

As Introduced

136th General Assembly

Regular Session

2025-2026

H. B. No. 623

Representatives Abdullahi, Cockley

Cosponsors: Representatives Sigrist, Lett, Upchurch, Brent, McNally

To amend sections 1329.29 and 1329.99 and to enact
sections 341.03, 753.022, 1329.291, 3313.8110,
3722.20, 5119.335, and 5120.101 of the Revised
Code to require the provision of religious
dietary food options in school districts,
hospitals, and correctional facilities and to
prohibit the misrepresentation of halal foods.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That sections 1329.29 and 1329.99 be amended
and sections 341.03, 753.022, 1329.291, 3313.8110, 3722.20,
5119.335, and 5120.101 of the Revised Code be enacted to read as
follows:

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Sec. 341.03. (A) As used in this section:

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(1) "County correctional facility" has the same meaning as
in section 341.42 of the Revised Code.

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(2) "Religious dietary food options" means meals that meet
specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy
religious dietary requirements.

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(B) Each county correctional facility shall accommodate
the mandatory dietary requirements of a recognized religion

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practiced by an inmate by offering religious dietary food 20
options. 21

Sec. 753.022. (A) As used in this section: 22

(1) "Municipal correctional facility" has the same meaning 23
as in section 753.32 of the Revised Code. 24

(2) "Religious dietary food options" means meals that meet 25
specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy 26
religious dietary requirements. 27

(B) Each municipal correctional facility shall accommodate 28
the mandatory dietary requirements of a recognized religion 29
practiced by an inmate by offering religious dietary food 30
options. 31

Sec. 1329.29. (A) As used in this section, "kosher" means 32
supervised, prepared under, and maintained in strict compliance 33
with the laws and customs of the Jewish religion, including the 34
laws and customs of shechita requiring the slaughter of animals 35
according to appropriate Jewish law, and in compliance with the 36
strictest standards of Jewish law as expressed by reliable, 37
recognized Jewish entities and Jewish rabbis. 38

(B) No person shall do any of the following: 39

(1) Sell or expose for sale at retail, or manufacture, any 40
meat or meat preparations or any fowl or preparations from fowl 41
and falsely represent the same to be "kosher" or as having been 42
prepared under, and of a product or products sanctioned by, the 43
Orthodox Hebrew religious requirements; 44

(2) Falsely represent any food products or the contents of 45
any package or container to be constituted and prepared as 46
described in division ~~(A) (1)~~ (B) (1) of this section by having or 47

permitting to be inscribed thereon "kosher," "kosher style,"
"kosher type," "kosher for passover," "Jewish," or "Hebrew" in
any language, or have "kosher," "kosher style," "kosher type,"
"kosher for passover," "Jewish," or "Hebrew" inscribed on the
front of any retail business establishment in any language
except the terms "Jewish," "Hebrew," "kosher style," or "kosher
type" may be used on packages or containers only if the packages
or containers are also marked "nonkosher" in easily readable
print;

(3) Sell or expose for sale at retail in the same place of
business both kosher and nonkosher meat or meat preparations
either raw or prepared for human consumption unless ~~he~~the person
indicates on ~~his~~the person's window signs and all display
advertising in block letters at least four inches in height,
"kosher and nonkosher food served here." However, if the person
sells only kosher meat or kosher meat preparations that are
prepackaged for sale, ~~he~~the person is exempt from this division.

(4) Make any direct statement, either orally or in
writing, display the words "kosher," "kosher style," "kosher
type," "kosher for passover," "Jewish," or "Hebrew" in any
language, or display any insignia, six-pointed star, or other
mark that might reasonably be calculated to deceive or lead a
reasonable person to believe a product is "kosher" or sanctioned
by Orthodox Hebrew religious requirements, if it is not.

