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Maine CDC Health Inspection Program

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To: Department of Education and School Food Service Directors

From: Lisa Silva, Program Manager, Maine CDC Health Inspection Program

Re: Maine School Kitchen Inspection Policy 2025-2026

I am writing in response to the USDA's Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004's mandate that requires two school kitchen inspections be conducted at each of Maine's 592 schools each school year.

The Maine CDC Health Inspection Program strives to inspect all school kitchens once per school calendar year, which is consistent with our risk-based inspection approach. Maine schools perform very well in their inspections. There were two failed inspection for the 2024-2025 school year and no failed inspections for the 2023-2024 school year. When a school fails an inspection, a follow up inspection occurs shortly thereafter and within the school year.

School foodservice personnel are well trained in food safety and handling practices. Schools are required to have one Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) on staff (there are some exemptions to this) which requires passing an exam. Once the exam is passed, a CFPM certification is received and it is valid for five years. All Maine schools are also required to have and practice a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Plan.

Based on the practices described above, we believe performing one inspection per school calendar year is adequate to ensure food safety in most Maine school kitchens.

Please call me at 207-287-5691 or email me at lisa.silva@maine.gov if you have questions. Thank you for your good work!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Lisa M. Silva'.

Lisa Silva
Program Manager
Health Inspection Program
Division of Environmental and Community Health
Maine CDC
Department of Health and Human Services