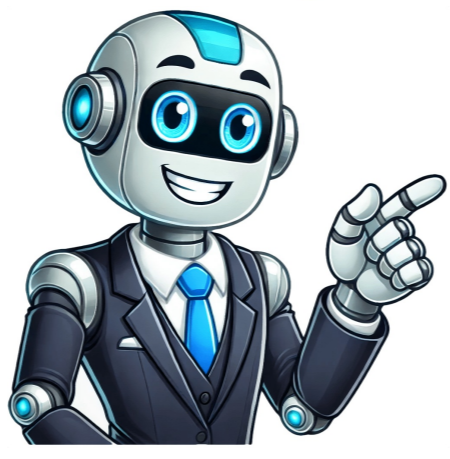


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Food safety and hygiene is essential to any consumer and so should be a priority for any food business. Understanding the obligations of the business and employees under the Food Safety Act (1990) and other food hygiene laws is essential. The main piece of legislation surrounding food standards is the Food Safety Act. Failure to meet the requirements of this important food hygiene law can have severe consequences both in terms of legal action and the health of consumers. Consumers want to be assured that the food they buy and eat is: What it is labelled to be (For example doesn't contain pork if it is labelled as beef). Will not harm them once eaten. In order to protect consumer health, various laws regulate food retailers who serve food to the public. These include: The Food Safety Act 1990 The General Food Law Regulation (Regulation EC 178/2002) General Food Regulations 2004 Food Hygiene Regulations 2006 This legislation applies to anyone working with food, at the production, processing, storage, distribution or sale stages. Small businesses are not exempt from these regulations, neither are non-profit making organisations. The Food Safety Act 1990 created three key offences: Rendering food injurious to health (e.g. selling gluten-free food that actually contains gluten) Selling food which is not of the nature or quality demanded (e.g. selling chicken nuggets made with chicken fat rather than actual meat) Falsely or misleadingly describing or presenting food (e.g. selling horsemeat mince labelled as beef) The punishment for committing any of the above offences is: For offences 1 & 2 up to a 20,000 fine for each offence, or each time one of those offences is committed For offence 3 up to a 5000 fine. For any offence up to 6 months imprisonment. Those who occasionally prepare food for gatherings or to sell at charitable events are not subject to the above offences, but still have duties regarding food hygiene under the General Food Regulations 2004. Food retailers must by law have in place procedures to manage food safety, based upon the principles set out in Article 5(2) of the European Community Regulations. There is no law about what these procedures must be, as long as they address the seven principles set out in the Regulations. The seven HACCP principles are known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point principles, or HACCP. The principles are: Conduct a hazard analysis (identify food safety hazards) Identify critical control points (the stages at which a hazard can be prevented or eliminated) Establish critical limits for each critical control point (the maximum and minimum level to which a hazard must be controlled) Establish critical control monitoring requirements (the monitoring activities needed to ensure compliance with the procedure) Lay out corrective actions (actions to be taken when monitoring indicates non-compliance) Establish procedures to ensure that the HACCP system works as intended (validate and periodically review points 1-6) Establish record keeping procedures (keep a written plan on points 1-6, and record monitoring activities and their findings) The Principles of HACCP require you to carry out a review of your business and identify potential hazards and things that could go wrong. These are referred to as critical control points. Once your food safety hazards have been identified, you need to focus on these specific areas in particular. You should implement procedures that will prevent or reduce the possibilities of things going wrong in these key areas. Your HACCP plan should also include what action you would take if things do go awry. All the basic principles of food safety hinge on the 4 Cs of food safety. These are cooking cross-contamination, cleaning, cooking, and chilling. By following simple procedures to make sure the 4 Cs are properly attended to, food safety can be ensured within your premises. Our detailed guide on what the 4 Cs of food safety are will help you understand how to apply them within your business. The World Health Organisation identifies some key hazards which will need to be considered in your plan: Pest control. Separation of raw and cooked foods. Storing food at the correct temperature. Using safe, clean water. Cooking food at a suitable temperature and for a suitable time to kill pathogens. Food safety Hazards can be related to many different areas when it comes to food manufacture and preparation. They could also be microbiological in nature. For example: Where bacteria could get into food, such as if it is not been stored correctly. Chemicals getting into food, such as products used for cleaning. Physical in nature like foreign bodies such as insects, parts of packaging or broken glass getting into food. Its important to remember that it may not necessarily be your direct fault that such hazards might occur. It could possibly be as a result of negligence on the part of suppliers to your business. However you as the food manufacturer or catering business are responsible for managing these hazards from taking delivery right up to the point of service. In the first instance, its for the owners of a food retail business to ensure compliance with laws, and they can be fined (and in some cases forced to close) if they do not comply. However, all employees or volunteers do have a role to play in ensuring food safety and complying with the procedures put in place to prevent hazards. I work in a care home and last week I had to make breakfast for a few people. Do I need a food and hygiene certificate to do this? If I do, can I refuse to prepare food until I have obtained the necessary certification? There is no legal requirement for anyone working with food to have any formal qualifications relating to food handling or food