

109.15 Food Preparation, Storage, and Sanitation

Sanitary and safe methods in food preparation, serving, and storage sufficient to prevent the transmission of disease and spoilage of food.

I do find that the Center has violated Food Storage/Sanitation. A very small percentage (approximately 2% of the food in the center as a whole was outdated, by a 1-2 month period). I do not find that the orange juice concentrate leak made the carrots below it unsafe or unsanitary. The bags the carrots were kept in were washed in my presence. It would be a reasonable and prudent assumption that the carrots would be cleaned (peels removed) and washed prior to use. However, the refrigerator did need to be cleaned, several items were outdated and several items in the pantry were not properly closed or stored. Furthermore, the center had been notified in writing from the Food Program regarding refrigeration temperatures, however the temperature was not at recommended levels:

The last review by a Food Program consultant on 7/9/2013 indicated the following:- Adjust the refrigerator temperature of 32-40 degrees F. The refrigerator was at 55 degrees the day of the review. - The freezer needs to be zero degrees F or below. The freezer was at +8 degrees the day of the review. Record and monitor temperatures daily and adjust if necessary. - Obtain a thermometer for the refrigerator in the infant room. -Food should be thawed in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or using the defrost setting of a microwave. Frozen food should not be thawed by setting it outside of the refrigerator. - The dishwasher temperature needs to be at least 155 degrees F. Since the dishwasher is a home unit and does not have a temperature gauge, it is recommended that the dishes be washed before placing them in the dishwasher. - Implement a regular cleaning schedule: A sample written cleaning schedule may be found in Chapter 2b of the CACFP Administrative Manual.”

Not only did the center have outdated items in the refrigerator, the refrigerator temperature was not at recommended levels. These factors combined would further contribute to contamination and/or food spoilage. Several dry food items were improperly stored. The center has a history of improper food storage, thus indicating a pattern of disregard to this rule.

According to the Iowa State Extension Office:

For most products, date shelf life is determined by the manufacturer and is based on food quality, not food safety. The lead author of the study concluded that a standardized date labeling system providing useful information to consumers is needed. Until a system is in place, Patricia Steiner, Nutrition and Health Program Specialist for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach suggests consumers use the guide below :

A “Sell-by” date tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.

A “Best If Used By (or Before)” date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.

A “Use-By” date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.

“Closed or coded dates” are packing numbers for use by the manufacturer.

According to the SAFE FOOD Project from Iowa State University:

Store food in original container if the container is clean, dry, and intact. If necessary, repackage food in clean, well-labeled, airtight containers. Food quality and sanitation is compromised when not stored properly.

Special Notes and Action Required:

It is recommended that frozen food should be placed in the refrigerator to thaw. The Center followed protocol in this instance. The refrigeration unit should be evenly cooled at recommended levels. The refrigerator should be cleaned on a regular basis and a routine cleaning schedule be established. When frozen foods are thawed they should have sufficient containment so debris from the thawing process does not contaminate other foods. CACFP and National Health and Safety Performance Standards should be maintained and followed. Used by or Expired by dates should be checked frequently and food destroyed that is outdated. It is not best practice to consume or serve expired food. Once food is opened from original containers remaining food contents should be placed in airtight containers.

Consultant's Signature:



Date:

03/17/2014