STANDARD 2 – TRAINED REGULATORY STAFF
APPENDIX B-3: RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT CATEGORIES

2026 FDA Food Code – Annex 5, Conducting Risk-based Inspections

Table 1

Risk Category	Description	Frequency #/Year
1	Examples include most convenience store operations, hot dog carts, and coffee shops. Establishments that serve or sell only pre-packaged, non-time/ temperature control for safety (TCS) foods. Establishments that prepare only non-TCS foods. Establishments that heat only commercially processed TCS foods for hot holding. No cooling of TCS foods. Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 2 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors.	1
2	Examples may include retail food store operations, schools not serving a highly susceptible population, and quick service operations. Most products are prepared/cooked and served immediately. May involve hot and cold holding of TCS foods after preparation or cooking. Complex preparation of TCS foods requiring cooking, cooling, and reheating for hot holding is limited to only a few TCS foods. Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 3 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors. Newly permitted establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 1 until history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors is achieved and documented.	2
3	An example is a full-service restaurant. Extensive menu and handling of raw ingredients. Complex preparation including cooking, cooling, and reheating for hot holding involves many TCS foods. Variety of processes require hot and cold holding of TCS food. Establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 4 but have shown through historical documentation to have achieved active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors. Newly permitted establishments that would otherwise be grouped in Category 2 until history of active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors is achieved and documented.	3
4	Examples include preschools, hospitals, nursing homes, and establishments conducting processing at retail. Includes establishments serving a highly susceptible population or that conduct specialized processes (i.e., smoking and curing, reduced oxygen packaging for extended shelf-life).	4