safety. However food retailers and their staff do need to have an awareness of basic principles covered on formal courses in order to comply with applicable laws and Regulations. I work in a bowling club that has a kitchen. On some occasions food is put on does the person making the food need food hygiene certificate? We are a private club. The most common formal qualification is the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Food Handling qualification. All food handlers must be given an allergen awareness training course this is vital to ensure compliance with the law. The CIEH food handling qualification is in three levels: Level One is priced at approximately 17.50 plus VAT and covers topics such as: Food Poisoning; Food Storage; Personal Health and Hygiene; Cross contamination and Pests. Level Two is priced at approximately 25 plus VAT and expands on Level One topics, as well as including topics such as: Cleaning; Risk assessment; Relevant legislation and Licensing. Level Three is priced at 125 plus VAT and expands on Level topics, as well as focusing on supervisory management and giving food safety training to others. Many food retailers (particularly larger chain restaurants) have their own training programmes in place. This will often be a combination of computer programmes (mini online lectures) and a written workbook, which covers all of these areas. As stated above, formal qualifications are not necessary, and you may choose to give training on a staff training day via oral discussion instead, which is just as acceptable. TIP: If you choose to simply give Food Safety Training orally, such as at a staff meeting, ask staff to sign a declaration to confirm that they have received this training. As best practice, you should aim to give all staff this training approximately once a year to refresh Food Safety awareness. It is not possible in this guide to go into depth about every food safety topic. However, you will find below some key facts about some of the most important areas. You should make sure that you consider each area and adopt the right measures to address these hazards. The laws as detailed above are quite basic, and so it is up to you to manage your business to comply with these. There are no specific laws about what you must wear in a kitchen for example, but clearly wearing mud-stained clothing would not be appropriate. These points are not part of the law, but are considered best practice by many in the industry. Symptoms of food poisoning include vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach cramps. Foods particularly vulnerable to contamination, include raw meat, pre-cooked sliced meats and sandwiches, and dairy products such as eggs and soft cheese. The most common types of bacteria causing food poisoning are salmonella, E.coli, campylobacter and Listeria. Symptoms of food poisoning can happen anything from a few hours after eating, to up to 70 days after in the most severe cases. The onset times depend upon the type of food poisoning I started work as a kitchen assistant recently at a residential home. The kitchen manager has told me I can no longer wear my watch due to health and safety. I am not forced to tie my hair up, I just have to wear a kind of baseball cap, which doesn't seem right. Also I am allowed to keep my wedding ring on. What are the actual requirements as far as dress and food preparation are concerned? Food handlers should wear minimal jewellery this is a contamination risk. Most kitchens allow food handlers to just wear a plain wedding band. Some other rules for food handlers to follow are as follows. Wash hands thoroughly before handling any food product and after touching any raw meat. Follow basic hygiene practices such as showering and wearing clean clothing. Avoid habits such as smoking or nail biting when handling food. Wear clean clothing when handling food a protective jacket makes sure food will not be contaminated by clothes that have been worn in the outside world, and protects clothes underneath from oil and fat stains. Long sleeves will also protect the workers skin against spitting fat. Tie hair back. It also helps to prevent contamination of food (such as hairs in food) if a hat is worn to cover hair. Any wound should be covered with a waterproof plaster. This should be in a visible colour (usually blue) so that it is easily spotted if it were to fall off. Blue plasters can be bought from most supermarkets. If a food handler has sickness or diarrhoea, they should not handle food for at least 24 hours after the symptoms have gone to avoid contaminating food (and passing the illness to other employees). Raw and cooked meat should always be stored separately. Any raw meat should be stored below cooked food so that the juices do not contaminate the cooked food. If you serve food for those with special dietary requirements, you should carefully consider what foods you store near other products. For example, dont store bread next to gluten-free cooked pasta, as it might be contaminated by excess flour. Make sure you rotate your stock and do not use food after the use by date. Do not store cooked food for longer than approximately 3 days, even if stored in a fridge. Remember, if its mouldy or smells off, do not be tempted to serve it even if it is within its use by date. There are guidelines for temperature control: Your fridges should store food at 3 to 5C and your freezer should store food at -18C or colder. If food is at any temperature between around 4C and 60C, it is described as being in the danger zone. This refers to the temperature band at which harmful bacteria multiply the fastest. Refrigerating food does not kill bacteria, but it does slow their growth. Freezing food does not kill bacteria, they are merely dormant. Most food cooked to a minimum at 65C should make sure that bacteria are killed. However there are