	5 points deducted
<b>Critical Infraction</b>	15 points deducted
<b>Health Hazard Closure Infraction</b>	100 points deducted
<b>Infraction Corrected During Inspection (CDI)</b>	50% of point value re-added

A **critical or health hazard closure infraction** has the potential to pose an immediate public health risk and/or lead to a food-borne illness (e.g., improper hot/cold holding temperatures, etc.). A **non-critical infraction** does not pose an immediate health risk in and by itself, is not likely to lead to a food-borne illness, and/or does not directly relate to food handling practices (e.g., structural deficiency of floors or walls, etc.).

The categorization of non-critical, critical and health hazard closure infractions can be found in the Appendix of this manual.

### Corrected During Inspection

Some infractions can be corrected during the inspection (CDI). It is the inspector's discretion as to whether or not a correction results in adding back 50% of the points that were lost due to the infraction. For example, *an inspector may note that raw meats are stored on the shelf above ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator. This would require a loss of 15 points, but the operator switches the two shelves so that the raw meats are stored underneath. The inspector decides to reduce the point loss to 7.5 points instead of 15.*

### FOR EXAMPLE...

INFRACTIONS	POINT CALCULATION	FINAL SCORE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ CRITICAL: Food is not held at 4°C (40°F) or less</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: Cutting boards are worn and cannot be properly sanitized</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: Raw meat stored above food in the refrigerator</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: No soap at the designated hand sink</li> </ul>	1 critical infraction: 15 pts 3 non-critical infractions: $5 \text{ pts} \times 3 = 15$ $15 + 15 = 30$ $100 - 30 = 70$	<b>70 points</b> <b>CONDITIONAL</b> <b>PASS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ CRITICAL: Food is not held at 4°C (40°F) or less</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: Cutting boards are worn and cannot be properly sanitized</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: Raw meat stored above food in the refrigerator → CDI</li> <li>→ NON-CRITICAL: Linens and tissues not stored properly → CDI</li> </ul>	1 critical infraction: 15 pts 1 non-critical infraction: 5 pts <b>2 corrected minor infractions: 2.5 pts x 2</b> $15 + 5 + 2.5 + 2.5 = 25$ $100 - 25 = 75$	<b>75 points</b> <b>PASS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ HEALTH HAZARD CLOSURE: No running water is available on the premises</li> </ul>	1 health hazard closure infraction: 100 pts $100 - 100 = 0$	<b>0 points</b> <b>CLOSURE</b>

### WHAT THE SCORE MEANS...

<b>PASS:</b> <b>75-100 points</b>	Operators will receive a pre-printed green sign. The sign must be posted until the next regular inspection.
<b>CONDITIONAL PASS:</b> <b>1-74 points</b>	Operators will receive a pre-printed yellow sign. The sign must be posted until a re-inspection can occur.
<b>CLOSURE:</b> <b>0 points</b>	Operators will receive a pre-printed red sign. The premises must be closed until an inspector is satisfied that the health hazard has been eliminated.

To receive a **conditional pass**, a premises would have to receive either: **2 critical infractions** OR **1 critical infraction and 3 non-critical infractions** OR **6 non-critical infractions**.

To receive a **closure**, a premises would have to receive either **1 health hazard closure infraction** OR **7 critical infractions** OR **21 non-critical infractions**.

## DEALING WITH A HEALTH HAZARD

Public health inspectors deal with health hazards using the powers given to them by the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. If they determine that a health hazard exists, public health inspectors have the authority to:

- close a food premises
- destroy any food they believe poses an immediate health risk if consumed by the public
- issue a set-fine ticket for each infraction
- issue a Summons for legislation infractions

Re-inspection after a yellow or red sign is issued will be completed after the inspector responsible is notified that the non-compliance issues have been corrected. Upon being contacted, the inspection will be completed within 10 business days. When a re-inspection is completed, a new sign will be provided that reflects the grade of the most recent inspection.

## SAFE FOOD HANDLING INFORMATION AND TRAINING OPTIONS

Section 32 of Ontario Regulation 493 requires every food premises operator must ensure that there is “at least one food handler or supervisor on the premise who has completed food handler training during every hour in which the premise is operating”. The NWHU offers different options for completing the necessary training. For all certification options or to register for training, visit <http://tiny.cc/SafeFoodHandler>.

### Online: Take the *In Good Hands* safe food handling course.

- Comprehensive course approved by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Allows user to work through material on their own schedule
- Takes approximately eight hours
- Re-certification required every five years
- For more information, call 1-866-287-8828 or visit the website at <https://ingoodhands.ca/>.

