



February 14, 2024

Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair,

The programs highlighted above support efforts of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to provide resources to state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) food safety programs that protect



Adoption of the FDA Code of Federal Regulations prevents foodborne illness. The FDA Code of Federal Regulations advances known practices for preventing foodborne illness. The code promotes the best advice from FDA to address the safety and protection of food offered at retail food and food service industries. FDA's purpose in maintaining an updated Code of Federal Regulations is to assist SLTT jurisdictions by providing them with a scientifically sound, technical, and legal basis for regulating the retail segment of the food industry.

The Retail Food Safety Association Collaborative, a cooperative agreement funded by FDA, promotes the adoption of the Code of Federal Regulations.

There are more than 3,500 SLTT government agencies that have the primary responsibility of regulating retail food and food service industries in the U.S., all of which follow some version of the Code of Federal Regulations. These agencies regulate food service operations in restaurants, retail food stores, food vendors, schools, hospitals, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, and childcare centers.

Conformance with the Code of Federal Regulations and Retail Program Standards encourages SLTT jurisdictions to follow a standardized set of guidelines for food safety that are known to lower the incidence of foodborne outbreaks.

A strong, qualified environmental health workforce is necessary to meet the public health mandate around food and human food needs.

Trained and credentialed personnel within SLTT food safety programs prevent adverse foodborne health outcomes through ensuring human food remains healthy and nutritious. This workforce is vital in FDA meeting its human food safety objectives.

Credentialed personnel within SLTT food safety programs improve the health and quality of life of people living in their communities. Their services prevent adverse health outcomes. FDA needs to improve its ability to recruit, hire and retain personnel with the skills necessary to meet its objectives, both at the federal and SLTT levels.

According to the Reagan-Udall report on human foods, FDA should move to a stronger, more cooperative relationship with states and other local authorities. Approximately half of the human food inspections are done by states through contracts and cooperative agreements, accounting for over 13,190 human food inspections in FY22. Funding for a strong, qualified SLTT workforce through FDA's Federal and State Initiative, the Integrated Food Safety System, and the Retail Flexible Funding Model is imperative in meeting FDA's goal of meeting public health mandate around food safety.

Food safety is a critical public health issue that affects individuals and communities across the U.S. and around the world.

NEHA supports Congress adequately funding FDA's Human Foods Program to improve the nation's food safety system.



If you have any questions, please contact our Director of Government Affairs Doug Farquhar at dfarquhar@neha.org.

In health,

