

Guidelines for Turtle Races at Food Service Establishments



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1. Purpose:

Because turtles are known to carry Salmonella, extra care must be taken to avoid disease transmission. This is especially true if a turtle race is held at a bar, restaurant, or other food service establishment.

2. Definitions:

Participant: Any one who handles a turtle during the event.

Race Area: Area in and around the Race Table where turtles and Participants will be located.

Race Table: The table used for the turtle race.

Staff: Anyone working at the facility where the race is held. This includes wait staff, bar tenders, and kitchen staff.

3. Race Table:

The Race Table should be non-absorbable, smooth, and easily cleanable and be used for the purpose of turtle racing only. The Race Table should be cleaned and sanitized following the race. If the Race Table is stored at the food establishment, it must be stored separate from any foods, utensils, linens, or single service items.

4. Race Area:

The Race Area should be located so that staff and other guests (non-participants) do not have to pass directly through the Race Area. If possible, the Race Area should be placed near restrooms to encourage frequent hand washing by Participants.

It is recommended that hand sanitizer be provided in the Race Area. If the Race Area is outdoors, all Participants shall use hand sanitizer before entering the facility. An outdoor hand wash station is recommended for outdoor races.

Open food and beverages are prohibited in the Race Area. Canned and bottled beverages and packaged foods are allowed.

Participants shall be limited to public areas of the facility. Participants shall not be allowed in any food, utensil, linen, or single service item area at any time.

On-duty staff shall not handle turtles at any time. All staff must wash their hands after passing through a Race Area.

Any items in the race area used by Participants, such as chairs, shall be cleaned and sanitized after the race.

5. Turtles:

All turtles should be pet turtles. The capture of wild turtles for turtle races is highly discouraged.

All turtles shall be confined to the Race Table or to the container that they are transported in. All turtle containers shall stay in the Race Area.

All turtles shall be treated humanely. Any mistreatment of turtles shall be reported to the appropriate authority.