



City of Fishers Sanitation Grading System

Your Sanitation Grading System Score

Every inspection conducted by Fishers Health Department (FHD) Food Inspectors is based on the [2025 Indiana Retail Food Code 410 IAC 7-26](#). Indiana Retail Food Code 410 IAC 7-26 is based on the [2022 U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) Model Food Code](#).

FHD inspectors go through an extensive training and verification process to ensure consistency with standards and each other. FHD inspectors have received standardization certification with the FDA via the Indiana Department of Health. Utilizing the Indiana Retail Code as the template, each food establishment will start with **100 points**. Violations according to the Indiana Retail Food Code fall into three categories: **Priority**, **Priority Foundation**, and **Core** violations. Points will be deducted for each violation that inspectors document, with point values based on the health risk the violation poses to the public:

- **Priority:** This category consists of elements that, when in place, contribute to the elimination, prevention, or reduction to an acceptable level, hazards associated with foodborne illness or injury. Priority violations are **(5)** points each and must be corrected within 72 hours.
- **Priority Foundation:** This category supports, facilitates, or enables one or more priority elements. Priority foundation violations are **(3)** points each and must be corrected within 15 calendar days.
- **Core:** This category typically relates to general sanitation, operational controls, sanitation standard operating procedures, facilities or structures, equipment design or general maintenance. Core violations are **(2)** points each.

How Do these Scores Become a Grade?

Grade A: 81 to 100 points Designates a facility with exceptional compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Grade B: 71 to 80 points Designates a facility with acceptable compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Grade C: 61 to 70 points. Designates a facility that meets minimum requirements for compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.

Temporarily Closed = 60 points or less or an imminent health hazard. The establishment will re-open after all priority violations have been corrected and imminent health hazard is eliminated.

When will I be Inspected and Graded?

FHD implements inspection cycles that align with FDA guidelines for risk-based inspections for food establishments (see Table 1, below). Each food establishment will fall into one of four Risk Categories (see Table 2, below), which in turn influences inspection frequency and permit pricing. In general:

- Risk Level 1 (Low Risk): Establishments are typically inspected once per year. These are often low-risk operations like convenience stores and coffee shops.
- Risk Level 2: Often includes establishments with some food preparation but with limited handling of potentially hazardous foods. Inspections occur twice per year.
- Risk Level 3: This category includes establishments with more complex food preparation techniques, such as those that handle raw poultry or seafood. Inspections occur three times per year.
- Risk Level 4 (High Risk): These are usually establishments serving highly susceptible populations. Inspections occur four times per year.



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Inspection frequency is determined by the risk level of establishment, ranging from once a year for low-risk operations to quarterly for high-risk establishments. To move down a risk level and reduce inspection frequency, establishments must achieve Grade A inspections for all inspections conducted in the prior permitting year. This will reduce the associated permit fee. New establishments, or those achieving only Grade C in the entire prior permitting year, will be permitted at one level up.

Table 1. Risk Level, Inspection Frequencies, Grades, Fees & Fines

Risk Level	Inspection Frequency	Criteria for Moving Up or Down a Risk Level	Annual Permit Fee	Routine Inspection Grading	Reinspection Fines
1 (Low Risk)	1 per year	Grade "A" for all inspections in prior permit year – move 1 risk level down from baseline	\$200	Routine inspections determine letter grade 100 points Violation deductions: 5 pts- priority 3pts- priority foundation 2 pts- core Grades: A=81-100 B=71-80 C= 61-70	\$100 baseline for each reinspection.
2	2 per year	Grade "C" for all inspections in prior permit year- move 1 risk level up from baseline	\$400		Fines for violations uncorrected at time of reinspection:
3	3 per year		\$600		Priority Violations: \$50 each
4 (High Risk)	4 per year	New establishments are permitted at 1 risk level up from baseline	\$800		Priority Foundation Violations: \$25 each Fines will double with each subsequent reinspection until corrected

Each establishment will be issued a grade at each inspection. For example, Risk Level 2 establishments will be issued a grade at each of the two inspections. Many establishments, even those scoring an "A", should expect to be reinspected when Priority and Priority Foundation violations are observed during inspections.

An appeal process is in place for establishments who wish to appeal specific violations in their inspection. Items for consideration of appeal must be submitted via the permit management system (ViewPoint Cloud) within 5 days of the inspection and must detail the specific violation(s) the operator is challenging, along with any accompanying documentation to support that process.

