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Guidance Document for Local Health Officers:

How to Report Possible Food or Lodging Health and Safety Issues to the Health Inspection Program

Local Health Officer (LHO) Responsibilities

As part of their local duties, LHOs can help to connect residents directly with specific public health services and resources provided by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC). When unsafe or unsanitary conditions are observed at food or lodging establishments licensed by the Maine CDC's Health Inspection Program (HIP), the LHO can inform the HIP in order to facilitate a quick resolution to such situations that may threaten public health and safety.

Health Inspection Program (HIP)

Health Inspectors license and inspect restaurants, take-outs, mobile food vendors, catering, school kitchens, senior citizen meals, correctional facilities, lodging, B&B's, tattoo, body piercing, micropigmentation, electrology, public pools and spas, campgrounds, youth camps, in Maine. During foodborne illness outbreaks and/or other issues associated with HIP licensed establishments or body artists, HIP staff will collaborate with any LHO willing to work together to mitigate the issue and establish controls to prevent future problems with the local establishments or body artists.

What LHOs can do to assist the HIP

LHOs can assist the HIP by reporting observations (by the LHO or reported to the LHO) at HIP licensed establishments/body artists including, but not limited to:

- Lack of hand-washing signs in bathrooms;
- Improper hand-washing procedures by staff;
- Issues with cleanliness of establishment and personal hygiene of staff;
- Signs of illness or other health concerns related to staff;
- Signs of pests, rodents or other vermin; and/or
- If foods ordered are not served hot and/or cold foods ordered are not being served cold.

Please report concerns such as those listed above to the Health Inspection Program at 287-5671 or email Rebecca.walsh@maine.gov or Lisa.silva@maine.gov.

Other ways to Assist

- Report observed power outages, floods or fires affecting HIP licensed establishments to the Health Inspection Program.
- The Health Inspector may also ask you to observe if an establishment that was ordered to close, remains closed as directed.

Thank you very much for your willingness to assist the HIP in protecting public health and safety. If you have any questions about this document, please feel free to contact us at 207-287-5671.