Guidelines for Inspection of Food Establishments
Objectives

At the end of the session, students should be able to:

• Outline clearly the reasons of inspecting food handling establishments

• Distinguish clearly among the types of inspections that may be conducted

• State accurately the names of the three (3) Public Health Regulations directly enforced in relation to food safety activities

• Explain clearly at least five (5) professional roles/responsibilities of the PHI while conducting inspections of FHEs
Objectives (cont’d)

• Describe clearly all elements included in the inspection procedure for FHEs
• Explain clearly information included in evidence development at food handling establishments
• Appreciate the importance of confidentiality in food inspection activities
• Describe clearly guidelines to be observed when preparing FHEs inspection reports
PURPOSE

• Inspections are conducted to evaluate:
  – Processes
  – Methods
  – Facilities
  – Food handling practices
  – Controls applied in the processing or preparation of foods
    in order to insure protection of the consumers and that value is obtained for money
Types of Inspections

- **Compliance** – based on the application for a licence; to certify FHEs
- **Routine** – throughout the licensing period; to ensure continual operation at the requisite standards
- **Revisit** – follow up activities based on either compliance/ routine inspection
- **Complaint** – in response to reports of FS breaches
- **Pre-operational** – during the commissioning processes; before operation begins
Authority


- The Public Health (Food Handling) Regulations 1998; 2000
- The Public Health (Tourist Establishments) Regulations 2000; 2004
- The Public Health (Nuisances) Regulations 1995; 2001
Inspectors' Responsibility

- Be knowledgeable of the inspection procedure, regulatory guidelines, policies and procedures
  - How inspections are conducted
  - Regulations used to evaluate establishments – review interpretations
  - Jurisdiction within which you are authorized to conduct duties
  - Turn around time, line of authority, reporting format
Inspector’s Responsibility

• Be professional at all times
  – Conduct the inspections with tact, decorum and diplomacy, while at the same time being firm and uncompromising in dispensing your duties
  – Be fair, honest and impartial
    – never be vindictive, never accept bribery, never accept gifts
  – People of varying background, be respectful at all times and listen
Inspector’s Responsibility

- Have proper identification
- Conduct thorough complete inspection
- Provide feedback on every inspection
- Follow up on inspections based on schedule
- Never discuss inspection findings from other establishments
  - Standardization is important
- Never try to discredit competence/authority of other colleagues
- Remember you are being evaluated outside of the regular 9 – 5
- Be careful of favours granted
General Inspection Guidelines

• The kind/type, frequency and depth of inspection will be determined by the policy directives issued by the Ministry of Health/Regional Authorities.

• A team leader should be identified before the inspection.

• The team leader will be responsible for planning, directing, scheduling and reporting on the inspection findings.
General Inspection Guidelines

• Be alert to criticism or allegations
• Dress appropriately
• Secure any item that may fall into product or machinery
  – jewellery, pens, clipboards, notebooks (use of cell phones)
• Where individuals are uncooperative or hostile
  – Be tactful, calm, and focus
  – At no time should you resort to threats, intimidation and strong-arm tactics.
Elements of Inspection

- Preparation for the Inspection
- Pre-Inspection Interview
- Conduct of the inspection
- Completion of the inspection
Inspection Procedures

• **Preparation for Inspection**
  ✓ Be aware of the purpose of the inspection
  ✓ Review generic process flow chart for the specific commodity or process
  ✓ Review references
    ✓ Regulations
    ✓ Codes of practices/Department guidelines
    ✓ Check previous history of inspection.
  ✓ Prepare equipment and materials required
Inspection Procedures

- **Pre-inspection (entry) Interview**
  - Introduce self/team by name, title and organization.
  - Provide rationale for visit/inspection.
  - Interview management/owner or representative.
  - Enquire about the product/process or operation. It might be useful to make a simple flow-chart. This will organize the inspection and permit product flow to be followed more easily.
Inspection Procedures

• Pre-inspection (entry) Interview
  ✓ Request that manager/owner/representative (senior person) accompany you on the inspection
  ✓ Develop/conceptualize the inspection procedure based on the preliminary information received

• If inspection or partial inspection is refused, proceed to advise supervisor and reschedule visit to the establishment
Inspection Procedures

• Conducting the Inspection
• Always lead your inspection
  ✓ Inspect the 'clean' sections of the establishment or facility and the high-risk food handling areas first.
  ✓ Determine the actual process
  ✓ Look for environmental contamination
  ✓ Review SOPs
  ✓ Examine employee practices
  ✓ Review cleaning and sanitation programme
  ✓ Review pest control programme
  ✓ Look for any processes or practices that would permit cross-contamination between raw and finished product
Inspection Procedures

Conducting the Inspection

✓ Environmental control - building maintenance, water supply, waste collection, handling and disposal

✓ **Review relevant records**

✓ Score inspection findings (use Food Service Establishment Inspection Report provided)

✓ **Record findings**

✓ If samples are collected the recommended sampling procedures should be followed.
Inspection Procedures

• Completing the Inspection

✓ Arrange/Conduct an exit interview
✓ Review the findings and observations with the establishment’s manager/owner’s representative. Explain the significance of all non-compliance items.
✓ Make recommendations. You should prioritize your findings.
✓ Concentrate on what needs/the end result to be done rather than how to do it.
Inspection Procedures

Completing the Inspection

☑ Establish a timeframe for corrective action with the establishment's manager/owner - that is, immediate or long term depending on the severity of the hazard and potential for contamination.

☑ If required serve statutory notice

☑ Leave copy of inspection findings with establishment manager/owner/representative
Protection of Privileged Information

The Inspector has a responsibility to keep all information received during the inspection as strictly confidential. Also, do not volunteer or divulge information about other establishments.
Evidence Development

- **Notebook/field book** - should include time(s), date(s), places, description of persons statements and other related events you observed
- **Proof of unsanitary conditions** - Location of unsanitary conditions and their proximity to food; include photographs; may seize/condemn food
- **Proof of manufacture**
- **Proof of sale**
- **Samples** - how samples were selected and maintained; precautions taken
REPORTING

• MUST BE PREPARED & SUBMITTED IN A TIMELY MANNER

• Clear and accurate
• As brief as possible, objective and factual
• Describe any unsanitary or other objectionable conditions and practices associated with the physical establishment, personnel habits, raw materials, processing, packaging and storage
• Must include clear time-bound recommendations
• Describe final action(s) – close, for follow up, notice
• Indicate your interventions – close, seize and condemn foods, ask workers to discontinue activity
Summary

• Different types of inspections are conducted at FHEs
• The PHI has a responsibility to conduct his duties with professionalism
• The PHI needs to ensure that all FHEs are inspected thoroughly and timely feedback is provided to operators
Quiz

• State two (2) reasons for inspecting FHEs
• State two (2) regulations which guides the operations of FHEs
• State three (3) responsibilities of the PHI in relation to the inspection of FHEs
• List the elements included in the inspection procedure
• What is document represents the most critical piece of evidence