



Winter 2021



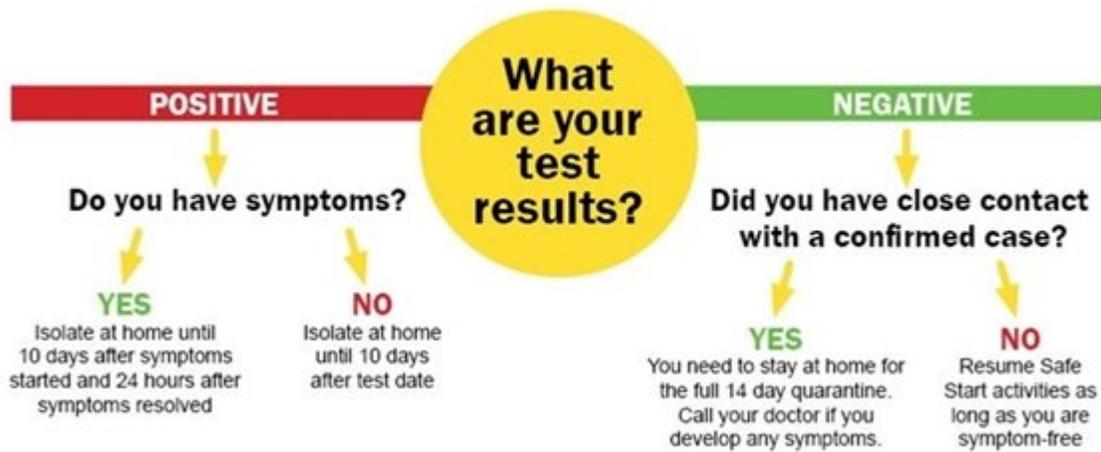
Donating Food

Many food banks are facing significant decreases in food donations right now. Individuals and retailers are doing more stocking up and donating less. Food establishments have similarly reduced donations because of service disruptions. This means that all donations to food banks have decreased when there is an increased need from the public. If any food establishments have ever considered donating in the past and didn't, or have any capacity to donate foods currently, those donations would be even more appreciated than in the past. As many establishments might still be figuring out how much food they need to order or prepare for their business each day or week (with often-fluctuating numbers of customers), this can still be a great way to give their food purpose and prevent it from going to the landfill if it turns out they've ordered or prepared too much. They are also [tax incentives](#) for food donation.

The first step for local businesses in making a food donation is ensuring that it can be done safely. Carefully assess your capacity to store foods in a freezer, commercial refrigerator or in your dry storage areas away from heat, pests and other sources of contamination. The foods you choose to donate must be in a food-grade package, cannot have been previously served to a customer and, if it requires temperature control for safety (perishable foods), it must have been held at proper temperatures throughout the lifespan of the food. Making sure that all of these factors have been controlled, you are protected from liability under the *Good Samaritan Food Donation Act*.

Once you have determined that you have the ability to safely make food donations, partner with a local hunger relief organization to find out what foods they need and coordinate pickup or delivery times. Make sure that the vehicle used to transport donations is clean, insulated or even temperature-controlled if you are delivering perishable items (especially on hot, sunny days). Always maintain detailed records of food handling activities, storage and transport conditions to demonstrate the safety and wholesomeness of your donated products. For more details on how to donate food, use our [Donation Guide for Businesses](#).

COVID Test Results Flowchart



Important Note:

Essential workers are allowed to work while in quarantine, as long as these conditions are met:

1. No symptoms.
2. No positive test.
3. Proper precautions are taken at work (masking, social distancing, etc).
4. Employee checks their temperature each day before work.



Food Code Change Update

The new food code has finally been approved. The adoption of the new food code will be a bit different this time. It becomes effective with a staggered timeline over the next 2.5 years.

