Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Retail Programs Standards Reference System (RPSRS)

Q-1: Where can I find more information on the FDA Retail Program Standards?

Answer: You can find complete information about the Retail Program Standards by going to the following URL: https://www.fda.gov/food/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards/voluntary-national-retail-food-regulatory-program-standards-november-2019 or you can contact your Retail Food Specialist

Q-2: What is the purpose of the RPSRS Database?

Answer: The RPSRS Database provides access to FDA's responses to questions related to the Food and Drug Administration Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. It is intended to promote a consistent understanding and application of the Retail Program Standards. Responses are developed and issued by members of the Clearinghouse workgroup which includes FDA staff and external State, Local, Territorial and Tribal partners. The RPSRS is designed to serve as a resource for federal agencies, state/local/tribal jurisdictions, consumers, academia, and industry stakeholders involved in the prevention of food borne illnesses. The RPSRS also is designed to assist the FDA, State, local, and tribal jurisdictions in the promotion, adoption, and implementation of the FDA Retail Program Standards as a means to achieving uniform national food safety standards.

Q-3: How do I get access to the RPSRS Database?

Answer: All FDA employees and contractors with an FDA network account can access the system via internal FDA link: https://cfsanappsinternal.preprod.fda.gov/scripts/rpsrs/?&ad=1371b020-4eec-42ba-b6c8-5a756d563c55

External users can access the system via the link:
https://cfsanappsexternal.preprod.fda.gov/scripts/rpsrs/?&ad=f57d32eb-aaf6-44f6-b665-c996d4f601e7

Q-4: I have a question, how do I submit it to the Clearinghouse?

Answer: Questions posed by enrolled jurisdictions about the Program Standards should first contact their assigned Retail Food Specialist. In many cases, the Retail Food Specialist will be able to provide you with an answer to your question. In cases where the Retail Food Specialist is unable to answer your question, they will submit the question to the Clearinghouse workgroup for an official response. Documents in RPSRS contain responses that reflect the current thinking of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on the FDA Retail Program Standards as developed and issued through the Clearinghouse workgroup members.

Q-5: How can I search the RPSRS Database?

Answer: Searches can be performed using the dropdown menus and keywords. Refer to the RPSRS User Manual for Search Tips and instructions on how to search the database.

Q-6: How can I view documents from the RPSRS Database?

Answer: Click on the hyperlinked title of the document and choose the Open button from the File Download dialog box. Refer to the RPSRS User Manual for further instructions.

Q-7: How can I download and save documents from the RPSRS Database?

Answer: Choose the Save button from the File Download dialog box. Refer to the RPSRS User Manual for further instructions.

Q-8: Can I upload files into the RPSRS Database?

Answer: No. Documents in RPSRS can only be uploaded to the database by personnel who have been granted the appropriate access to perform that task.

Q-9: Are the documents in RPSRS revised?

Answer: Yes, revisions may become necessary to reflect updates. When documents are revised (i.e., superseded by a more recent version), a version number will be appended to the original filename (e.g., filename_v01, filename_v02). To provide the most current information to the user, only the most recent documents are shown in the RPSRS.

Q-10: Can I view a list of recent responses in the Database?

Answer: Yes, use the timeframe dropdown box to display the most recent documents created within the database. The available options are within 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, or 12 months.

Q-11: Are instructions available for using the RPSRS Database?

Answer: Yes, the RPSRS User Manual (PDF format) will be available from the RPSRS Reference Search page.

Q-12: Who can I contact if I have questions about the RPSRS Database?

Answer: For questions regarding RPSRS and its use, send an email to Retailfoodprotectionteam@fda.hhs.gov. In the email, please be sure to provide your specific question(s), name, and contact information where a response can be sent.