

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

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June 3, 2014

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Marin County Board of Supervisors  
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**SUBJECT:** Adoption of the proposed ordinance to allow for placarding of inspection compliance ratings in food establishments by adding sections and amending selected sections of the Marin County Code, Chapter 7.24, Food Establishments.

Building and Safety  
Environmental Health Services  
Planning  
Environmental Review  
Housing  
Sustainability  
Code Enforcement  
GIS  
Federal Grants

Dear Supervisors,

**RECOMMENDATION:** Conduct a first reading of the proposed ordinance by title only and schedule the merit hearing for June 17, 2014 to adopt the ordinance adding sections amending sections of the Marin County Code, Chapter 7.24, Food Establishments.

**SUMMARY:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are over 47 million food-borne illness outbreaks a year in the United States. Forty percent of the food-borne illness outbreaks are associated with commercial food establishments.

The proposed County Code amendments would allow the Community Development Agency Environmental Health Services Division (EHS) to implement the "Go for Green" Placard Program, which is a key initiative in the Agency's FY 2014-16 Performance Plan. The Placard Program is consistent with the Agency's goal of improving food handling practices and protecting food and public safety in Marin food establishments. The public has become more interested in food safety with their desire for more information about food facilities they patronize. Food facility operators also have an interest because evidence of safe food handling practices tends to increase customers' trust and thus is good for business. The proposed Placard Program will supplement the online posting of food facility inspection reports currently available at [www.marinfoodinspection.org](http://www.marinfoodinspection.org) with a posting of the facility's food safety rating at its entrance.

In developing the Placard Program, EHS considered food rating models that have been implemented by many jurisdictions. The food rating systems were discussed with the EHS food industry working group. Additionally, each food facility operator in the county was invited to a March 2014 meeting to hear about this proposal and provide input. Overall, the industry working group and the food facility operators are supportive of the "Go for Green" Placard proposal as outlined below. This type of

[www.marincounty.org/cda](http://www.marincounty.org/cda)

rating system has also been adopted by many counties in the state, including Sacramento and Alameda. Santa Clara County will be implementing the placard program during the same general time frame as Marin County.

The "Go for Green" Placard Program would visually inform the public of the compliance record of food establishments with a colored placard posted near the entrance to the facility. The colors will mimic a traffic light with: **green** for "go" or "pass"; **yellow** for "conditional pass"; or **red** for "stop" or "closed". The color code placard is intended to:

- be easy to understand;
- increase public awareness;
- lead to increased compliance and food safety; and
- reduce food-borne illness factors.

It is believed that the public demand to easily access food inspection results will provide incentive to the food establishments to keep their operations clean and healthy.

The proposed ordinance amending sections of the Marin County Code, Chapter 7.24, Food Establishments, will authorize Environmental Health Services to post placards signifying the overall compliance or lack of, at each food establishment after a routine inspection. The code amendments address the location of the placards and clarify penalties for violations of Chapter 7.24. Additional code amendments are proposed to update definitions to be consistent with the California Retail Food Code.


**FISCAL/STAFFING IMPACT:**

The costs to administer the food facility placard program are anticipated to be recovered by application and cost recovery fees. There will be no impact to the County's general fund, as the EHS Division is fully cost covered by fees.

**REVIEWED BY:** (These boxes must be checked)

<input type="checkbox"/> Department of Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County Counsel	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

**SIGNATURE:**




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Rebecca Ng, R.E.H.S.  
Deputy Director




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Brian C. Crawford  
Director

**Attachments:**

1. Proposed resolution adopting the proposed changes to MCC
2. Proposed amendments to Marin County Code, Chapter 7.24