

Restaurant Standard Operating Procedure

Department: Food Service Operations

Version: [1.0]

Document ID: [SOP-DEPT-###]

Effective Date: [MM/DD/YYYY]

1. Purpose

This Standard Operating Procedure establishes guidelines for food service operations to ensure food safety, quality, and consistent customer experience in compliance with health regulations and industry standards.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all restaurant staff including managers, chefs, cooks, servers, hosts, and support staff involved in food preparation and service.

This procedure applies to:

- Kitchen staff (chefs, cooks, prep cooks)
- Front-of-house staff (servers, hosts, bartenders)
- Management and supervisors
- Dishwashers and cleaning staff
- Delivery and takeout personnel

Exclusions:

[Describe any activities, processes, or personnel NOT covered by this SOP]

3. Definitions

The following terms have specific meanings within this procedure. Defined terms are capitalized when used throughout this document.

Term	Definition
Critical Control Point	Step where control can be applied to prevent food safety hazards

Cross-Contamination	Transfer of harmful bacteria or allergens between foods or surfaces
Danger Zone	Temperature range 41-135 degrees F where bacteria multiply rapidly
FIFO	First In, First Out - inventory rotation to ensure freshness
TCS Foods	Time/Temperature Control for Safety foods requiring refrigeration

4. Responsibilities

The following roles and positions have specific responsibilities for this procedure:

Role/Position	Responsibilities
[General Manager]	Will ensure compliance with health codes and maintain all certifications
[Kitchen Manager/Head Chef]	Will oversee food safety, quality, and kitchen operations
[FOH Manager]	Will manage customer service standards and dining room operations
[All Food Handlers]	Will follow food safety procedures and maintain personal hygiene
[Servers]	Will communicate allergen information and follow safe service practices

5. Food Safety Procedures

5.1 Temperature Control

1. Cold foods must be held at 41 degrees F or below at all times
2. Hot foods must be held at 135 degrees F or above at all times
3. Record temperatures on logs every 2 hours during service
4. Discard TCS foods that have been in the danger zone for more than 4 hours total

5. Cool hot foods from 135 degrees F to 70 degrees F within 2 hours, then to 41 degrees F within 4 additional hours
6. Verify temperatures with calibrated thermometer; do not rely on equipment gauges alone

5.2 Personal Hygiene Requirements

- Handwashing performed before handling food and after contamination events
- Hair restraints (hat, hairnet) worn at all times in kitchen
- Clean uniform/apron and closed-toe, non-slip shoes worn
- No eating, drinking, or smoking in food prep areas
- Cuts and wounds properly bandaged and covered with gloves
- Illness symptoms reported; employee excluded per health code requirements

5.3 Cleaning and Sanitizing Steps

1. Scrape or remove visible food debris
2. Wash surface with warm water (110 degrees F) and approved detergent
3. Rinse thoroughly with clean water
4. Apply sanitizer solution at correct concentration (check with test strips)
5. Allow to air dry - never towel dry sanitized surfaces

6. Health Inspection Preparation Checklist

Complete this checklist regularly to maintain inspection readiness at all times:

6.1 Food Storage

Item	Completed	Notes
All food stored minimum 6 inches off floor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Raw meats stored below ready-to-eat foods (proper vertical order)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
All containers properly labeled with contents and date	<input type="checkbox"/>	
FIFO rotation being followed consistently	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Refrigerator temperatures verified at 41 degrees F or	<input type="checkbox"/>	

below		
Freezer temperatures verified at 0 degrees F or below	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No expired products in storage	<input type="checkbox"/>	

6.2 Food Preparation

Item	Completed	Notes
Separate cutting boards used for raw meat vs. ready-to-eat foods	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Probe thermometers available, calibrated, and clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Handwashing sinks accessible, stocked with soap and towels	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sanitizer solution at correct concentration (verify with test strips)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Food prep surfaces clean and sanitized between tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Single-use gloves used properly for ready-to-eat food handling	<input type="checkbox"/>	

7. Allergen Management Protocol

7.1 Major Food Allergens (Big 9)

- Milk and dairy products
- Eggs
- Fish (bass, flounder, cod, etc.)
- Shellfish (crab, lobster, shrimp, etc.)
- Tree nuts (almonds, cashews, walnuts, etc.)
- Peanuts
- Wheat

