



## Sneeze Guards

Sneeze guards are an effective means of protecting displayed food from contamination by consumers.

There are many designs that work well to ensure adequate protection. The following points represent how Maricopa County will be evaluating the various designs:

- A sneeze guard must provide adequate protection for exposed food.
- A sneeze guard must protect exposed food wherever contamination from customers may occur (i.e. along the front, rear, and/or sides of the counter, table, or bar).
- A sneeze guard should be positioned to account for the average mouth height of customers, which is between 4 ½ to 5 feet above the floor.
- The guard should intercept the direct line between the average customer's mouth height and the exposed food.

### FDA Code References:

In instances where there are no means of protecting the food on display and/or contamination is observed, the following Priority violation may be documented:

#### **3-306.11 Food Display.**

*Except for nuts in the shell and whole, raw fruits and vegetables that are intended for hulling, peeling, or washing by the CONSUMER before consumption, FOOD on display shall be protected from contamination by the use of PACKAGING; counter, service line, or salad bar FOOD guards; display cases; or other effective means.*<sup>P</sup>

In instances where food on display is not adequately protected, one of the following violations may be documented:

#### **3-306.12 Condiments, Protection.**

#### **3-306.13 (C) Consumer Self-Service Operations.**

#### **3-307.11 Miscellaneous Sources of Contamination.**

### NSF/ANSI 2-2014 Reference:

Food Shields: [https://www.nsf.org/newsroom\\_pdf/NSF\\_2\\_2014\\_5\\_35.pdf](https://www.nsf.org/newsroom_pdf/NSF_2_2014_5_35.pdf)

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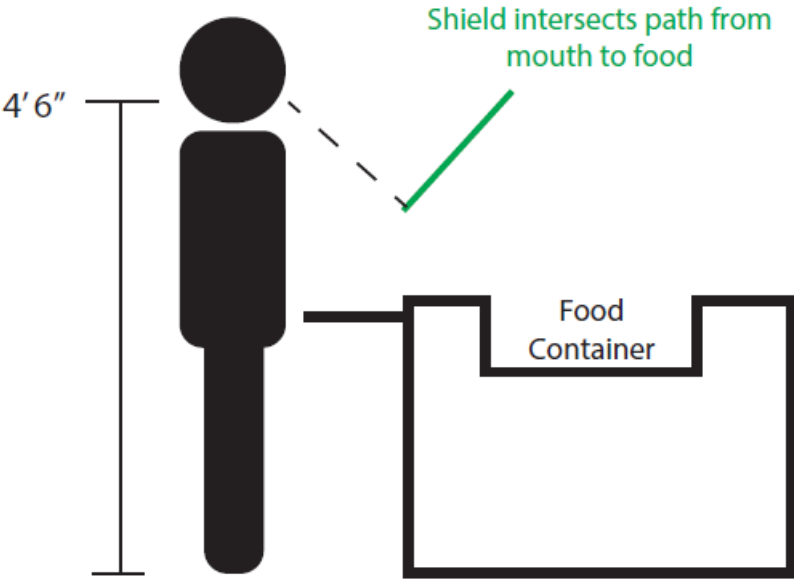
Maricopa County Environmental Services Department

Please contact us with questions: 602-506-6824 or [esplanreview@maricopa.gov](mailto:esplanreview@maricopa.gov)

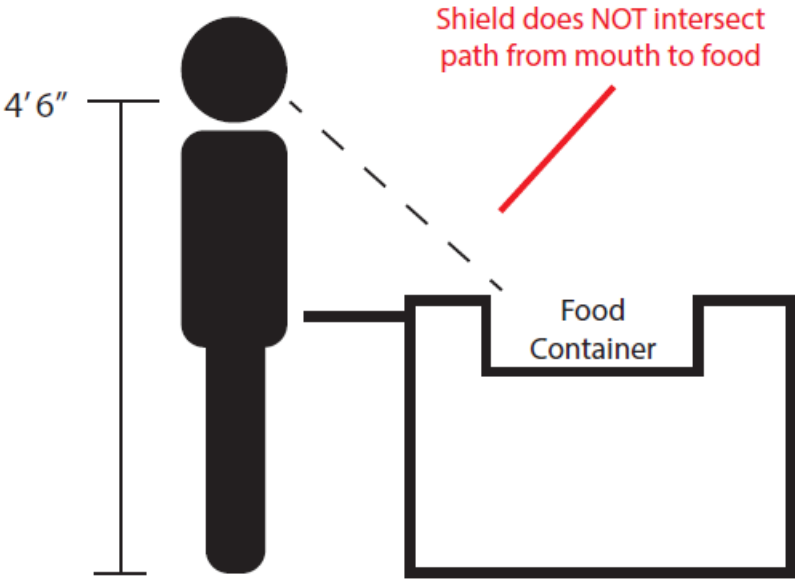


## Sneeze Guard Examples

### Effective Sneeze Guard



### Ineffective Sneeze Guard





### Things to Know

1. Displayed food must be monitored at all times. If any contamination of displayed food is observed, the contaminated food must be discarded and any contaminated equipment must be washed, rinsed, and sanitized or discarded if single use. This does not include food on display that is not intended for consumption.
2. Food that is displayed without lids, including cafeteria style service (e.g. meal assembly, sandwich stations, etc.), buffet lines, and other consumer self-service operations, require sneeze guards that adequately protect the food from contamination.
3. Food that is prepared/plated/trayed for immediate service may not require sneeze guards; however monitoring must take place (e.g. fast food order put on a tray for customer to pick up).
4. Some other options to sneeze guards include:
  - Lids/covers on all open food items.
  - Adequate distance between food and customers, so that displayed food is not within reach of customers (e.g. line barrier, table, counter, etc.).
  - Food employee actively monitoring and handing food directly to customers, such as sampling at special events/farmers' markets, grocery stores, etc.

# Food Establishments

Environmental Health Division



## Examples of Inadequate Protection

Does not provide a barrier of protection between displayed food and customers.





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## Examples of Proper Protection

Uses barriers, distancing, and employee monitoring to ensure proper protection of displayed foods.