~~(B)~~(C) All prepackaged meats and poultry sold or exposed
for sale at retail as "kosher" shall be soaked and salted. All
other fresh meats and poultry sold or exposed for sale at retail
as "kosher" shall be marked, on the label when packaged or by a
sign when not packaged, with the words "soaked and salted" or
"not soaked and salted," whichever is applicable. All

advertisements for food or food products sold or exposed for 78
sale as "kosher" under rabbinical supervision must identify the 79
name of the rabbi or organization, if any, that certified the 80
food or food products as being "kosher." 81

~~(C)~~ (D) Any retailer who, at the end of the business day on 82
the effective date of this amendment, has in ~~his~~ the retailer's 83
inventory products that are not "kosher" but are marked "kosher 84
style," "kosher type," "kosher for passover," "Jewish," or 85
"Hebrew" may continue to sell those products if ~~he~~ the retailer 86
marks them "nonkosher" either on their labels or on display 87
advertising in block letters at least four inches in height. 88

~~(D)~~ (E) The department of agriculture shall enforce this 89
section and for such purpose any person designated by the 90
department may enter upon premises where food represented to be 91
kosher is sold or exposed for sale, at any reasonable time 92
during business hours to inspect such food. 93

Whenever the department determines that a person is 94
violating this section and has received no previous warning 95
under this section, it shall issue a warning to that person 96
specifying what actions ~~he~~ the person needs to take in order to 97
comply with this section and notifying ~~him~~ the person that ~~he~~ the 98
person has ten days after ~~his~~ receipt of the warning to take 99
those actions. If, at the end of the ten-day period, the 100
department determines that the person still is not in compliance 101
with this section, the violator is subject to strict criminal 102
liability, as provided in division (B) of section 2901.21 of the 103
Revised Code. 104

If a person has received a previous warning under this 105
section or has been found in violation of this section, ~~he~~ the 106
person shall receive no warning under this division concerning 107

subsequent noncompliance with this section and is subject to 108
strict criminal liability, as provided in division (B) of 109
section 2901.21 of the Revised Code. No action may be maintained 110
against a retail seller for a violation of this section unless: 111

(1) ~~He~~The retail seller fails to comply with a warning 112
issued under division ~~(D)~~(E) of this section; or 113

(2) ~~He~~The retail seller had actual knowledge or should 114
have had knowledge that the product offered for sale did not 115
comply with this section. 116

Sec. 1329.291. (A) As used in this section, "halal" means 117
prepared under and maintained in strict compliance with the laws 118
and customs of the Islamic religion including the laws and 119
customs of zabiha or zabeeha, slaughtered according to 120
appropriate Islamic code, and as expressed by reliable, 121
recognized Islamic entities and scholars. 122

(B) No person shall do any of the following: 123

(1) Sell or expose for sale at retail, or manufacture, any 124
meat or meat preparations or any fowl or preparations from fowl 125
and falsely represent the same to be halal; 126

(2) Falsely represent any food products or the contents of 127
any package or container to be constituted and prepared as 128
described in division (B) (1) of this section by having or 129
permitting to be inscribed thereon "halal," "Muslim," or "Islam" 130
in any language, or having "halal," "Muslim," or "Islam" 131
inscribed on the front of any retail business establishment in 132
any language; 133

(3) Sell or expose for sale at retail in the same place of 134
business both halal and nonhalal meat or meat preparations 135
either raw or prepared for human consumption unless indicated on 136

window signs and all display advertising in block letters at 137
least four inches in height, "halal and nonhalal food served 138
here." A person who sells only halal meat or halal meat 139
preparations that are prepackaged for sale is exempt from this 140
division. 141

(4) Make any direct statement, either orally or in 142
writing, display the words "halal," "Muslim," or "Islam" in any 143
language, or display any insignia, star and crescent, or other 144
mark that might reasonably be calculated to deceive or lead a 145
reasonable person to believe a product is halal if it is not. 146

(C) The department of agriculture shall enforce this 147
section and for such purpose any person designated by the 148
department may enter upon premises where food represented to be 149
halal is sold or exposed for sale, at any reasonable time during 150
business hours to inspect such food. 151