### In-Class: Register for a safe food handling course through the Health Unit.

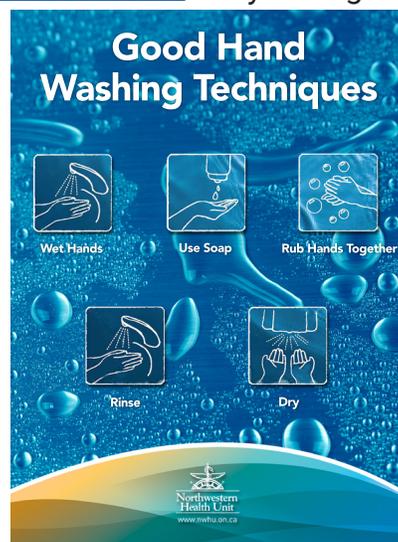
- Full-day course offered by the Northwest Health Unit in multiple locations
- Accommodates different learning styles
- Re-certification required every five years
- Course dates and locations can be found online at <http://tiny.cc/courseschedule> or by calling your local health unit office

### Independent Book Study

- At your own pace, in the comfort of your home
- Includes course materials and exam
- Must take exam within six months of registration

## RESOURCES

- Health Protection and Promotion Act <http://bit.ly/healthPPA>
- Ontario Food Premises Regulation (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 493) <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/170493>
- OPHS Food Safety Protocol 2019 <https://tinyurl.com/ophsprotocol>
- Copies of **hand hygiene** and **dishwashing posters** can be accessed by contacting the Northwestern Health Unit.



# APPENDIX

## Health Hazard Closure Compliance Items

Infractions that automatically result in temporary premises closure (100 point deduction).  
\*infraction examples are not comprehensive

COMPLIANCE ITEM	INFRACTION EXAMPLES
The premises is operated and maintained free from every condition that may be a health hazard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infestation with insects/rodents where there is evidence of food contamination and a lack of an effective pest control program</li> <li>• Inadequate water supply</li> <li>• Sewage back-up</li> <li>• Fires, floods or power outages</li> <li>• Gross lack of sanitation/sterilization</li> <li>• Evidence of food contamination</li> </ul>

## Critical Compliance Items

Failure to comply with any item on this list constitutes a critical infraction and results in a deduction of 15 points.

Food is held at 4°C or less
Proper cooling methods/practices used
Thorough cooking to minimum internal food temperature
Hot holding: minimum of 60°C (140°F) after cooking/rapid re-heating
Re-heating: to original cooking temperature within 2 hours
Adequate number of handwashing sinks conveniently located and kept adequately supplied
Washing hands thoroughly before and after handling food
Proper infection control practices ensure minimized risk of blood/body fluid/body substance exposure to food
Separate raw foods from ready-to-eat foods during storage and handling
Constant supply of potable hot and cold running water under pressure
Toxic / poisonous substances (chemicals/pesticides) to be stored separately from food
Meat obtained from an approved source
Manufactured meats are processed to destroy bacteria
Uninspected meats obtained through hunting: only for custom cutting
Only Grade A or Grade B eggs and non-hen eggs permitted
Milk and milk products – pasteurization, record keeping, labelling, cleaning and sanitizing
Either mechanical or manual dishwashing provided
Manual dishwashing: wash, rinse, sanitize technique
Mechanical dishwashing: wash/rinse water clean, water temperature, timing cycles, sanitizer
Food contact surfaces washed / rinsed / sanitized after each use and following any operations when contamination may have occurred

## Non-Critical Compliance Items

Failure to comply with any item on this list constitutes a non-critical infraction and results in a deduction of 5 points.

Disclosure signage is posted

Frozen food is kept in frozen state

Thermometers used to verify storage, food preparation and hot holding temperatures

Handwashing basin used for the sole purpose of handwashing

Good food handler hygiene practices observed

Food obtained from an approved source

Minimum of one certified food handler on-site

Food protected from potential contamination and adulteration

Proper use and storage of clean utensils (including single service utensils)

Food contact surfaces properly designed, constructed, installed and maintained

Equipment, non-food contact surfaces and linen are maintained, designed, constructed, installed and accessible for cleaning

Proper use of dishwashing and cleaning items

Sanitary maintenance of and provision of required supplies in staff / public washroom facilities

Frequency of waste removal adequate to maintain the premises in a sanitary condition

Adequate protection against the entrance of insects, birds, rodents, and other pests

Floors, walls, and ceilings clean and in good repair

Mechanical ventilation operable where required

Lighting adequate for food preparation and cleaning

General housekeeping is satisfactory

Exclusion of live animals on the premises, subject to exemptions