



# LIMITING YOUR FOOD SAFETY RISKS

By: Ruth L. Petran PhD  
Vice President, Food Safety & Public Health



As a restaurant owner or manager,  
***preventing foodborne illnesses***

*is perhaps your most serious responsibility.*

Not only is it important to your customers' safety and satisfaction.  
**It's CRITICAL to your business.**

The many U.S. federal and state regulations aimed at protecting consumers from tainted foods can be used to hold restaurateurs strictly liable for serving contaminated foods that make someone sick.

» Failure to take food safety seriously can result in

**negative publicity, expensive lawsuits**  
and, in some cases, **criminal charges.**

**food safety –  
CRITICAL  
TO YOUR  
BUSINESS**

Fortunately, you can take steps  
to help **LIMIT YOUR RISKS:**





Use **third-party audits** to verify that suppliers are performing as promised

## ▶ Know your suppliers

Today's long, GLOBALIZED FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN creates many opportunities for food to become contaminated. And large-scale production and distribution can lead to broad infection, potentially affecting foods served at your restaurant.

For these and other reasons, it's important to:

### ▶ GET TO KNOW your suppliers

Question them about their commitment to delivering safe food and visit their operations with a sharp eye for plant cleanliness and food safety practices.

### ▶ REGULARLY VERIFY suppliers meet high food safety standards

Talk with them frequently about your expectations and their performance.

### ▶ Make food safety standards part of your SUPPLIER CONTRACTS

Require in your contracts that vendors maintain adequate product and general liability insurance coverage.



## ▶▶ Partner with local public health officials

Treating local health inspectors as partners can provide knowledge and insight that will help you keep food safe. Invite health inspectors into your business.

If you receive complaints of illness from customers, or have reason to believe there may be an outbreak, **report it**

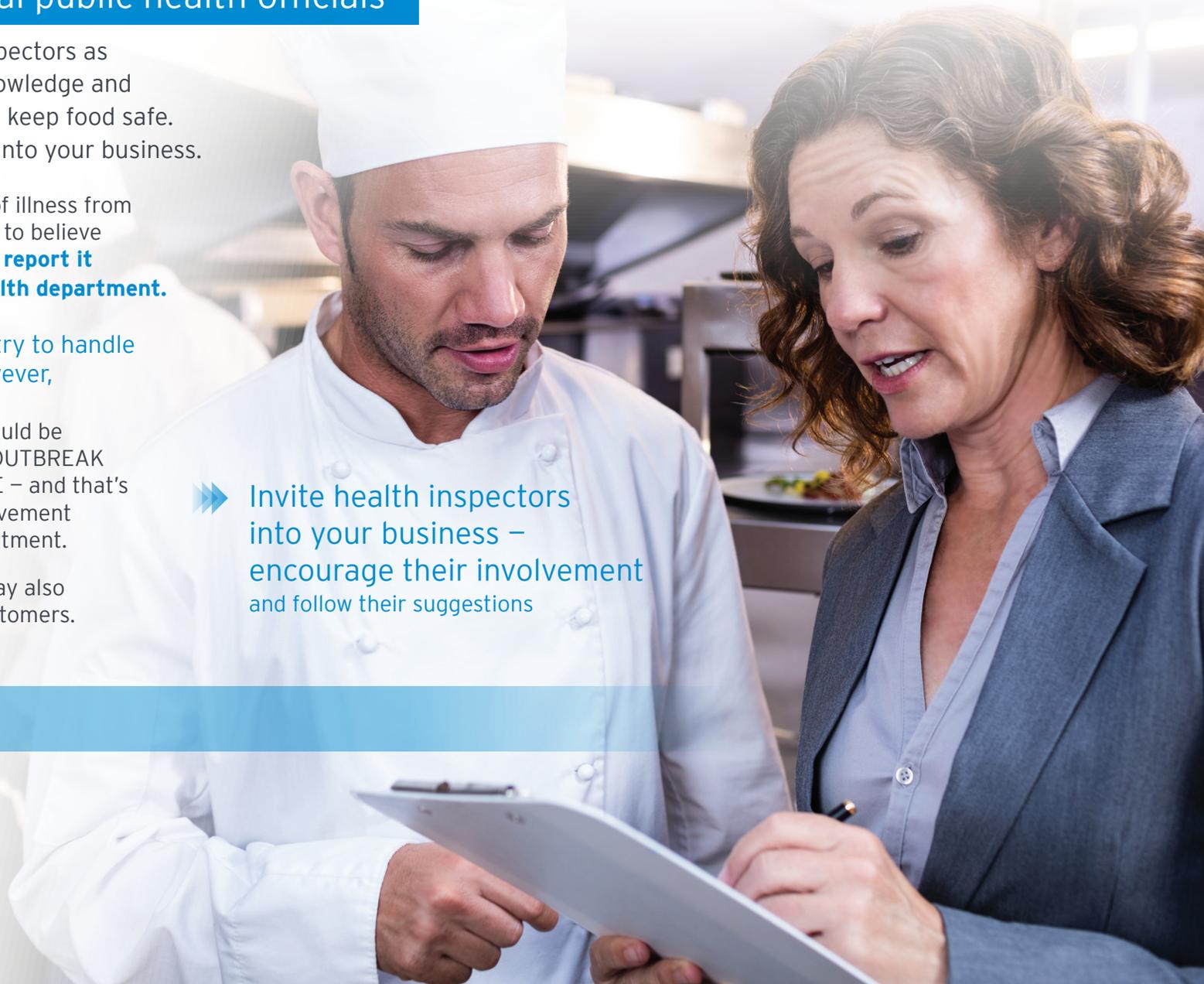
▶▶ **IMMEDIATELY to the health department.**

You may be tempted to try to handle the incident quietly; however,

>> **Your first priority** should be to STOP A POTENTIAL OUTBREAK *BEFORE IT GETS WORSE* – and that's best done with the involvement of the local health department.

>> **Your transparency** may also win points with your customers.

▶▶ Invite health inspectors into your business – encourage their involvement and follow their suggestions



## ▶▶ Maintain a clean, organized and healthy work environment

Of course, maintaining your restaurant through daily cleaning and sanitizing and promoting good hand hygiene practices among your staff are fundamental to preventing foodborne outbreaks and possible legal liability.

» But there's another important step to keep in mind in your daily routine. That is to **retain complete records** of all food deliveries. If an outbreak occurs, **YOUR RECORDS** could play a vital role in helping investigators identify the source of contamination.

▶▶ **maintain complete records** of all food deliveries

TODAY'S FAST PACED, COMPETITIVE RESTAURANT ENVIRONMENT can make us feel "too busy" to give food safety the attention it deserves. But that's a mentality that can lead to legal implications.

*By forming trusting relationships with your suppliers and regulators, maintaining a clean, organized operation and remaining committed to transparency and compliance, you can lower the risk of foodborne illnesses, limit your legal liability and **keep your guests coming back.*** ▶▶





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

### Ruth L. Petran

PhD, Vice President, Food Safety & Public Health

Dr. Ruth Petran is the vice president of Food Safety and Public Health at Ecolab. Dr. Petran provides technical expertise and consultation to internal and external customers on food safety and public health issues, and identifies and tracks emerging food safety trends and control strategies.

➔ [LEARN MORE](https://cleanwithkeystone.com/foodsafety) [cleanwithkeystone.com/foodsafety](https://cleanwithkeystone.com/foodsafety)

## FOOTNOTES: