

37. Food Safety, Delivery and Storage Policy and Procedure

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Skymac recognises our responsibility to ensure we have a robust food safety program in accordance with *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2018* and the *Foods Standards Code – Standard 3.2.2 – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements*.

The purpose of this program will ensure food does not become unsafe or unsuitable for consumption by our residents and clients.

The requirements outlined in this policy relate to the receipt, storage, processing, packaging, distribution, disposal and recall of food. Other requirements relate to the skills and knowledge of food handlers and their supervisors, the health and hygiene of food handlers, and the cleaning, sanitising, and maintenance of premises and equipment.

Scope

The food safety policy and procedure covers food prepared and/or served/delivered by the Food Services department.

It does not cover events where food is prepared by a person outside of Skymac's Food Services department (e.g., relatives or external support providers bringing food in for clients, and food that a resident sourced externally from Skymac's Food Services department).

Policy

Potential food safety hazard

The following potential hazards may occur during all activities in a facilities food operation.

Microbiological hazards

Consumption of food poisoning microbes (bacteria, viruses and parasites), also known as pathogens, can result in food-borne illness.

Microbiological hazards are the most significant food safety hazards because microbes:

- are not easily detected
- are widely present on, and transfer easily between, humans, animals, pests, and raw produce
- may be able to grow rapidly at ambient temperatures
- can in some cases survive or regenerate following control steps such as cooking
- can result in illness even in small numbers

Food poisoning BACTERIA

Campylobacter
Salmonella
Listeria
E coli
Staphylococcus aureus
Bacillus cereus
Clostridium perfringens

Food borne VIRUSES

Hepatitis A
Rota viruses

Potentially hazardous foods

Particular care should always be taken with 'potentially hazardous foods' because:

- they may contain food poisoning microbes that can cause food-borne illness if allowed to multiply to large numbers
- they provide a suitable environment (that is, moist but not acidic, salty nor high in sugar) to support the growth of food poisoning bacteria.

Potentially hazardous foods include:

- raw and cooked meats/poultry and foods containing raw and cooked meats/poultry
- small goods
- dairy products such as custard and cheesecake
- seafood and products containing seafood and fish stocks
- some processed fresh fruits and salad vegetables such as pre-prepared salad and pre-cut fruit salad (where the product has a shelf life >24 hours)
- cooked rice and pasta
- foods containing protein rich products such as eggs, beans and nuts; and
- foods that contain the above foods such as pizza and sandwiches.

Non potentially hazardous foods include:

- any fully processed foods such as canned and bottled foods, dried fruit, salted and fermented dried meats, acidic foods such as yoghurt and orange juice, shelf-stable sauces such as tomato sauce, uncooked rice, bread, dried pasta and other dry products

- butter, margarine and similar oil-based spreads
- hard cheeses and yoghurt
- raw whole fruit and vegetables and freshly cut fruit and vegetables (used within 24 hours of being cut)
- uncracked eggs in their shell.

Physical hazards

Physical objects not for consumption but found in food, are of concern for two reasons:

- they may introduce microbial hazards; and
- they may result in physical harm to the consumer, for example, choking, laceration, broken teeth.

Physical hazards may include glass, metal, plastic, dirt, adhesive dressings and rubber bands.

Chemical hazards

Chemical hazards can occur naturally in foods or be introduced through poor practices. They include pesticides, cleaning agents, heavy metals, and toxins.

Procedure

FOOD HANDLING FUNDAMENTALS

The food handling fundamentals apply to all food handling activities and are the basis of safe food production. The fundamentals are applied in the procedures below. All food businesses and their food handlers should routinely follow these fundamentals.

Time and temperature

Control the time & temperature of potentially hazardous food (3.2.2 c7)

The time/temperature of potentially hazardous foods must be controlled during the entire production process - from receipt to serving to the client:

- Receive potentially hazardous food at 5°C or below or 60°C or above unless the temperature and the time taken to transport it will not adversely affect the safety of the food. (3.2.2 c5)
- Check that fridges are operating effectively at 5°C or below and heating/hot holding equipment is operating effectively at 60°C or above
- Cook potentially hazardous food thoroughly to above 75°C

- Ensure temperature measuring equipment is accurate to + 1°C by calibrating at least annually or per manufacturer’s instructions. (3.2.2 c22)
- Minimise the time potentially hazardous foods are between 5°C and 60°C by:
 - refrigerating as soon as received or prepared (allow steam to dissipate if steaming hot),
 - refrigerating as much as possible: only remove when ready to prepare, cook or serve,
 - preparing small batches of ready to eat foods such as salads and sandwiches so they can be refrigerated as each batch is completed,
 - thawing, as much as possible under refrigeration or rapidly in the microwave. If thawed out of refrigeration the food must be cooked or consumed in the following 4 hours,
 - cooling rapidly by dividing into shallow containers, stirring occasionally, placing in a freezer, refrigerator or cool room, or
 - reheating rapidly (< 2 hours) to 60°C.
- Follow the 2 hour – 4-hour guide

Total time between 5°C and 60°C	Action
Less than 2 hours	Refrigerate or use immediately
Between 2 hours and 4 hours	Use immediately
More than 4 hours	Throw out

Food handler health and hygiene

Employees and volunteers who engage in the handling of food, or who handle surfaces likely to come in contact with food are ‘food handlers’. Food handlers have legal obligations under Standard 3.2.2 Division 4.

Food handler legal obligations

Food handlers must:

- advise their supervisor if they are suffering from, are a carrier of, or have symptoms of food-borne illness. Common symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, nausea and fever
- take all reasonable measures to handle food and food contact surfaces and equipment in a way that will not compromise the safety and suitability of food

- wash their hands with soap and warm running water in hand washing facilities whenever hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food and specifically:
 - before commencing and recommencing handling food,
 - after using the toilet or changing nappies,
 - immediately before handling ready to eat food,
 - immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating, drinking, touching hair, scalp or a body opening.

Personal hygiene

Food handlers must abide by the following requirements:

Fingernails, jewellery and hair

- Keep fingernails short and clean; do not wear nail polish or nail decorations or artificial fingernails
- Wear minimal jewellery (for example, plain wedding rings, sleepers) especially on hands and wrists. Do not wear loose jewellery, especially earrings
- Wear gloves over jewellery on hands if they are in direct contact with food
- Tie back or cover long hair.

Clothes

- Wear outer clothing that will not contaminate food or food contact surfaces and that has a level of cleanliness appropriate for the handling of food that is undertaken
- Wear a clean apron or similar and remove when going to the toilet, on a break or away from food handling duties.

Exposed cuts or sores

- Cover cuts or sores with a bandage (for example, band-aid). If exposed (for example, on hands) cover with gloves or other waterproof covering to prevent seepage.

Eating

- Do not eat over unprotected food (that will be served to others) or food contact surfaces.

Personal belongings

- Personal belongings not required for food handling must be stored in allocated staff areas.

Good food handling practices

Cross contamination occurs when pathogens from one food are transferred to another food. For example, pathogens may be transferred from raw chicken to a cutting board, knife or a food handler's hands. If these items come in contact with a ready-to-eat food such as lettuce for a

salad, the pathogens from the chicken may be transferred to the salad. Opportunities for contamination increase with handling. Cross contamination is a significant cause of food-borne illness.

Avoid cross contamination

- Clean and sanitise utensils, equipment, and surfaces per the cleaning schedule
- Keep raw and cooked or ready-to-eat foods separate by:
 - cleaning and sanitising utensils, surfaces, and equipment between preparing raw and cooked foods or using separate equipment,
 - storing raw foods below cooked foods.
- Use equipment and containers that can be easily and effectively cleaned, will not absorb grease, food nor water, and will not contaminate the food
- Cover food with plastic wrap or a lid
- Store food off the floor
- Store chemicals where they cannot contaminate food and according to the manufacturer's instruction

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Food handler skills and knowledge (3.2.2 c3)

Background

Food handlers and supervisors of food handling operations are required to have skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene matters appropriate to their work activities.

