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**GENERAL REGULATION  
FOR FOOD  
ESTABLISHMENTS AND  
SERVICES**

**Maldives Food and Drug Authority**

**Male', Republic of Maldives**

# General Regulation for Food Establishments and Services

Ref. No: 2007/182/FS 1

## 1. Introduction

- a. This regulation shall be applicable to the establishments relating to the production, harvesting, transport, storage or sales of food.
- b. This regulation is in force with the powers bestowed under the President's Office announcement number 2006/19.
- c. This regulation is cited as "General Regulation for Food Establishment and Services".

## 2. Location

Establishments shall normally be located away from:

- a. Environmentally polluted areas and industrial activities, which pose a serious threat of contaminating food.
- b. Areas subject to flooding unless sufficient safeguards are provided.
- c. Areas which pose a threat from animals and birds.
- d. Areas such as dump yards where wastes, either solid or liquid are collected.

## 3. Building and facilities

- a. Building and facilities shall be sound of construction, easy to clean and maintain in good repair. All construction material shall be such that they do not harbor living organisms, transmit any undesirable substance to the food and shall not emit any toxic vapors when the construction is completed.
- b. The buildings and facilities shall be designed to provide separation, partition, location or other effective means, between those operations which may cause cross contamination. For example, areas where cooked food is handled must be effectively separated from raw food handling areas.
- c. Working space shall be provided to allow for satisfactory performance of all operations without inferences.
- d. Food handling areas shall be constructed to prevent contamination. Hence:
  - I. The building and facilities shall be designed to prevent the entrance and harboring of pests and the contaminants such as smoke, dust and dirt etc.
  - II. The design should be such as to permit easy and adequate cleaning facilities and proper supervision of food hygiene.

- III. To maintain foods safe, adequate facilities shall be provided to hold hot foods hot and cold foods cold and for storing refrigerated and frozen foods. Adequate facilities shall be provided for monitoring food temperature.
- e. The structures and fittings in food handling areas shall be as follows:
- I. **Floors** shall be constructed of durable non-absorbent material and shall be easy to clean and disinfect. Where appropriate, floors shall slope sufficiently for liquids to drain to trapped outlets.
  - II. **Walls** shall be waterproof, non-absorbent and washable materials, sealed and free from insects. Up to the operation height they shall be smooth and without crevices and shall be easy to clean and disinfect.
  - III. **Working surfaces that come in direct contact with food** shall be in sound condition, durable and easy to clean, maintain and disinfect. They shall be made of smooth, non-absorbent materials and inert to the food, to detergents and disinfectants under normal operating conditions.
  - IV. **Ceilings** shall be so designed, constructed and finished as to prevent the accumulation of dirt and minimize condensation, mould development, flaking and shall be easy to clean.
  - V. **Doors** shall be smooth, non-absorbent surfaces and where appropriate be self closing and close fittings.
  - VI. **Windows** shall be easy to clean, be constructed to minimize the buildup of dirt, where necessary, be fitted with removable and cleanable insect proof screens. Where necessary, windows should be fixed.
- f. In the food handling areas, all overhead structures and fittings shall be installed in such manner as to avoid contamination directly or indirectly of food and raw materials by condensation and drip, and shall not hamper cleaning operations. They shall be installed where appropriate and be designed and finished as to prevent the accumulations of dirt and minimize condensation, mould growth and flaking.
- g. Living quarters, toilets and areas similar shall be completely separated and shall not be open directly in to food handling areas.
- h. Water and steam supplied shall be meet the following requirements:
- I. **Potable water** shall be supplied in adequate quantity the premises shall provide with adequate supply of portable water. Stored water shall be in clean containers, free of hazardous substances and contaminates.
  - II. **Ice** shall be manufactured from portable water, handled and stored so as to protect from contamination.
  - III. **Steam** used in direct contact with food or food contact surface shall be free from hazardous substances or contaminants.

