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FSSAI makes it mandatory for restaurants to display food safety boards

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The FSSAI has operationalised the Food Safety and Standards (Licencing and Registration of Food Business) Amendment Regulations, 2018 and has made it mandatory for restaurants to display food safety boards listing the dos and don'ts with respect to hygiene, sanitation, good manufacturing practices (GMP), etc., prominently, besides employing trained food safety supervisor on their premises.

Under the new operationalised set of rules for obtaining licences and registrations, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has revised the conditions for restaurants to obtain licences.

The new rule prescribed that a food safety display board needs to be displayed at a prominent place in the premises, along with the employment of at least one technical person or food safety supervisor trained by the country's apex food regulator in case of restaurants.

However, giving relief to the restaurants, FSSAI has reduced the burden of documentation. Under Section 2 of the regulations regarding documents to be enclosed for new application for licences to the Central or State Licensing Authority for restaurant, the list has been revised.

“Accordingly restaurants do not require to submit the blueprint/layout plan, the name and list of equipment and machinery, the list of food category, the copy of certificate obtained under Co-operative Act, the no-objection certificate (NOC) from the manufacturer and the recall plan while applying for a Central or state licence,” stated the new regulations.

H G Koshia, commissioner, Food and Drug Control Administration (FDCA) Gujarat, said these revised regulations will allow the simplification of the process involved in licencing and registration.

“The food business operators (FBOs) will get licences easier and faster through minimum requirement of papers,” he said, adding that it would also help in pushing the FBOs to understand the requirement under the Food Safety and Standards (Licencing and Registration) Regulations, 2011, and ensure their compliance,” he added.

Meanwhile, under Section 1 for licencing and registration of e-commerce FBOs, FSSAI stated that to regulate the online marketing companies involved in the selling of food items, the e-commerce has been included under the kind of business. The procedure for licencing and registration of e-commerce business operators, along with their responsibilities, has also been prescribed.

Further, in Part-II of Schedule 4 relating to general requirements on hygienic and sanitary practices to be followed by all FBOs applying for licences. The regulator stated, “These requirements under Schedule 4 have been revised and simplified to facilitate the industry to implement GMP and good hygiene practices (GHP) and to meet the regulatory requirements.”

In regards to establishing a small slaughterhouse, wherein currently, specific hygienic and sanitary practices to be followed by FBOs engaged in manufacturer, processing, storing and selling of meat and meat products is detailed in Part-IV of Schedule 4 of the Food Safety and Standards (Licencing and Registration of Food Business) Regulations, 2011.

The new rules stated that these requirements were found to be incompatible with the operation of small slaughterhouses, hence, the minimum sanitary and hygienic requirements for establishing small slaughterhouses have been developed.

Further, FSSAI has also simplified the requirements relating to GHP and GMP to be followed by licenced FBOs engaged in catering or food service operations.

The regulator added that it had been done to facilitate ease of doing business while ensuring food safety of the business operations, while adding that such operationalisation would also enable the regulator to get the feedback regarding difficulties, if any, faced in implementing the amended/new provisions which could be suitably taken into

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consideration at the time of finalising the single comprehensive amendment to the given regulations.

FBOs shall follow these revised regulations with immediate effect.