

## V. Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings in this report and are intended to enhance the effectiveness of regulatory and industry retail food protection programs. Each of the foodborne illness risk factors comprises food safety practices and employee behaviors. These practices and behaviors are captured by the individual data items in this report and are based on the food safety provisions of the 2017 FDA Food Code.

The results of the 2020 risk factor study indicate that overall, we observed improved compliance overall but still have targeted work to do.

Foodborne Illness Risk Factor Risk Factor IN Compliance:	All Facilities								
	2010			2015			2020		
	% IN	# IN observations	Total observations	% IN	# IN observations	Total observations	% IN	# IN observations	Total observations
Approved Source	95%	990	1039	96%	999	1036	98%	1052	1070
Inadequate Cooking	91%	331	363	94%	240	256	95%	195	205
Improper Holding	57%	1177	2082	65%	1271	1943	75%	1514	2006
Contamination	87%	1679	1931	88%	1664	1893	86%	1678	1951
Personal Hygiene	82%	1699	2064	90%	1971	2183	92%	2109	2281
<b>Risk Factor Totals</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>5876</b>	<b>7479</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>6145</b>	<b>7311</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>6548</b>	<b>7513</b>
<b>Other interventions</b>	<b>% IN</b>	<b># IN observations</b>	<b>Total Observations</b>	<b>% IN</b>	<b># IN observations</b>	<b>Total Observations</b>	<b>% IN</b>	<b># IN observations</b>	<b>Total Observations</b>
CFPM Presence	42%	194	458	72%	323	447	64%	299	465
Employee Health Policy	10%	44	458	17%	74	447	66%	308	465
Food Allergy Awareness (19a)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	18%	85	465

Wake County should use the study to develop interventions that address priority OUT of compliance categories and the following specific items:

- Cold Holding – Continue to focus on cold holding compliance, particularly in the restaurant sector (full service and fast-food facilities.) Develop print materials to distribute at routine inspections. Provide temperature measuring devices to distribute to facilities.
- Time as a Public Health Control (TPHC) should be considered in situations that could effectively eliminate cold holding non-compliance. Educate staff to use the NC Code Enforcement Strategies Manual which has the tools for TPHC and risk control plans.
- Employee Health Policy – Develop programming to address compliance with Employee Health Policy, especially in the retail sector (delis, meat markets, seafood markets and produce departments.) Distribute employee health materials periodically.
- Food Allergen Awareness and Training – Develop educational materials that support Wake County operators and consumers. Distribute materials to operators.

The County's active participation in the FDA's Program Standards will provide guidance for identifying risk factors that should be given priority for inspection, education, and enforcement. To keep up with the latest science and public health interventions, Wake County should advocate for food policies that are current with the latest FDA Food Code.