- IV. **Non-portable water** used for steam production, refrigeration, fire control and other similar purpose not connected with food should be carried in completely separate lines, identifiable preferably by color, and with no cross contamination or back siphon age in to the system carrying portable water.
- i. The establishments shall be provided with adequate, suitable and conveniently located changing facilities and toilets. Toilets shall be designed as to ensure easy cleaning and hygienic removal of waste matter. These areas shall be well lit, ventilated. Hand washing facilities with potable water, a suitable hand-cleaning preparation and with suitable hygienic means of drying hands, shall be provided.
  - j. There shall be provided adequate and conveniently located facilities for hand washing and disinfection at the entrance to and inside hand food handling areas. The facilities shall be provided with potable water, a suitable hand-cleaning preparation and with suitable hygienic means of drying hands.
  - k. Adequate or natural lighting shall be provided throughout the establishment. Light bulbs and fixtures suspended over food materials shall be safety type and protected to prevent contamination of food in case of breakage.
  - l. Adequate ventilation should be provided to avoid excessive build up of heat, steam condensation and dust and to remove contaminated air. The direction of airflow within the premises shall never be from a dirty area to clean area. Ventilation opening shall be provided with a screen or other protecting enclosure. Screen shall be easily removable for cleaning.
  - m. There shall be facilities to store waste and inedible material prior to removal from the establishment. These facilities shall be designed to prevent access to waste or inedible material by pests and to avoid cross-contamination of food, potable water, equipment, building and roadways.
  - n. Establishments shall have an efficient waste disposal system which shall at all times be maintained in good order and repair. As such, adequate number of tight-closing containers for waste, facilities for cleaning the containers, and a well maintained sewerage system shall be made available.
  - o. Mobile facilities and vending machines shall be designed to permit easy cleaning. They shall be designed and maintained to avoid contamination of food and harboring of pests.

#### **4. Equipment and utensils**

- a. All equipment and utensils used in food handling areas, which may contact food, shall be made of material which does not transmit toxic substances, odour to taste, is non-absorbent, is resistant to corrosion and is capable of withstanding repeated cleaning and disinfection. Surface shall be smooth and free from pits and crevices. The use of wood and other materials, which cannot be adequately cleaned and disinfected, shall be avoided except when their use would clearly not be a source of contamination.

- b. All equipment and utensils shall be designed and constructed as to prevent hygienic hazards and permit easy and thorough cleaning and disinfection and where practicable be visible for inspection.
- c. Containers for inedible materials and waste shall be leak-proof, constructed of metal or other impervious material, which shall be easy to clean and to be closed securely.
- d. All refrigerated rooms/compartments shall be provided with temperature measurement or recording devices.

## **5. Hygienic Requirements**

- a. The buildings, equipment, utensils and all other physical facilities of the establishment including water supply and drain, shall be maintained in good repair and in orderly condition.
- b. All equipment and utensils shall be cleaned as frequently and disinfected whenever circumstances demand, to prevent contamination of food.
  - I. Equipment, utensils and other implements shall be adequately cleaned to avoid any contamination of food
  - II. Adequate precautions shall be taken to prevent food from being contaminated during cleaning and disinfection of rooms, equipment or utensils by water, detergents and disinfectants and other solutions.
  - III. Where clean-in-place (CIP) system is used for cleaning they shall ensure effective cleaning and disinfection of the processing line.
  - IV. Toilets and changing facilities shall be kept clean at times.
- c. A permanent cleaning and disinfection schedule shall be drawn up for each establishment to ensure that all areas are appropriately cleaned and disinfected. All areas, equipment and utensils shall be effectively cleaned and disinfected following this schedule.
- d. Processed/ ready-to-eat and unprocessed/ raw food shall be stored in separate defined areas with suitable labeling.
- e. By products shall be stored separately to avoid contamination of food.
- f. Waste materials shall not be allowed to accumulate in food handling areas and shall be disposed of as in 3m and 3n.
- g. Cats, pets or other animals or Birds shall not be kept in food handling establishments.
- h. There shall be no rodents, geckos, cockroaches, flies or other pests in the food handling and processing area. There shall be an effective and continuous program for the control of pests.
- i. Pesticides or other such chemicals, which may represent a hazard to health, shall be suitably labeled with warning about their toxicity and use. They should be stored in locked rooms or cabinets used only for that purpose and handled only by authorized and properly trained persons. Extreme care shall be taken to avoid contamination of foods with these substances.

