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May 14, 2021

Mr. Christopher Tyrell
Clerk of the Committee
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Legislative Assembly of Ontario
111 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Mr. Tyrell:

I am writing in response to your letter dated February 22, 2021 regarding the Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report on Section 3.06 Food Safety Inspection Program (Volume 1 of the 2019 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario).

Thank you for your report; we welcome the recommendations made within the report.

In response to your request, please find attached a completed template outlining the Ministry's response to these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Helen Angus
Deputy Minister

Enclosure

- c. Taras Natyshak, MPP, Chair of the Committee
Bonnie Lysyk, Auditor General

Summary Status Table in Response to the Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) on
Section 3.06 Food Safety Inspection Program (Volume 1 of the 2019 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario), Ministry of Health

Number	Committee Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
12	The Ministry of Health should establish clear protocols and minimum standards for inspection requirements at special events based on a consistent risk assessment which includes relevant factors such as event size, expected attendance, and types of food preparation.	- A detailed workplan to implement this recommendation through enhancements to the food safety program has been developed. - A stakeholder engagement plan for audit implementation has been completed. - Research and evidence gathering is underway to support this recommendation by looking at current best practices and evidence of food safety for special events.	<u>Late 2022</u> - Stakeholder consultations and working group(s). <u>Late 2022</u> - Release updated risk categorization tool for use by Public Health Units. - Release updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2023</u> - Local implementation of on the updated risk categorization and public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2024</u> - Local implementation report back on progress by Public Health Units.
13	The Ministry of Health should work with the Public Health Units to: a) establish a consistent set of inspection and quality assurance procedures, protocols and tools for conducting consistent food premises inspections for use by all Public Health Units; and b) require consistent enforcement of Ontario Regulation 493/17: “Food Premises” which requires food premises to have at least one certified food handler or supervisor who has completed food-handler	- A detailed workplan to implement this recommendation, through enhancements to the food safety program has been developed. - A stakeholder engagement plan for audit implementation has been completed. - An educational webinar was held for local PHUs to discuss the amendment of the Food Premises regulation 493/17 in March 2020. The discussion included a consistent enforcement approach for PHUs and the requirement for food-handler training on food premises during all hours of operation. - Research and evidence gathering is underway to support this recommendation by looking at current quality assurance procedures.	<u>Late 2022</u> - Stakeholder consultations and working group(s). <u>Late 2022</u> - Release updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2023</u> - Local implementation of on the updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2024</u> - Local implementation report back on progress by Public Health Units.

Number	Committee Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
	training on the premises during all hours of operation.		
14	The Ministry of Health should work with the Public Health Units to establish a single consistent and comparable food premises grading system to be used across Ontario and to ensure that: a) all Public Health Units publicly report their inspection results through a single provincial website; and b) the latest inspection results are posted onsite at food premises.	• A detailed workplan to implement this recommendation has been developed. • The Ministry has gathered information from other provinces to begin a jurisdictional scan of current best practices and evidence for effective disclosure systems and for the evaluation of these systems. • A stakeholder engagement plan for audit implementation has been completed.	<u>Late 2021</u> • Stakeholder consultations and working group(s). <u>Late 2022</u> • Development of provincial website for posting of inspection results. • Consistent signage for onsite disclosure at food premises. • Updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2023</u> • Local implementation of on the website, signage, and updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2024</u> • Local implementation report back on progress by Public Health Units.
15	The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Public Health Units and Public Health Ontario, should ensure that there is updated and consistent guidance to Public Health Units to: a) ensure consistency in the recording of foodborne-illness data in the Integrated Public Health Information System by Public Health Units; and b) develop and implement a public education campaign on all aspects of food safety at home and at food premises, including home-based and online food premises.	• Guidance on home-based food business was developed and posted on the Ministry of Health's website in December 2020. • A stakeholder engagement plan has been completed for both data entry as well as public education issues. • A detailed workplan to implement this recommendation has been developed. • Research and evidence gathering is underway to support this recommendation by examine existing public education campaigns on food safety.	<u>Late 2021</u> • Collaboration with Public Health Ontario to discuss new data management tools. • Stakeholder consultations and working group(s). <u>Late 2022</u> • Updated Foodborne Illness Investigation tool. • New or revised data management tool (Integrated Public Health Information System). • Updated public health food safety documents. • New public education materials. <u>Early 2023</u> • Training of local Public Health Units on the new or revised data management tool; the updated Foodborne Illness

Number	Committee Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
			Investigation tool and the updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2024</u> Local implementation of recommendation and report back on progress by Public Health Units.
16	The Ministry of Health should work with Public Health Units to: a) implement a requirement that Public Health Units determine and initiate a response within 24 hours of receiving a significant potential foodborne illness-related complaint and conduct food premises inspections within no more than 48 hours of receiving a complaint of a potential foodborne illness; and b) provide detailed, timely, and publicly available information about public health inspections and reports on food premises.	- A detailed workplan to implement this recommendation, through enhanced food safety program measures, has been developed. - A stakeholder engagement plan for audit implementation has been completed.	<u>Late 2021</u> - Stakeholder engagement and working group(s) - Collaborate with local Public Health Units to discuss the requirements of food premises inspections connected to a potential foodborne illness and the timeline of the inspections. <u>Late 2022</u> - Updated public health food safety guidance documents. - Updated reporting requirement under the Public Health Funding Accountability Agreement Annual Report for Public Health Units for the 2023 calendar fiscal year. <u>Early 2023</u> - Training of local Public Health Units on the updated public health food safety guidance documents. <u>Early 2024</u> - Local implementation of recommendation and report back on progress by Public Health Units.