All facilities may be inspected at any time, and no prior notice will be given. Inspections may be conducted in response to food-borne illness investigation, consumer complaint, or to ensure ongoing compliance with all applicable standards. Complaint-based inspections will not incur a fee unless violations are noted which require a follow-up visit for correction.

[How Should I Post My Grade?](#)



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Posting of your letter grade placard has been mandatory since 2023. Each Fishers Sanitation Grade placard is required to be placed in a visible place on the establishment's front window, door, or wall or within 5 feet of the front door or other direct entrance from the street. Placards must be 4 to 6 feet above the ground of floor. If an establishment does not have a direct entrance from the street, they must post the grade near its point of entry, where it is clearly visible to passersby. The FHD Health Inspector will help identify an acceptable place. Placards must be placed immediately upon receipt of the placard. Restaurant grades will also be available to the public via the Fishers Health Department website. Fines will be assessed for failure to post as directed. Placards must be posted upon receipt.

How Can I Improve My Grade?

FHD Health Inspectors are motivated to help you improve your grade! They will provide education and the necessary steps to take in order to achieve a higher grade level. You may consider conducting your own "mock" inspections routinely to ensure you are meeting all applicable rules according to Indiana Retail Food Code 410 IAC 7-26 rules. All inspections are performed according to the criteria outlined in the 410 IAC 7-26.

What are the Fines for Violations?

Permit Cost: as posted in current fee schedule, based on risk level of facility

Each violation-based reinspection: \$100

Priority violations uncorrected at reinspection: \$50 each, doubling with each reinspection required

Priority foundation violations uncorrected at reinspection: \$25 each, doubling with each reinspection required

Operator-requested re-inspection: 150% of the annual permit fee.

Failure to post grade placard: \$100 per day

Failure to renew annual permit by December 31, or operating without a permit: 200% of annual permit fee

How Will Fees & Fines be Assessed?

The fee for routine inspections, as determined by facility risk level, is included in the annual permit fee. The frequency of routine inspections is determined by the risk level. All re-inspections will incur a fine and will **not** result in a letter-grade change. Operators will not be issued a permit for the following year until all previously assessed fees and fines have been paid. Reinspection is required for all priority and priority foundation violations, unless corrected on site.

For More information:

FHD Website: <https://health.fishersin.gov/environmental-inspections-services/environmental-permitting/retail-food-establishments/>

FDA Voluntary Retail Standards: <https://www.fda.gov/food/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards-november-2022>

FDA Risk Categorization: <https://www.fda.gov/media/164194/download?attachment>

Indiana Administrative Code: <https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/files/Retail-Food-Establishment-Sanitation-Requirements-410-IAC-7-26-3.pdf>

Call or email us: 317-567-5045; healthdept@fishersin.gov



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Table 2. Risk Categorization Guidelines

Risk Level	Description
1	Examples include: • Most convenience store operations, hot dog carts, and coffee shops. • Establishments that serve or sell only pre-packaged, non-time/temperature control for safety (TCS) foods • Establishments that prepare only non-TCS foods • Establishments that heat only commercially processed, TCS foods for hot holding. No cooling of TCS foods. • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 2, but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "A" grade)
2	Examples may include: • Retail food store operations, schools not serving a highly susceptible population, and quick service operations. Limited menu. Most products are prepared/cooked and served immediately. May involve hot and cold holding of TCS foods after preparation or cooking. Complex preparation of TCS foods requiring cooking, cooling, and reheating for hot holding is limited to only a few TCS foods. • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 3 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "A" grade) • Newly permitted establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 1 until history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors is achieved and documented • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 1, but have not maintained sufficient history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "C" grade)
3	Examples include: • A full-service restaurant with extensive menu and handling of raw ingredients. Complex preparation including cooking, cooling, and reheating for hot holding involves many TCS foods. Variety of processes require hot and cold holding of TCS food. • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 4 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "A" grade) • Newly permitted establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 2 until history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors is achieved and documented • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 2, but have not maintained sufficient history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "C" grade)
4	Examples include: • Preschools, hospitals, nursing homes, and establishments conducting processing at retail (typically permitted and inspected by Indiana Department of Health) • Newly permitted establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 3 until history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors is achieved and documented • Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Risk Level 3, but have not maintained sufficient history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors (all inspections in previous year received "C" grade)

Adapted from: [Annex 5 FDA Food Code 2022](#))