## **6. Personnel Hygiene and Health Requirements**

- a. Food handlers shall be trained in hygienic handling of food and in personal hygiene.
- b. Every person who worked in a capacity of a food handler shall have a medical examination and be certified fit by a registered Medical Officer, prior to their employment and annually. The medical examination shall include intestinal parasites and salmonella screening.
- c. No person, who is known or suspected to be suffering from or to be a carrier of a disease likely to be transmitted through food or while afflicted with infected wounds, skin infections, sores or with diarrhea is permitted to work in any food handling area in any capacity in which there is any likelihood of such persons directly or indirectly contaminating food. Any person who affected shall immediately report to the management and be relocated to work in other areas. The person will be allowed to resume work in food handling areas only after proof of recovery from a medical practitioner in writing.
- d. Any person who has cut or wound shall not continue to handle food or food contact surface. If unavoidable, the person can commence work only when the injury is completely protected by water-proof covering. Adequate first-aid facilities shall be provided in the premises.
- e. Any person while on duty in a food handling area shall wash his hands frequently and thoroughly with a suitable hand cleaning preparation under running potable water. Hands shall always be washed before commencing work, immediately after using toilets, after handling contaminated materials.
- f. Every person engaged food in handling area shall maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and apply hygienic practices while on duty, and shall at all times, wear suitable protective clothing including head covering.
- g. Gloves used in handling of food products shall be maintained in clean and sanitary condition
- h. Every person engaged in food handling activities shall abstain from behavior which should result in contamination food, including eating, smoking, spitting, chewing (betel nuts, gum etc), sneezing, picking the nose or coughing over unprotected food in food handling areas.
- i. Every person engaged in handling of food shall refrain from the following or similar activity that may contaminate food:
  - I. Shall not wear personal effects such as jewellery, watches or other items in food handling areas
  - II. Shall not bring in or deposit personal effects such as jewellery and clothing in food handling areas
  - III. Shall ensure that any food kept within the premises is fit for human consumption
  - IV. Shall adequately protect the food from contamination during storage, transport, expose for sale or during sale.

- j. Visitors to food manufacturing, processing or handling areas shall wear appropriate protective clothing and adhere to the other personal hygiene provisions. The management shall make appropriate arrangements for this.

## **7. Recall procedures**

The management shall ensure effective procedures are in place to deal with any food safety hazard and to enable the complete, rapid recall of any implicated lot of the finished food from the market or on sale. Recalled product shall be held under the supervision until they are destroyed, used for purpose other than human consumption, or reprocessed in a manner to ensure their safety.

## **8. Enforcement of this regulation**

This regulation shall be enforced by the Maldives Food and Drug Authority or by any other relevant department deemed by the Government.

## **9. Penalty**

- a. A person found guilty of violating any terms of this regulation shall be given an appropriate time period for rectification based on the magnitude of the offence. However, if The Maldives Food and Drug Authority after due investigation found this to be an immediate threat to public health, the food business shall be shut down without further delay.
- b. A person violating the terms in 9a after the given time period, is liable to a fine between MRF 5,000 (Maldivian Rufiyaa Five Thousand) and MRF 10,000 (Maldivian Rufiyaa Ten Thousand).
- c. A person found guilty of violating the terms of this regulation for the second time is liable to a fine of MRF 10,000 (Maldivian Rufiyaa Ten Thousand) and MRF 20,000 (Maldivian Rufiyaa Twenty Thousand).
- d. If a person repeatedly contravenes the requirements in the regulation, The Maldives Food and Drug Authority may opt to revoke the permit granted to the food establishment/ business through the concerned ministry.

## **10. Interpretations**

- a. **Establishment** means any building area in which food is prepared or processed and the surrounding under control of the same management. This also includes a part or an area in a building where food is handled, prepared and processed.
- b. **Potable water** means water that meets the criteria of WHO drinking water guidelines/ MWSA Guidelines for Drinking Water
- c. **Cleaning** means the removal of soil, food residue, dirt, grease or other objectionable matter.
- d. **Hazard** means a biological, chemical or physical agent or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.

- e. **Contaminant** means any biological or chemical agent, foreign agent, foreign matter, and other substances not intentionally added to food which may compromise food safety or suitability.
  - f. **Food handler** means any person who directly or indirectly handles food. This may include packaged or unpackaged food, food equipment and utensils, or food contact surfaces and is therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements.
  - g. **Disinfection** means the reduction, by means of chemical agents and/ or physical methods, of the micro organisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability.
  - h. **Clean-in-place** means a method of cleaning the interior surfaces of pipes, vessels, process equipment, and associated fittings automatically without disassembly.
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