Department of Agriculture
Food Safety

Agri.Ohio.gov

Mike DeWine, *Governor* **Jim Tressel,** *Lt. Governor* **Brian Baldridge,** *Director*

March 26, 2025

Dear Mr. Sands,

I hope this letter finds you doing well. I'm writing in response to your request regarding the Ohio Department of Agriculture's enforcement of laws, codes, or regulations that require a customer or patron of businesses to always wear shoes or some form of footwear when inside the business as a customer. If by businesses, you mean retail food establishments (grocery stores) or food service operations (restaurants), then the Ohio Department of Agriculture Division of Food Safety does not have jurisdiction over such businesses. Our division licenses and inspects the manufacturing and distribution sector of food commerce within Ohio.

In Ohio, the licensing and inspections of retail food establishments (grocery stores) and food service operations (restaurants) fall under the jurisdiction of health departments at the ~~l~~local government level within each city or county. There is nothing within the Ohio Uniform Food Code (OAC 3717-1), from which they regulate such businesses, that restricts access to customers or patrons without shoes. So, it would likely be determined by whatever policy the business itself establishes, but not something that the local health departments could enforce. For more in-depth information regarding the requirements of OAC 3717-1, you can contact the respective local health departments who enforce this regulatory code. A directory of the local health departments in Ohio can be found at: https://odh.ohio.gov/find-local-health-districts.

Regards,

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