- **Effective January 15, 2021:** Rule sections addressing legislative changes
 - WAC 246-215-01115 Definitions (including the removal of lemonade/beverage stands and certain B&B food service when meeting the criteria as defined in “FOOD ESTABLISHMENT”).
 - WAC 246-215-03235 Receiving temperature of freshly-made rice noodles.
 - WAC 246-215-06570 Pet dogs allowed indoors at food establishments with very limited food service.
 - WAC 246-215-09100 through WAC 246-215-09160 Mobile food units, commissaries, mobile plan review.
- **Effective March 1, 2022:** All remaining provisions of the rule excluding the Certified Food Protection Manager certification requirement
- **Effective March 1, 2023:** Certified Food Protection Manager certification requirement

The adopted revisions incorporate the 2017 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code with Washington modifications that address legislative changes and food safety issues raised by stakeholders. Major provisions of the adopted rule include:

- Active Managerial Control and the duties of the Person in Charge.
- Certified Food Protection Manager requirements.
- Refilling reusable consumer-owned containers.
- Date marking for 7-day shelf life of unpackaged refrigerated foods.
- Employee health, illness and hygiene.
- Clean up procedures for vomit and diarrhea.
- Allowable bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food.
- Mobile food unit requirements, including commissaries and plan review.
- Donated food operating requirements, facility clarifications, and modifications to food source.

- Cooking temperatures for poultry and ground meat.
- Modification of consumer advisory and requirements for parasite reduction in fresh fish.
- Dogs in select indoor and outdoor areas of food establishments.

For more detailed information on the new food code changes, visit the [Washington Department of Health](#) website.

Imminent Health Hazards

A food service establishment must stop serving food and call the Snohomish Health District if they experience an emergency that could cause the food to become unsafe and affect the health of customers and employees. These health hazards include fire, flood, loss of power, loss of hot water, and sewage backup. If you experience any of these health hazards, call the Snohomish Health District at 425.339.5250. Your call will be forwarded to the appropriate inspector who will determine the next steps required to keep the public safe. The inspector can also help the establishment decide which food is safe to keep and what needs to be thrown away before you reopen. In general, food needs to be thrown away if it:



- Has come in contact with flood water, smoke, fire, sewage or chemicals.
- Is a Time-Temperature Control for Safety Food or TCS Food (previously called Potentially Hazardous Food) that has been in the danger zone for more than 4 hours.
- Is a frozen food that has thawed and is above 41°.
- Has been partially cooked and cooking cannot be completed within 1 hour.

Non-TCS foods that are undamaged and have not had contact with flood water, smoke, fire, sewage or chemicals and frozen foods that are under 41° are more likely to be able to be saved.

Inspection Expectations During COVID

Performing inspections right now is very difficult for everyone involved. Inspectors need everyone to be wearing a mask properly, they need to socially distance in tight quarters and they need to limit the time in the facility as much as possible. Any effort to help them get through an inspection efficiently will be appreciated. Wearing a face covering is required and strictly enforced, even after obtaining the 2-dose vaccine. A face covering must be worn over both the mouth and nose. Giving them enough space, saving most questions till the end of the inspection and discussing the inspections outdoors or over the phone are a couple ways that will keep the process safer. Inspectors still want to be a resource and encourage changes through education. It just needs to happen in different ways. Stay informed of rule changes using the [Snohomish Health District](#) and [Washington State Health Department](#) websites. Thank you for your help in this.



Listeria monocytogenes

Listeria is caused by a bacteria that can be found in deli meat, unpasteurized milk and soft cheeses made from unpasteurized milk. It usually only affects people whose immune systems are compromised. The elderly, pregnant women or those battling a long-term illness fall into this category.

People can get sick anywhere from 3 to 70 days after eating the bacteria. The symptoms of Listeria are fever, muscle aches, nausea or diarrhea. Women who are pregnant could have flu-like symptoms and could cause a miscarriage. The elderly could get meningitis, bacteria in the blood or a blood infection, which is called sepsis. What makes this bacteria special is that it can grow in cooler temperatures, such as in a refrigerator. Prevent Listeria by throwing foods away after they pass the use-by or

expiration date. Cook foods to their proper temperatures, wash vegetables thoroughly, don't use unpasteurized dairy products and prevent cross-contamination.

Contact Us

For Questions:

Environmental Health Office at 425.339.5250
or ehquestions@snohd.org.

For Complaints:

[File a Complaint](#)

To Report a Foodborne Illness:

Communicable Disease Program at 425-339-5278.



 Share on Facebook

 Share on Twitter

 Share via Email

Snohomish Health District
3020 Rucker Ave., Everett, Washington

Powered by