Skymac will adopt approaches to provide food handlers with appropriate skills and knowledge to produce safe food which may include

- in-house training
- distribution of food safety information
- viewing of relevant food safety videos or DVDs
- use of interactive CD-ROM or internet-based packages
- establishment of internal policies and procedures that provide information about food handler and supervisor responsibilities

An employee's skills and qualifications will be recorded in our HR platform to demonstrate that food handlers have appropriate skills and knowledge.

Purchasing and donations

Background

Food safety risks when purchasing food will be reduced by purchasing from reputable suppliers that can be expected to supply safe and suitable products.

Skymac will provide, to the reasonable satisfaction of an authorised officer upon request, the following information relating to food on the food premises –

- a) the name and business address in Australia of the vendor, manufacturer or packer or, in the case of food imported into Australia, the name and business address in Australia of the importer; and
- b) the prescribed name or, if there is no prescribed name, a name or a description of the food sufficient to indicate the true nature of the food.

Cleaning and sanitising (3.2.2 c19 & c20)

Effective cleaning and sanitising reduces the potential for food poisoning bacteria to grow, pests to be attracted, and cross contamination.

There should be no accumulation in food handling areas and on fixtures, fittings and equipment of garbage, recycled matter, and food waste (except in designated areas), dirt, grease or other visible matter that may contaminate food. Eating and drinking utensils and food contact surfaces must be in a clean and sanitary condition prior to use.

Items that must be sanitised

- eating and drinking utensils, including cutlery, crockery, cups, and glasses
- surfaces that will come into contact with food, and are likely to contaminate it, including cutting boards, mixing bowls, storage containers, thermometers, bench surfaces and similar equipment
- equipment does not need to be sanitised if it will exceed 75°C during use, including pots and pans, ovens and oven trays, and other similar items. These items must be adequately cleaned and if used for cold preparation, must be sanitised.

Methods of sanitising

- Chemical: use 5 ml of domestic bleach (4% chlorine) per litre of warm water (equals 200 ppm) and allow a minimum of 30 seconds contact time for immersions and 5 minutes for spray, or other chemicals as recommended by the facility's chemical supplier/manufacturer for use in food production environments, applied per the supplier's instructions
- Heat: immerse equipment in clean water at 77°C. Spray bottles of hot water are not effective. This method requires consideration of the OHS&W risks

- Dishwasher: most commercial dishwashers will sanitise by using heat or chemicals. Domestic dishwashers generally have a sanitise cycle. Check with your manufacturer or chemical supplier. If your dishwasher heat sanitises then a regular check should be conducted and recorded to ensure the temperature is adequate (this may be part of your premise and equipment support program see section 7.4).

For further information regarding cleaning and sanitising refer to Safe Food Australia at www.foodstandards.gov.au

The cleaning and sanitising schedule

A cleaning schedule is a live document that will assist in making sure that an appropriate level of cleanliness is maintained and tasks are not inadvertently missed.

A cleaning schedule can be developed by a number of ways. Choose a style that suits your facility and is easy for food handlers to use and follow. Keep it as simple and user friendly as possible.

It is important to make your schedule practical. Tasks that are completed because of necessity and will be obvious to an auditor do not need to be checked off by staff, for example, putting dishes through the dishwasher after each meal. The schedule should focus on tasks that are not routine and may be overlooked if not allocated a time and person. The schedule may also outline which tasks are 'priority tasks' that must be completed to ensure food safety. This will assist on busy days or if short-staffed.

Some approaches are:

- all tasks listed for an area
- tasks grouped according to frequency
- tasks grouped according to person responsible.

Position the cleaning schedule in an area that is regularly and easily accessed or place individual sections of the schedule in the area concerned. The schedule may be completed by food handlers or supervisors as tasks are completed or at the end of each shift or week.

Premises and equipment

Food premises, fixtures, fittings and equipment must be in working order and a good state of repair with regard to their use. The facility must have a temperature measuring device that is accurate to +/- 1°C. Pests and animals must be excluded from the premises as much as is practical.