Whenever the department determines that a person is 152
violating this section and has received no previous warning 153
under this section, it shall issue a warning to that person 154
specifying what actions that person needs to take to comply with 155
this section and notifying that person that there is a ten-day 156
period after receipt of the warning to take those actions. If, 157
at the end of the ten-day period, the department determines that 158
the person still is not in compliance with this section, the 159
violation is subject to strict criminal liability, as provided in 160
division (B) of section 2901.21 of the Revised Code. 161

If a person has received a previous warning under this 162
section or has been found in violation of this section, that 163
person shall receive no warning under this division concerning 164
subsequent noncompliance with this section and is subject to 165
strict criminal liability, as provided in division (B) of 166

section 2901.21 of the Revised Code. No action may be maintained 167
against a retail seller for a violation of this section unless: 168

(1) The retail seller fails to comply with a warning 169
issued under division (C) of this section; 170

(2) The retail seller had actual knowledge or should have 171
had knowledge that the product offered for sale did not comply 172
with this section. 173

Sec. 1329.99. (A) Whoever violates section 1329.26 or 174
1329.27 of the Revised Code shall be fined not more than one 175
hundred dollars. 176

(B) Whoever violates section 1329.29 or 1329.291 of the 177
Revised Code shall be fined not less than twenty-five nor more 178
than five hundred dollars. 179

(C) Whoever violates section 1329.30 of the Revised Code 180
shall be fined not less than one nor more than twenty-five 181
dollars. 182

(D) Whoever violates section 1329.31, 1329.32, or 1329.33 183
of the Revised Code shall be fined not less than twenty-five nor 184
more than fifty dollars for a first offense; for each subsequent 185
offense such person shall be fined not less than fifty nor more 186
than two hundred dollars. 187

(E) Whoever violates sections 1329.41 to 1329.53, 188
inclusive, of the Revised Code, shall be fined not less than ten 189
nor more than fifty dollars or imprisoned not less than ten days 190
nor more than one month, or both, for a first offense; for each 191
subsequent offense such person shall be fined not less than 192
twenty nor more than one hundred dollars, or imprisoned not less 193
than thirty days nor more than three months, or both. 194

Sec. 3313.8110. (A) As used in this section, "religious dietary food options" means meals that meet specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy religious dietary requirements.

(B) Each school district shall offer, upon request provided with reasonable notice, religious dietary food options that comply with federal and state nutritional guidelines. However, a district shall not be required to provide a religious dietary food option that exceeds the cost of the federal reimbursement rate for a student's meal.

Sec. 3722.20. (A) As used in this section, "religious dietary food options" means meals that meet specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy religious dietary requirements.

(B) Each hospital licensed under this chapter shall offer, upon request provided with reasonable notice, at the hospital, religious dietary food options that comply with federal and state nutritional guidelines. After an individual submits a request for a religious dietary food option, the hospital shall make accommodations for the request as soon as the hospital is able to provide the meals.

(C) The provisions of this section shall not infringe upon or affect any obligation in a contract entered into and in effect on or before the effective date of this section.

Sec. 5119.335. (A) As used in this section, "religious dietary food options" means meals that meet specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy religious dietary requirements.

(B) Each hospital licensed by the department of mental

health and addiction services under section 5119.33 of the 224
Revised Code shall offer, upon request provided with reasonable 225
notice, at the hospital, religious dietary food options that 226
comply with federal and state nutritional guidelines. After an 227
individual submits a request for a religious dietary food 228
option, the hospital shall make accommodations for the request 229
as soon as the hospital is able to provide the meals. 230

(C) The provisions of this section shall not infringe upon 231
or affect any obligation in a contract entered into and in 232
effect on or before the effective date of this section. 233

Sec. 5120.101. (A) As used in this section: 234

(1) "State correctional institution" has the same meaning 235
as in section 2967.01 of the Revised Code. 236

(2) "Religious dietary food options" means meals that meet 237
specific food and food preparation techniques that satisfy 238
religious dietary requirements. 239

(B) Each state correctional institution shall accommodate 240
the mandatory dietary requirements of a recognized religion 241
practiced by an inmate by offering religious dietary food 242
options. 243

Section 2. That existing sections 1329.29 and 1329.99 of 244
the Revised Code are hereby repealed. 245