exceptions. Pork and chicken should be cooked to approximately 75C (as a core temperature) to make sure that it is safe to eat. Pests are a problem for any food establishment, as food attracts pests. Common pests are insects, birds and rodents, the easiest way to keep out larger pests is to close doors and windows. Kitchens should be cooled by specially installed kitchen fans. If you need to open the door, use netting to cover the doorway to keep out pests. Many kitchens have regular pest inspections by reputable companies such as Rentokil. Keep a record of any such inspections. Common signs of pests are small holes in dry food packets (especially grain), droppings, and dirty marks along the bottom of walls. Many establishments that serve food also serve alcohol. It is therefore essential that staff know the laws surrounding alcohol licensing. You must have a licence to serve alcohol, and that licence will specify the times at which you may do so. If a 16-17 year old eats a meal at a licensed restaurant, and are with a supervising adult (over 18 year old), they may have one small glass of wine, one beer or one cider. However technically it must be the adult who buys the drink, not the minor. Our easy to understand answers to commonly asked questions about food safety laws in the UK! Its illegal to work with food when sick? The food standards agency guidelines recommend that people do not work with food when sick and suffering with gastrointestinal symptoms such as sickness and diarrhea. Working with food, or being in food handling areas should not resume until 48 hours after the symptoms pass. Contact Us Phone: 01892 524957 Mobile: 07786980934 Email: theteam@hygieneuse.co.uk Post: 42 Eridge Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8HR 2016-2022 Hygiene Sue Ltd. Training provider delivering courses in food safety, teacher training & Apprenticeships. Registered office Registered address: 42 Eridge Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 8HR Country of Incorporation: England. Registered No: 2946389 Share copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. 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Brentford Football Club (Read Customer Story) With SafetyCulture in the hands of your teams, every person, at every level, can play an active role in improving quality, safety and compliance. Give them the tools they need to be successful in their role, however unique it may be, and empower every individual to have a voice. Manufacturing Construction Transport & Logistics Hospitality Facilities Management Retail Paper waste saved annually Using SafetyCulture platform, we have become a paperless HACCP company. There is absolutely no way that we could have grown as fast as we have whilst maintaining quality without these processes and data in place. Explore our Manufacturing solution Today, were at 2.5 million hours without a lost time injury. SafetyCulture allows us to achieve that. You dont work 2.5 million hours and just be lucky. Explore our Construction solution We go above and beyond whats required to ensure guest safety and the best experience every day. 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This is an increasingly common feature when starting [...] Learn the regulations surrounding safe food handling and which safe food handling practices apply to each food type Food handling is the process of preparing food that is safe for public consumption. Essential to implementing safe food handling is that food handlers receive training on personal hygiene and sanitation, cooking and storing food at appropriate temperatures, and other safe food handling practices. An integral part of food safety, food handling should always be a priority. Food handling is important because unsafe food handling can lead to outbreaks of foodborne illnesses (commonly known as food poisoning) to both humans and animals. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), foodborne illnesses can cause long-lasting disability and even death. As a possible threat to public health and safety, food handling is closely monitored by government agencies across the world. Failing to pass routine inspections and not complying with regulations can result in involuntary shutdowns of businesses. Regulations & Other Guidelines in the United States, under the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code 2017, permit holders or those who operate food establishments must assign someone or take responsibility as the person in charge. The person in charge has to ensure that employees are maintaining the correct temperatures during cooking, cooling, and holding. This works with the Hazard Analysis and Risk-based Preventive Control (HARPC), a regulation under the Food and Drug Administrations FSMA (Food Safety Modernization Act). In Australia, according to the Food Standards Code, its the duty of food businesses to make sure that food handlers are trained and knowledgeable about food safety and food hygiene. Food businesses must also take the necessary steps to prevent the likelihood of food being contaminated. The recently updated Standard 3.2.2A which must be followed starting December 2023 states that all food businesses that operate as food service establishments, caterers, or related retailers must ensure that all employees who handle food have proper food handler training to ensure that they have adequate knowledge and skills before they start preparing high-risk foods. Additionally, here are other food handling practices that should generally be followed: Reheat food to at least 165F (74C) for hot holding. Cool cooked food within 2 hours from 135F to 70F (57C to 21C) or within 6 hours from 135F to 41F (57C to 5C). Maintain hot holding at 135F (57C) or above. Maintain cold holding at 41F (5C) or below. Cultivate a safe working environment and streamline compliance with our EHS