Maintenance and calibration (3.2.2 c21 & c22)

The facility should review food handling areas, fitting, fixtures and equipment crucial to the delivery of safe food and document maintenance and calibration requirements. Some facilities may prefer to record maintenance and calibration separately. The calibration frequency will be determined by the Manager but must be at least annual.

Transport (3.2.2 c19 and 3.2.2 c21)

Vehicles that are used to transport food, and other items provided by the business to purchasers to transport food, will be maintained in a good state of repair and working order having regard to their use.

Vehicles that are used to transport food, and other items provided by the business to purchasers to transport food, will be subject to the standard of cleanliness and sanitisation of other food services equipment where there is no accumulation of –

- food waste
- dirt
- grease; or
- other visible matter.

Animals (3.2.2 c24)

Live animals (pets) must be excluded from food handling areas.

Pest control (3.2.2 c24)

A preventative approach to pest control is required.

The control of pests will be managed through:

- adherence to good food handling procedures, cleaning requirements and preventative controls such as screens on windows, electronic insect zappers, cockroach and mouse baits
- contracting a licensed pest control business.

Under each method, Skymac will record:

- any pest activity: when and where pests have been sighted
- any action taken to eliminate pests
- details about baits: type, location, date placed, storage, method of disposal.

If a licensed pest controller is contracted, the above information and a written report for each visit will be requested. These records will be analysed and then filed.

CONTROLS

Background

Controls prevent, eliminate or reduce a food safety hazard to an acceptable level.

Food Safety Management Plan

Skymac will identify and document controls, monitoring, corrective action and records using a Food Safety Management Plan.

Controls: The controls for each key activity describe the action taken to control food safety hazards. The business must assess each of the generic controls in this template to determine if it is appropriate and make amendments or additions if required.

Monitoring: Monitoring of controls is the regular checking that the control is effective. In doing so, Skymac is seeking evidence that the control is effectively preventing, eliminating or reducing a food safety hazard to an acceptable level.

Corrective action: If monitoring of a control identifies that a hazard is not under control then Skymac will take action to ensure the situation is corrected. Corrective action will be listed on the Food Safety Management Plan.

Records: Skymac will keep evidence of the monitoring of control and corrective actions for auditing. It is valuable to link each control with relevant records keeping.

Specific information about controls

Receipt

The Food Safety Standards require potentially hazardous foods to be received at 5°C or below unless the supplier can demonstrate that the time and temperature will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.

Although pasteurised milk and some pasteurised dairy products are considered potentially hazardous, it is not necessary to temperature check pasteurised dairy products that are hygienically sealed. These products will spoil before they become unsafe.

Storage

Domestic fridges are best checked following quiet periods, for example, first thing in the morning. Readings during busy periods where the fridge is opened and closed regularly may not give a true indication of the average temperature. The temperature measuring device should be placed in a glass of water in the middle of a domestic fridge.

Ready to eat Listeria risk foods be stored for a maximum of 24 hours unless:

- frozen
- in unopened hygienically sealed packaging (for example, unopened whole ham or chicken loaf)
- the hospital has documented sound scientific evidence that the food can be stored longer without adversely affecting the microbiological safety of the food (Some suppliers may be able to provide this information).

Thawing

Thawing potentially hazardous foods in the fridge is generally accepted as safest practice. However, there are occasions when potentially hazardous food needs to be thawed quickly. Food Safety Standards do not prohibit thawing of food outside of temperature control or in the microwave, but care must be taken to ensure the time that these foods are between 5°C and 60°C is limited. Frozen potentially hazardous foods that are thawed out of temperature control should be either cooked or consumed within 4 hours of being removed from refrigeration.

Preparation

During preparation it is essential that basic food handling fundamentals are followed. Sandwiches and salads containing potentially hazardous foods and other ready-to-eat potentially hazardous foods such as some cold sweets require careful handling and temperature control because there is no pathogen destroying cooking step.

It is recommended that:

- once the packaging of bulk ready to eat meats is opened, they are sliced and either used within 24 hours, or frozen in portion packs
- fruit and vegetables to be eaten raw, that are not peeled by the patient (or carer) for immediate consumption, are thoroughly washed under running water before use.

