

Govt looks to improve food safety, hygiene in its canteens

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To ensure that the food served in its canteens is wholesome and hygienic, the government is training people as food safety supervisors for cafeterias run by its departments.

In the first phase of the initiative, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has trained 80 staffers from various government canteens that serve thousands of employees each day to oversee food hygiene.



“This training is a part of FSSAI’s recently launched SNF@Workplace (safe and nutritious food at workplace) initiative, which aims to educate people on safe and healthy diets and developing an overall ecosystem for safe and nutritious food in workplaces,” said Pawan Agarwal, chief executive officer, FSSAI. “It encourages employers to adopt a systematic approach to ensuring safe and wholesome food for their employees, both as a measure of employee welfare and to enhance workplace productivity,” he added.

The government has adopted a comprehensive approach towards the initiative, including measures that the workplace administration can take to create a system and an enabling environment to ensure food safety and nutrition for everyone.

Best practices and guidelines are recommended for canteens to ensure that the food they serve is safe and wholesome, and useful tips and suggestions are provided to employees to eat and stay healthy by making informed choices about what they consume. After receiving complaints about the bad quality of food being served in canteens in educational institutions and other places, the regulator had written to state food commissioners to ensure that canteens are licensed or registered under Food Safety and Standards Act regulations.

In an order issued last year, FSSAI made it mandatory for a food business operator (FBO) to have at least one trained food safety supervisor. “We ask FBOs to have one supervisor for every 25 food handlers,” said Agarwal.

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