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**MAYOR EMANUEL EASES RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS FOR LOW-RISK FOOD
ESTABLISHMENTS AND IMPROVES INSPECTION EFFICIENCY**

Chicago Restaurant Inspections Now Online, Increasing Transparency and Accountability

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today introduced an ordinance that will make doing business in Chicago easier for new and existing food businesses by initiating a self-certification pilot program for low-risk food inspections and improving the efficiency of City inspectors. The proposal creates risk based inspections while maintaining public food safety.

“This ordinance will allow a more effective and efficient approach to overseeing food safety, targeting our resources at higher-risk establishments without compromising safety oversight at any food business across the city,” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “Providing the best services to our residents at the best price is non-negotiable, and my Administration is leaving no stone unturned to find efficiencies and streamline operations.”

Fifteen percent of Chicago’s 15,000 restaurants are considered “low risk.” Low risk restaurants primarily sell beverages or pre-packaged foods, requiring no or very minimal food handling or preparation, yet they require inspections like every other restaurant.

If passed, this ordinance will give the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health the ability to create an alternative certification system for these low-risk food retailers so that they can self-certify, while saving taxpayer dollars and maintaining current health requirements to protect consumers. Chicago would be one of the first major cities to implement such a program.

The new self-certification pilot program would allow low-risk businesses to take a more active role in the health safety of their own food establishments. At the same time, the pilot program will ensure the City’s resources are allocated towards food establishments with a greater risk of causing a food-borne illness.



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Currently, all retail food establishments are required to have follow-up health inspections regardless of the risk level. By identifying risk levels, not all retail food establishments will be required to undergo the same length of inspection, reducing inspector time by creating a shorter inspection process for establishments that are self-reporting just to ensure they are reporting accurately.

Restaurant Inspections Data Now Online

The City also announced today that it is posting online every food sanitation inspection report conducted from January 1, 2010 to October 31, 2011. Moving forward, the information will be updated on a weekly basis. Now, residents can view the entire inspection report, including whether a restaurant passed or failed and exactly what types of violations were found, if any.

“This provides more transparency for the public and more accountability for businesses to ensure healthy conditions,” said Bechara Choucair, Commissioner of the Department of Public Health.

For several years inspection information has been available online, however it was limited and not always current. The information posted today is more comprehensive and detailed, and in a format that is easy-to-use and view. The information can be found here:

<https://data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/Food-Inspections/4ijn-s7e5>

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