solutions. Consequences of Bad Food Handling On June 9, 2021, it was reported by the public health department of King County in Washington that 13 people who dined at a certain restaurant were sick with norovirus, a kind of foodborne illness. According to Medical News Today, norovirus infections are caused by touching a contaminated surface or by consuming contaminated food. Aside from putting the lives of people at risk, bad food handling also has long-term legal implications, as seen with Blue Bell Creameries. In 2015, a deadly Listeria outbreak was traced back to the companys ice cream. As a result, Blue Bell had to settle its criminal liability with the Department of Justice in payments of \$19.35 million. What are Safe Food Handling Practices? Often referred to as the 4 steps to food safety, the core safe food handling practices are clean, separate, cook, and chill. Each safe food handling practice will be discussed in detail below for dairy, meat and fish, eggs, fruit and vegetables, frozen goods, and dried goods. 1. Clean Food handlers must wash their hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before they begin food preparation. They should also ensure that all tools, like cutting boards and knives, are clean and dry. 2. Separate Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs separate from other ingredients. Dont use containers, plates, cutting boards, or utensils that have held raw items for other ingredients unless theyve been washed with hot, soapy water. 3. Cook Food handlers must check the internal temperature of cooked dishes using a food thermometer to ensure they are within the required range for each food type. Dishes must not be served if they fall outside the proper temperature, as this helps kill harmful microorganisms before the food reaches the customer. 4. Chill Keep refrigerator temperatures below 40F (4C). To simplify monitoring, consider using temperature sensors that alert food handlers if the temperature rises above this threshold. For freezers, maintain a temperature of 0F (-17C). Enhance operational efficiency with monitoring sensors. Track real-time data and insights to never miss another food safety incident. Food Handling Practices per Food Type Here are detailed guidelines on safe food handling practices for different types of food: Food Handling Practices for Dairy Avoid dairy products with unpasteurized milk, except for hard cheeses aged 60 days. Do not return milk and other dairy products to their original containers once taken out. Store milk, cream, yogurt, and cheese below 40F (4C) in the fridge. Unopened shelf-stable milk can be stored at room temperature; however, once opened, it should be kept chilled in the refrigerator at a temperature below 40F (4C). Keep butter in the fridge for up to 2 weeks; freeze after that. For dessert batters, use butter at 71F (22C). Store ice cream in the freezer at or below 0F (-17C). Dont freeze yogurt, cream, or milk, except fresh whole or skimmed milk. For hard cheese with mold, cut out the mold and surrounding area. Discard soft cheese with visible mold, except for blue cheese. Food Handling Practices for Meat and Fish Dont wash meat, poultry, or seafood. If defrosting meat/poultry in the microwave, cook it immediately. Thaw meat/poultry in original packaging or an airtight bag in cold water, changing water every 30 minutes. Dont cook frozen meat/poultry in a slow cooker. Marinate meat only in the fridge. Cook ground meat to 160F (72C) or higher. Cook beef, pork (including uncoked ham, both fresh and smoked), veal, and lamb to 145F (63C) and let rest for 3 minutes. Cook poultry to 165F (74C) or higher, and fish to 145F (63C) or until opaque and flakes easily. Cook shrimp, lobster, and crabs until pearly and opaque. Cook scallops until milky white, opaque, and firm. Cook clams, oysters, and mussels until their shells open. Food Handling Practices for Eggs Dont wash eggs. Separate raw (unpasteurized) eggs from pasteurized eggs. Discard damaged eggs. Store eggs in the fridge below 40F (4C). Bring eggs to room temperature before using in dessert batters. Cook eggs until yolk and white are firm; 250F (121C) is recommended. Dishes containing eggs should have an internal temperature of 160F (72C) or higher. Food Handling Practices for Fruit and Vegetables Cut away damaged or bruised areas. Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water; dont use any cleansing agent. Skip washing if labeled as pre-washed. Food Handling Practices for Frozen Goods Discard the parts of food that have freezer burn. Thaw frozen goods only in the fridge, cold water, or microwave. Dont refreeze improperly thawed food. Always cook frozen food thoroughly. Dont freeze canned food or eggs in shells. Avoid freezing mayonnaise, cream sauce, lettuce, or items near their shelf life. Blanch vegetables before freezing by briefly boiling and then cooling them. Food Handling Practices for Dried Goods Check dried goods for pests. Store them at 50F to 70F (10C to 21C) in a ventilated area away from the sunlight. Use airtight containers and not cardboard boxes. Store dried goods at least 6 inches (15 cm) off the floor. Keep humidity below 55%; use a humidity sensor if necessary. Food Handling Courses As a business, one of the best ways you can promote these food safety practices is by distributing a comprehensive food handling course to your employees. These courses typically cover topics such as food safety standards, delivery and storage processes, food prep, food contamination, and food-borne illnesses, all of which are vital for food handlers to understand. Learn best practices to ensure the safety and hygiene of your catering services. Learn about food safety violations, their impact, and how to prevent them. Get informed on how FSMA impacts food safety standards for food businesses.

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