

**Business Facilitation Advisory Committee
Food Business and Related Services Task Force**

**Consultation of the Code of Practice
for Delivery of Online Food Ordering and Delivery Platforms**

Purpose

This paper briefs members on the code of practice on take-away meal and meal delivery services (the Code) put forward by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD).

Background

2. Under the prevailing food business licensing regime, licensed food premises providing takeaway and food delivery services (including online sale of food) must adhere to relevant licensing conditions, including those requirements on food containers, food storage and temperature for food delivery etc.

3. In recent years, e-commerce is getting more and more popular, including food transaction through the Internet, mobile applications or social media and related food complaints/incidents have also increased. Members of public are concerned about the hygienic operation of the licensed food premises, online food delivery platforms as well as the food deliverers. In this regard, FEHD plans to formulate a code of practice to lay down the guidelines to relevant stakeholders for observance when providing takeaway and food delivery services.

The Code

4. The Code contains the general hygiene and food safety requirements for handling of meals ready for consumption for observance by all related business stakeholders (including food premises, online food platforms, food delivery agents and food deliverers) at providing food delivery service. It aims to set out the actions that these operators should take so as to reduce the risk of foodborne diseases when providing take-away meals and meal delivery services. The hygiene and food safety requirements stipulated in the Code mainly covers the following areas:

(a) **For food premises**

(i) Food preparation

- All food should be properly prepared in time to match with the delivery time.

(ii) Packing of meal

- Suitable containers should be used for packing of food. Packaging should be so designed or provided with tamper-evident devices to prevent food tampering, and with preparation and packing time marked/labelled. Restricted foods need to be refrigerated should be suitably packed in containers so as to maintain the optimal storage temperature during delivery (such as using cooling gel).

(iii) Transportation of meal

- Food premises operators should provide adequate hygiene and food safety training to the food deliverers if food delivery is arranged or engaged by them. Or the food delivery agent engaged by them should be of competency and capability to conduct the food delivery services on required condition.

(b) **For online food platforms and delivery agents**

- The licensing status of the concerned food premises providing the meals should be verified;
- It is desirable to incorporate and leverage technology for securing food safety, such as providing optimal delivery route and sequence for the food deliveries, restricting food orders that take a long time to arrive and sending notifications to customers upon any delivery delay;
- All order and delivery records should be kept for 60 days;
- Adequate hygiene and food safety training to the food deliverers should be provided;
- A mechanism to handle non-compliance and customer complaints should be set up; and
- Regular review should be made with the food premises so as to facilitate the arrangement of delivery of meals right after the food preparation.

(c) **For food deliverers**

Food deliverers should follow good hygiene practices including:

- Separate all food from non-food items and ready-to-eat food from raw food during transportation;
- Hot and cold foods are preferable to be packed in separate containers. Restricted foods that need to be refrigerated should be kept cool at or below 4°C as far as practicable while in transit;
- Properly packing of the food to avoid crushing of food or damage to food containers;
- All food must be untampered and delivered to customers in a manner that maintains it from becoming unsafe or unfit to eat. The food packaging must not be opened, altered, tampered with or changed;
- Minimize any unnecessary ransacking;
- Deliver the meal to the customers within one hour after preparation, in case food warming device and food refrigerating device is not available;
- Remind the customers to consume the meals as soon as possible;
- Follow good personal hygiene practices;
- Clean the delivery containers and storage compartments of the vehicles for transportation food before and after each delivery;
- Stop working if they have or suspect they have an infectious disease with symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, fever, sore throat or abdominal pain; and
- Attend relevant hygiene and food safety training.

In case the transportation of meals is arranged or engaged by online food platform or delivery agents, clear delineation of responsibilities between the food premises and the online food platform or delivery agent on all customer complaints in respect of the quality of the ordered meals and any consequential effects thereof, including any food incidence such as food poisoning case, food hygiene and/or related issues should be set out in the relevant contractual agreements.

5. FEHD plans to roll out the Code near the end of 2022.

Advice Sought

6. Members are invited to note and give comments on the content of this paper.

Food and Environmental Hygiene Department
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