



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**SANITATION BRANCH**  
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AIEA, HAWAII 96701-5602

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

April 21, 2020

**PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING  
PRE-OPERATIONAL VIRTUAL (VIDEO) INSPECTIONS OF FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS**

Thank you for contacting the State of Hawaii Department of Health, Food Safety Branch. Due to precautions that must be taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19, our staff has evaluated options for conducting essential services while engaging in social distancing.

This document is intended to provide the Owner/Operator of a proposed Food Establishment, instructions for pre-operational inspections during the COVID-19 Modified Departmental Operations.

We are able to conduct these inspections utilizing Apple FaceTime (on iPhone or iPad) or Google Hangouts (NOT Google Hangouts Meet). While FaceTime is preferred, if you do not have access to this service via an iPhone, you will need to download Google Hangouts to your Android mobile device to be able to participate.

Please let the Food Safety Specialist (inspector) know which type of conferencing you will use (FaceTime or Google Hangouts) and schedule a date & time to conduct the virtual inspection.

**Prior to the video conference inspection, the following will need to be submitted (please let your Food Safety Specialist know if you previously submitted with your application):**

- Plan or hand drawn sketch showing the layout of the facility
- List of equipment (refrigeration, hot holding units, ware-washing machine, 3-compartment sink, etc.)
- Menu or list of food served
- Written procedures such as an "Employee Health Policy" or "Alternative Operating Procedures Allowing Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat foods"
- Food Handlers Certificate
- If you wish to perform any special food processes, such as reduced oxygen packaging, sous vide, acidification, curing, or fermenting foods to extend shelf life or to make them shelf stable, you must submit your HACCP plans and Variance Request for approval prior to conducting these processes.

**During the video conference inspection, you will need to have the following equipment or capabilities:**

- Internet or WiFi connectivity sufficiently fast to support clean/clear video and audio
- A device with a camera that can move through the facility (smart phone or tablet)
- Flashlight
- Proper probe type thermometers for checking food and/or equipment temperatures. Examples include but are not limited to:



- Sanitizing test kit for 3-compartment sink and/or ware-washing units. Ensure your test kit matches the sanitizing agent you will be using. Examples include but are not limited to:



During the virtual inspection, the Food Safety Specialist will discuss with you the areas of the facility that we want to observe and certain procedures for you to demonstrate that are pertinent to your proposed operation. You should plan to have a second person available to hold the camera/phone for you unless you have it mounted somewhere on your body. Some of the items you will be asked to demonstrate may include:

- Checking hot water temperatures at ware-washing unit(s) for proper sanitizing of equipment and utensils
- Temperature checks of refrigerator(s) and hot holding unit(s), and cooking temperature(s)
- Checking sanitizer concentration with sanitizer test kit for ware-washing unit(s) and wiping cloth bucket(s)

A written inspection report will be completed and emailed to you by the Food Safety Specialist at the end of the inspection. To finalize the inspection, respond by email to the Food Safety Specialist's email address with the following acknowledgement:

**“This email acknowledges that I have received and understand the findings and actions indicated on the inspection report. All information given to the Department of Health during the virtual inspection is accurate and truthful. This email will serve as my signature as the Owner/Person in Charge.”**

After receiving your reply email which will serve as your signature on the inspection, the Food Safety Specialist will send you a final copy of your inspection report and any required or requested guidance documents. At that time, you may begin your food operation. The copy of your inspection report will serve as your Food Establishment permit until your official permit is sent to your mailing address. The Food Safety Specialist will then visit your facility within 30 days after Governor Ige lifts the Emergency Proclamation.