



Eateries need to hire food safety officer to get licence

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The food regulator has drafted regulations for restaurants and eateries, requiring them to employ a food safety officer in order to obtain a licence.

The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India also made it mandatory for companies that sell food online to get separate licences under the Food Safety & Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Business) Amendment Regulations, 2018.

Owners and vendors of food products sold on ecommerce platforms must display their licences or FSSAI registrations. The ecommerce firms will have to ensure that food articles have a pending shelf life of 30% or 45 days before expiry at the time of delivery to consumers. Such food products can be sampled at any point in the supply chain, the authority added.

While applying for a state or central licence, restaurants won't have to submit blueprints or layout plans, names and lists of equipment and machinery, lists of food categories, copies of certificates obtained under Co-op Act, NOCs from manufacturers and recall plans.

"The revised condition prescribes that a Food Safety Display Board needs to be displayed at a prominent place in the premises and employment of at least one technical person or Food Safety Supervisor trained by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India in case of restaurant," the regulator said.

"Safety and standards are paramount in running any business which has food for human consumption," said Rahul Singh, president of the National Restaurant Association of India. "The NRAI welcomes such initiatives as restaurants need to dedicate their resources towards food safety to successfully execute measures and develop a culture within their premises to stay committed towards customer safety."

The draft regulations are being notified and the final regulations will be enforced subsequently.

"All food companies will have to follow these revised regulations with immediate effect and the enforcement of these regulations will commence only after the final regulations are notified in the Gazette of India," FSSAI said.

The regulator simplified rules for slaughter houses, making minimum sanitary and hygienic requirements mandatory because the earlier requirements were not compatible with the operation of small slaughter houses.

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Rules have been laid down for catering companies, including those that provide services at eating houses, canteens at schools, colleges and other institutions, religious places, trains and flights, hospitals and events.