

Food Safety & Hygiene Procedure

SOP · UK · Updated 2026-07-11 · Square brackets are placeholders to replace with your own details.

A food safety and hygiene procedure is the written set of rules and checks a food business follows to keep food safe to eat — personal hygiene and fitness-to-work standards, cleaning, temperature control, cross-contamination and allergen management, and the daily records that prove it all happened.

Your food hygiene rating, your environmental health inspections, and your customers' safety all ride on the same thing: whether every shift runs to the same standard, including the ones the owner never sees. A written procedure is how the Saturday casual and the head chef end up doing it the same way.

This template gives you the working document: hygiene rules staff can be inducted on, cleaning and temperature disciplines, allergen controls including Natasha's Law labelling, and the checks and records an inspector asks to see.

Purpose and scope

This procedure sets out the food safety and hygiene standards at [Your company], [site/premises]. It applies to everyone who handles food or works in food areas, including temporary and agency staff, from their first shift.

It operates alongside our food safety management system ([e.g. Safer Food, Better Business pack / HACCP plan]). Where the two differ, the food safety management system takes precedence and this procedure is corrected.

Roles and responsibilities

- Food safety lead ([name/role]): owns the food safety management system, the records below, staff training, and contact with environmental health.
- Shift managers: run the opening and closing checks, enforce the fitness-to-work rules, and act on any out-of-range result before service continues.
- All food handlers: follow this procedure, complete the checks assigned to them honestly, and report illness, pests, or anything that doesn't look right.

Personal hygiene and fitness to work

1. Wash hands at the wash-hand basin on entering the food area, after handling raw food, after breaks, after using the toilet, after touching bins or cleaning materials, and after handling money or phones.
2. Wear clean [workwear/apron] on every shift; tie back or cover hair; remove watches and jewellery except [a plain band].
3. Cover cuts and wounds with a [blue] waterproof plaster; report any infected wound or skin condition to the shift manager.
4. Report vomiting or diarrhoea to the shift manager before starting work — do not enter food areas.
- 5.

Stay away from food handling until symptom-free for [period — check current FSA guidance; 48 hours is the widely used standard].

6. No eating, and no personal phones, in food preparation areas.

Cleaning

The cleaning schedule at [location] lists every item and area with its frequency, method, chemical, contact time, and named owner. Clean as you go during service; the schedule is for the discipline on top, not instead.

- Use sanitiser at the manufacturer's stated dilution and contact time — a wiped-off sanitiser has done nothing.
- Use the colour-coded cloths and equipment scheme: [describe your scheme, e.g. red for raw areas, blue for ready-to-eat].
- Sign off completed cleaning tasks on the schedule; the shift manager verifies at close.
- Deep cleans ([equipment pull-outs, extraction, drains]) run at [frequency] and are recorded.

Temperature control

1. Check and record fridge and freezer temperatures at opening and closing against the targets in our food safety management system.
2. Check delivery temperatures for chilled and frozen goods before accepting; reject and record anything out of range.
3. Cook and reheat to the targets in our food safety management system, verified with a probe in the thickest part of the food.
4. Clean and sanitise the probe between uses and verify its accuracy at [frequency, e.g. weekly, using the method in the FSMS].
5. Cool cooked food for storage quickly using [method — shallow trays, blast chiller], and get it into the fridge within the time set in the FSMS.
6. If any reading is out of range: tell the shift manager, apply the corrective action in the FSMS, and record what was done with the food.

Cross-contamination and allergens

- Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate at every stage: separate storage (raw below ready-to-eat in fridges), separate boards and utensils [describe your colour scheme], separate preparation areas or times.
- The allergen matrix at [location] lists every menu item against the allergens it contains, and is updated by [role] whenever a recipe, ingredient or supplier changes — before the item is next served.
- Food prepacked for direct sale is labelled in line with Natasha's Law: full ingredient list with allergens emphasised.
- When a customer declares an allergy: [role] takes over the order, checks the matrix, and prepares the item with clean equipment in a clear area.

- Never guess an allergen answer. Check the matrix, ask the food safety lead, or decline the sale.

Daily checks and records

- Opening checks: [fridge/freezer temps, staff fitness for work, equipment working, area clean] — signed by the opening manager.
- Closing checks: [temps, cleaning sign-off, waste out, food covered/dated/labelled] — signed by the closing manager.
- Records kept: temperature logs, cleaning schedule sign-offs, delivery checks, corrective actions, pest checks, training records — in [diary/system] at [location], retained for [period].
- A record signed but not done is treated as a serious conduct issue — the records only protect us if they are true.

If something goes wrong

1. Suspected contamination or a food poisoning complaint: isolate the food, keep it (don't discard it — it may be needed for investigation), and record batch and supplier details.
2. Equipment failure: move stock to working units, check and record its temperature, and decide per the FSMS what can be kept.
3. Evidence of pests: close the affected area, inform [role], and call [pest control contractor].
4. Notify the food safety lead the same day in every case above.
5. For serious incidents, follow current FSA and local authority guidance on notification and product withdrawal.

Training and review

Every food handler is inducted on this procedure before their first solo shift, and completes food hygiene training appropriate to their role ([e.g. accredited Level 2 for food handlers]) with refreshers at [frequency]. Training is recorded in [system].

This procedure is reviewed [frequency, e.g. annually], after any environmental health visit, food incident, or menu or layout change. Owner: [name/role]. Next review due: [date].

How to use this template

1. Set up or dust off your food safety management system first ([Safer Food, Better Business] for most small businesses) — this procedure hangs off it and takes its temperature targets from it.
2. Fill in your real colour-coding scheme, cleaning schedule location and record-keeping system — staff follow what is on their wall, not a generic ideal.
3. Build the allergen matrix before publishing and make one named role responsible for keeping it current.
4. Walk one full day through the procedure — delivery, prep, service, close — and fix anything that doesn't match how the kitchen actually runs.

5. Induct every current staff member, not just new starters, and keep the sign-off sheet.
6. Diarise the review and put your next environmental health visit's findings straight into it.

Official guidance

- › [Food Standards Agency — Business guidance](#)

This template is provided in good faith and for general information — it is not legal advice. Adapt it to your organisation and, where your sector carries specific legal requirements, have the finished document reviewed by a qualified adviser. The live version at <https://trainedteam.com/templates/food-safety-hygiene-procedure> is kept current; this file is a snapshot.