- Soybeans
- Sesame

7.2 Allergen-Safe Service Procedures

1. Ask every table about food allergies when taking orders
2. Document allergen requests clearly on order ticket with special marking
3. Alert kitchen staff verbally AND in writing on the ticket
4. Use clean, dedicated equipment for allergen-free preparation
5. Prepare allergen-free items first, before allergen-containing items if possible
6. Verify all ingredients with manager if any uncertainty exists
7. Deliver allergen-free items on separate plate/tray with verbal confirmation

WARNING: Allergen cross-contact can cause severe reactions including anaphylaxis. When in doubt, always verify with the kitchen manager.

8. Seasonal Menu Transition

Follow this process when transitioning to new seasonal menus:

8.1 Pre-Launch (2 weeks before)

- New menu items finalized with standardized recipes
- Ingredient sourcing confirmed with all vendors
- Allergen information updated for all new items
- Menu pricing approved by management
- POS system updated with new items and modifiers

8.2 Training Week

- Kitchen staff trained on all new preparations
- FOH staff trained on menu descriptions, ingredients, and pairings
- Full tasting session completed for all staff
- Allergen knowledge quiz administered and passed
- Suggested selling points and upsells distributed

9. Staff Training Log

Document all staff training activities. Maintain records for health department review:

Date	Employee Name	Training Topic	Trainer	Verified By

9.1 Required Training Schedule

Training Topic	Frequency	Duration	Certification
Food Handler Certification	Upon hire + renewal per local law	8 hours	Required
Allergen Awareness	Annual refresher	2 hours	Recommended
Alcohol Service (if applicable)	Upon hire + renewal per law	4 hours	Required
Fire Safety/Evacuation	Annual	1 hour	Required
Menu Knowledge	Each menu change	2 hours	N/A

10. Emergency and Exception Procedures

10.1 Emergency Response

In case of emergency, follow the procedures below. Safety of personnel takes priority over all other considerations.

1. Ensure immediate safety of all personnel in the area
2. Contact emergency services if required (911 or local emergency number)
3. Notify supervisor/manager immediately
4. Follow facility emergency evacuation procedures if applicable
5. Document the incident using the Incident Report form

10.2 Exception Handling

When standard procedures cannot be followed due to unusual circumstances:

1. Assess the situation and identify the specific deviation required

2. Obtain verbal approval from [Supervisor/Manager] before proceeding
3. Document the exception, including justification and approver
4. Complete the Exception Request Form within 24 hours
5. Submit for formal review during the next scheduled procedure review

WARNING: Exceptions should only be made when necessary and must be properly documented. Repeated exceptions may indicate the need for procedure revision.

11. Related Information

The following documents and references relate to this procedure:

Category	Reference
Related Policies	Food Safety Policy, Employee Health Policy, Allergen Policy
Related SOPs/Procedures	SOP-REST-002 Opening/Closing Procedures, SOP-REST-003 Cash Handling, SOP-REST-004 Cleaning Schedule
Related Forms	Temperature Log, Cleaning Checklist, Allergen Matrix, Training Record Form
External References	FDA Food Code, State/Local Health Codes, ServSafe Guidelines

12. Document Control

SOP Owner	[General Manager / Kitchen Manager]
Approved By	[Owner / Director of Operations]
Contact Email	[management@restaurant.com]
Contact Phone	[(XXX) XXX-XXXX]
Review Schedule	Annual or upon changes in health regulations, menu, or operational procedures

13. Revision History

Document all revisions to maintain a complete audit trail:

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	[MM/DD/YYYY]	Initial release

14. Authorization and Approval

Name	Role	Signature	Date
	Prepared By		
	Reviewed By		
	Approved By		

15. Documentation of Training

I have read and understand the content of this Standard Operating Procedure. I have received training specific to the procedures, hazards, and emergency protocols described herein.

Note: All personnel who will perform tasks covered by this SOP must sign below prior to conducting any work. Additional signature pages may be attached as needed.

Printed Name	Signature	Date
[Manager/Supervisor]		

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