

How Should Restaurants Handle and Declare Major Food Allergens'

March 13, 2018 Suzie Trigg, Kayla Cristales

PRACTICES Healthcare Transactions and Regulatory, FDA Regulatory and Compliance, Food, Beverage and Restaurant, Healthcare and Life Sciences

Although many restaurants are not in states that require food allergens to be declared on menus, the declaration (or labeling) and handling of food allergens is a growing concern for restaurants, due to the significant risks of liability and poor public relations, if handled incorrectly. Restaurants should create careful plans to address food allergens, from ensuring that food product suppliers provide comprehensive allergen checklists to training food handlers in methods to prevent cross-contact among food products that contain major food allergens and those that do not.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), food allergies affect an estimated 15 million people in the United States and are reportedly responsible for 30,000 emergency room visits and between 150 and 200 deaths each year. As there is no cure for food allergies, the only way to prevent potentially harmful, sometimes life-threatening, reactions is to avoid the applicable allergens entirely. This has proven to be particularly difficult in the restaurant setting where the safety of food-sensitive consumers is threatened by issues like miscommunication between and among restaurant staff and customers, unexpected or hidden food allergens, and cross-contact during food preparation. Accordingly, regulatory oversight of restaurants has increased, and additional laws have emerged as tools to hold food establishments legally responsible for how they are handling allergens. To ensure customer safety and legal compliance, restaurants must be aware of the applicable laws and implement proper protocols for the treatment of food allergens.

To read the full article, click on the PDF linked below.

[How-Should-Restaurants-Handle-Major-Food-Allergens.PDF](#)