Modified texture foods

- Modified texture foods that are potentially hazardous require careful handling and application of time and temperature controls. These products are at greater risk of contamination because:
- The process of texture modifying involves additional handling of cooked food and additional equipment
- Foods are often cooked and cooled before modification which requires careful time and temperature controls.
- The temperature of hot food reduces, and the temperature of cold food increases during modification, potentially subjecting the food to temperatures between 5°C and 60°C where pathogens and spores, if present, may grow
- The process of modification will redistribute pathogens throughout the entire product.
- Controls for the preparation of texture modified foods are the same as for all potentially hazardous food, but greater care is required. Particular care is required to ensure equipment used for texture modification is in a clean and sanitary state before use and food temperature is controlled.

Cooking and reheating

Thorough cooking of potentially hazardous foods to 75°C, or greater, destroys pathogens. Potentially hazardous cooked foods should be checked to ensure thorough cooking to 75°C or

greater. Foods that are subjected to sustained boiling, simmering, or steaming do not need to be checked because the temperature clearly exceeds 75°C.

To check if potentially hazardous cooked foods are thoroughly cooked, temperature check the centre of the food or visually check by cutting open the food and inspecting (no pink).

Potentially hazardous foods that will be reheated and held hot, particularly texture modified foods must be reheated to 60°C to avoid pathogen growth.

Cooling

While cooking destroys pathogens it does not destroy some pathogenic spores. The spores may germinate at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C and during the germination process produce a toxin. When the food is reheated to more than 60°C the newly germinated pathogen is destroyed but the toxin is not destroyed by heat and remains, potentially causing illness.

Potentially hazardous cooked foods that are cooled for later use must be cooled rapidly to ensure pathogenic spores do not germinate. To speed cooling, divide potentially hazardous hot foods into smaller portions (for example, cool in several containers) or stir occasionally during cooling. Hot foods that are to be cooled should not be placed in the fridge while steaming hot as this may increase fridge temperatures. Instead, facilities may allow hot foods to cool out of the fridge until the steam dissipates or the temperature falls to 60°C and then place the food in the fridge or cool room.

Cook-chill systems

Facilities that operate a cook-chill operation must ensure cooking, cooling and reheating of potentially hazardous foods as outlined in the cooking and reheating, and cooling controls.

REVIEW

The Food Safety Management Plan will be reviewed at least annually to ensure its adequacy. An adequate food safety management plan will cover all food handling operations, incorporate any recent changes that would be effective. The business is ultimately responsible for the adequacy and effectiveness of the food safety program.

When conducting a review, Skymac will consider:

- the bigger picture, for example, are there any processes, products or hazards that have been overlooked
- any changes to food production processes or products
- any changes to the Standards, industry practices or fundamental science that require adjustment to the food safety program
- results of internal verification and external audit /inspection
- system or end-product non-conformances
- customer complaints.

RECORDS

A Food Safety Management Plan will be retained by Skymac including records of compliance and other related action, that –

- a) systematically identifies the potential hazards that may be reasonably expected to occur in all food handling operations
- b) identifies where, in a food handling operation, each hazard identified under paragraph (a) can be controlled and the means of control
- c) provides for the systematic monitoring of those controls
- d) provides for appropriate corrective action when that hazard, or each of those hazards, is found not to be under control
- e) provides for the regular review of the program by Skymac to ensure its adequacy; and
- f) provides for appropriate records to be made and kept by the food business demonstrating action taken in relation to, or in compliance with, the food safety program

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT FOOD POISONING

If you believe the facility's food service or a particular food served by the facility may be responsible for causing food poisoning:

- Advise people displaying symptoms to seek medical advice. Faecal samples may assist with an investigation
- Keep suspect food wrapped in the fridge (preferably not the freezer) and retain any packaging or containers as it may assist an investigation.

Related documents

Food Safety Management Plan

Incident Report

References

- [Residential Services \(Accreditation\) Act 2002](#)
- [Residential Services \(Accreditation\) Regulation 2018](#)
- [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code - Standard 3.2.2 - Food Safety Practices and General Requirements \(Australia Only\)](#)