



# MECKLENBURG COUNTY

## Health Department

### CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

This document is intended to serve as guidance to what can be served at an exempt continental breakfast operation.

**These foods and beverages may be served *without requiring* a retail food establishment permit:**

- Bread products
  - Toast, bagels, plain biscuits, English muffins, and shelf-stable pastries from an approved source, and individually wrapped or presented with a serving utensil
- Butter, cream cheese, and mayonnaise in individual serving packets.
- Coffee creamers
  - In shelf-stable individual packets obtained from a commercial source that are labeled “No Refrigeration Needed”
  - Shelf-stable powder bulk packs that do not require a utensil to serve
- Fresh fruits like oranges and bananas that must be peeled to be eaten. Apples that are wrapped in food grade plastic or protected by a sneeze shield
- Frozen breakfast sandwiches and/or burritos
  - Purchased pre-made and individually wrapped from a commercially approved source and guest heat the sandwiches for themselves in a microwave
- Frozen waffles
  - Purchased pre-made and individually wrapped from a commercially approved source. Waffles wrapped by the establishment from a bulk package are not acceptable.
  - The guests open the wrappers and heat the waffles for themselves.
- Waffle Batter
  - Reconstituted waffle batter mix (Operator only adds water to powdered waffle mix)
  - Waffle batter from commercial vendor in a disposable packet designed for a dispenser (“Bag-N-Box”)
  - Dispensed into individual disposable cups via an approved dispenser or placed in covered single service cups by establishment
  - Guest use mix to prepare their own waffle
- Breakfast bars
  - In individually wrapped packaging
- Hot beverages
  - Coffee, tea, instant cocoa and cider
- Jams, jellies, and pancake syrup
  - In individual commercially prepared approved packages
- Hot Breakfast Cereals
  - Individual serving packets requiring only hot water for preparation
- Juices and Milk
  - Milk in unopened individual sized serving cartons or bottles or dispensing units that have no washable parts.
  - Pasteurized juices placed in a food grade pitcher that has a lid
- Boiled Eggs
  - Commercially packaged & individually portioned boiled eggs from an approved source
- Other Common Breakfast Items
  - Commercially packaged & individually portioned of cheese (i.e. cheese sticks) and yogurt from an approved source

**Questions? Please call 704-336-5100**

Updated: 8/22/13

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NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SECTION

February 3, 1999

MEMORANDUM

To: Local Environmental Health Directors, Supervisors and Coordinators

From: Susan C. Grayson, Head  
Food and Lodging Sanitation

Subject: Continental Breakfast

Continental breakfast has traditionally been a cup of coffee or tea and a roll. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources does not regulate these operations if they serve the beverage (coffee, juice or other) in a single-service container (G.S. 130A-250) and the roll is a "packaged" food under Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services control. (See attached memo regarding "packaged" food).

Many of the lodging establishments have expanded their menus over the years. Because of the wide variety of food now offered in lodging operations, there has been a growing concern about when a permit would or would not be required. In an effort to eliminate the confusion, we offer the following guidelines.

First, determine if the food operation fits the definition of a "restaurant" (.2601 (21)) of the "Rules Governing the Sanitation of Restaurants and Other Foodhandling Establishments." If an establishment meets the qualifications of a restaurant, the menu and the food preparation processes should be evaluated. Permitting should proceed as in any other foodhandling establishment.

The following issues are situations we felt needed clarification:

1. Milk, even in unregulated establishments, remains under the control of the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance (PMO) (See attached) as long as it is in the individual (individual portion; a half pint or pint) original container as packaged at the dairy. This includes approved bulk milk dispensers. (Attached is the current list of approved National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) bulk milk dispensers) Milk service in carafes, pitchers or thermos containers is not allowed under the PMO. **Milk served in accordance with the PMO does not require the issuance of a permit.** The PMO requires that all milk be kept at proper temperature (45 degrees Fahrenheit or below) until in the hands of the consumer. When necessary, Environmental Health Specialists with Food and Lodging authorization have the authority to enforce the Pasteurized Milk Ordinance in unregulated situations (See attached, G.S. 130A-21; G.S. 130A-275 and Embargo Authority memo of June 11, 1986).
2. When other unpackaged potentially hazardous foods are served, a permit shall be required. Please refer to the definition of "potentially hazardous food" in .2601 of the "Rules Governing the Sanitation of Restaurants or Other Foodhandling Establishments." "Packaged" potentially hazardous foods may be offered without a permit provided they remain in unopened individual portions.
3. Preparation of foods by hotel staff will require a permit. Preparation includes activities such as cutting fruits or breads, heating food items, or thawing frozen fruits. The display of whole fruit or unwrapped bakery items placed on a tray does not require a permit. Bakery items are regulated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
4. If multi-use eating or drinking utensils are provided for customers, a permit is required. (Tongs, trays, scoops, or bulk cereal dispensers, or bulk juice dispensers designed to prevent hand customer contact are not considered eating or drinking utensils. The presence of these items does not require a permit to be issued.)

When specific problems are observed in a continental breakfast that does not require a permit, contact the local Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services representative. We have spoken to the Food and Drug Division of that Department and they have the authority to answer complaints on establishments that we do not regulate.

The Environmental Health Services Section will be meeting with local Environmental Health leadership and top management in the North Carolina Hotel/Motel industry March 1, 1999 to share this information with franchise owners. After this meeting, we will send out copies of the training handouts prepared specifically for this presentation.

We plan to discuss this memo at the district educational meetings and put this policy into effect on July 1, 1999.

If you have questions or need help, contact your Regional Environmental Health Specialist.

Attachments

cc: Std. Distribution  
Local Health Directors  
NC Department of Agriculture and  
Consumer Services  
NC Hotel and Motel Association

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