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NEWS

Restaurant owners meet with state regarding food safety concerns with third-party delivery

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CLEVELAND — Laurie Torres strategically places a sticker on each to-go order that leaves her [Mallorca](#) restaurant in Cleveland. It's a trick she learned to keep the orders from being tampered with during delivery.

"If somebody tries to tamper with this, it's going to rip. Once you open these, it's hard to re-seal," Torres said as she showed how the containers work.

Torres said it's necessary because there have been cases where a third-party delivery driver has tampered with, or even eaten some of the food.

Local health departments regulate food health and safety inside restaurants. For instance, kitchen staff learn how to handle food safely, how long it can be kept, and at what temperature.

Torres said concerns like those are out of her hands once it leaves her restaurant, and by someone she neither employs nor knows their credentials.

"They should have some kind of training which is you need to keep your car at this temperature. You need to use an insulated bag with all the food," she explained. "You need to make sure that you're getting the delivery to where it belongs within a certain window of time."

She said she met with the [Ohio Department of Health](#) to ask for requirements for third party delivery drivers. Spectrum News reached out to the state health department for comment; no one has responded.

Gina Nicholson Kramer is overseeing a study on third party food delivery at the [Ohio State University](#). She said food delivery drivers usually aren't trained on how to handle food properly while delivering it. She said there should be some regulations in place.

"There in the past has been no regulations for third party delivery companies as far as licensing. We all assume they're going to deliver our food fast and the proper times and keep the food at the proper temperatures," Nicholson Kramer said

Besides stickers, Torres has another safeguard in place. She also timestamps receipts so customers know when a meal left the restaurant.