

## Standard Operating Procedure Guidelines

A restaurant operator should provide a “**Standard Operating Procedure**” (SOP) along with a hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) plan. The standard operating procedure must incorporate information outlined below in accordance with the Code of Maryland COMAR10.15.03. Employees must be trained on the SOP procedure and the HACCP Plan procedure. The following categories and information should be included in the SOP for your food service facility. Please adapt it to reflect the operations at your food service facility.

### A. Provide general food handling information and procedures for:

- Verifying and only purchasing food products only from approved source (licensed vendors).
- All shell egg invoices must be kept on file for a minimum of 90 calendar days.
- If you serve shellfish, ensure that shellfish tags are maintained on the premises for 90 calendar days to readily identify the source of the shellfish by:
  - Recording the date on the tag or label when the last shellfish from the container is sold or served
  - Using an approved record keeping system that keeps the tags or labels in chronological order
  - Preserves the source identification if tags or labels are removed from the container
- Procedure for receiving delivered food product:
  - Monitor food temperature and food condition upon delivery
  - When to reject food upon delivery
  - Immediately refrigerate, freeze or store food product in the approved area
  - Storage of food products inside refrigerator and dry storage, follow first in first out (FIFO)
- Procedure for thawing food include:
  - Thaw food in the refrigerator at 41°F or below
  - Use the lowest shelf in the refrigerator for thawing raw meat to prevent cross-contamination.
  - Separate raw meat products from cooked and ready-to-eat products
  - Thaw food for immediate service under potable running water at 70°F or lower (this product must be prepared within 4 hours of thawing)
  - Thaw the product in the microwave if the product will be cooked immediately
  - Do not refreeze thawed foods, unless they are first cooked or processed
  - NEVER thaw food at room temperature
- Food preparation procedure for fruits and vegetables:
  - All Fruits and vegetables must be washed before preparation
  - Cut leafy greens must be kept refrigerated at 41°F or below
  - Cut leafy greens include: All types of lettuce (iceberg, romaine, butter, leaf, and baby leaf), spring mix, spinach, cabbage, kale, arugula, chard, escarole and endive. All commercially processed cut leafy greens, such as bagged salad mixes and spinach, and to leafy greens that have been cut in the food service facility.
- Cooking temperature for food products. All foods will be cooked to at least the required minimum internal temperature as specified in HACCP Plan.
- Cooling procedure. Food must be cooled from 135°F to 70°F in 2-hours and from 70°F to 41°F in an additional 4-hours. Cooling of potentially hazardous food is accomplished using one or a combination of the following methods:
  - Refrigerate food in shallow pans not over 3 inches deep
  - Reduce food mass by separating foods into smaller or thinner portions
  - Use rapid cooling equipment

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- Use ice water baths combined with frequent stirring
- Use containers that facilitate heat transfer
- Add ice made from potable water as an ingredient
- Refrigerate food loosely covered or allow the food to remain uncovered until cooled if the food is protected from overhead contamination
- Procedure for reheating food product:
  - Reheat hot held foods to 165°F only if hot food temperature falls below 135°F for less than 4-hours. Discard and do NOT reheat food if it falls below 135°F for 4-hours or for an undetermined amount of time
  - Reheat commercially precooked foods to a minimum of 135°F for hot holding
  - Reheat food that has been cooked and cooled to a minimum of 165°F for at least 15 second within 2- hours

### **B. Storage of clean and sanitized food equipment, portable equipment and utensils:**

- A minimum of 18 inches above the floor when not fully protected by an enclosure with doors.
- In a clean and dry location.
- In a space that affords protection from splash, dust, and other contamination.

### **C. Wiping cloths with sanitizer:**

- The minimum level of sanitizer:
  - 50 parts per million (ppm) **chlorine** with a minimum water temperature of 75°F and a minimum contact time of 7 seconds
  - The concentration indicated on the manufacturer's label with a minimum contact time of 30 seconds for **quaternary ammonium compound (QAC)**
  - A test kit or other device that accurately measures concentration of the sanitizer in parts per million is provided and used to check that the minimum level of sanitizer is accurate
  - Identify sanitizer used and train employees to test sanitizer solution for correct level

### **D. Daily set-up of sanitizing buckets (including when to change water):**

- Used only for wiping food spills.
- Free of food debris when used dry for wiping food spills on tableware.
- Cloths are rinsed and stored in sanitizing solution specified when used wet for wiping spills from the surfaces of equipment.

### **E. Cleaning and sanitization of food contact surfaces and equipment:**

- As often as needed to prevent food contamination.
- After each use.
- Between an interruption in food preparation greater than 4 hours.
- Except for food contact surfaces of equipment or utensils within holding units that are maintained at proper temperatures, after a continuous use of 4 hours.

### **F. Procedures for washing hands:** Employees must wash hands and exposed arm areas thoroughly with soap and warm water (hand sinks must be checked for supplies before daily operation and periodically throughout the day):

- Before starting work.
- Before handling exposed foods.
- Before handling food-contact surfaces.

- After handling trash, cleaning restrooms etc.
- As often as required to remove soil and contamination.
- After using toilet facilities.
- Before and between glove use.
- Hands must be washed:
  - With a cleaning compound (soap)
  - Vigorously rubbing together the surfaces of lathered hands and arms for at least 20 seconds
  - Cleaning under the fingernails
  - Thoroughly rinsing the hands and arms with clean warm water
- An employee shall keep hands clean while engaged in handling food and food-contact surfaces or equipment.

#### **G. Requirements for an employee who handles exposed food and food-contact surfaces:**

- Keeps fingernails clean and neatly trimmed.
- Unless wearing gloves that are in good repair, does not wear fingernail polish or artificial fingernails.
- Except for a plain, smooth ring such as a wedding band, does not wear jewelry.
- Wears outer garments that are clean.
- Uses a hairnet, cap, or other effective hair restraint to keep hair from contacting food and food-contact surfaces.
- Maintains personal cleanliness.
- Does not eat or use tobacco in any form while working.

#### **H. Glove use by employee:**

- Washes hand before putting on gloves and when changing gloves.
- Uses gloves only for one task.
- Does not use the same gloves while working with ready-to-eat food and raw food.
- When to discard used gloves:
  - The gloves are damaged or soiled
  - An interruption occurs in the operation of handling food
  - After 2 hours of continuous use

#### **I. When in a food preparation or utensil washing area, an employee:**

- Drinks only from a covered beverage container.
- Handles the container in a way that prevents contamination of the employee's hands, exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens and unwrapped single service and single use articles.

**J. Employee HACCP training:** All Employees must receive training on proper food handling procedure, sanitation and temperature monitoring procedures in accordance with HACCP Plan. Provide a written statement indicating that employees will be trained according to the SOP procedure and the HACCP Plan procedure.

**K. Employee Personnel Health Policy:** The employee personnel health policy states the procedure for excluding sick employees from the food service operations at your facility. All employees must report any symptoms of illness. The following information set forth in COMAR 10.06.01.06E must be included in the employee illness or wellness policy:

“A food handler does not serve or handle food intended for public consumption if the food handler has any of the following diseases:

- Diarrhea caused by *Entamoeba histolytica*
- Cholera
- Disease causing diarrhea, unless physician-certified as noninfectious
- *E. coli* O157:H7
- Hepatitis A
- Diarrhea caused by *Salmonella*
- Shigellosis
- Streptococcal infection caused by group A beta-hemolytic *Streptococcus*
- Typhoid fever
- Is a carrier of *Salmonella Typhi*”
- An employee experiencing persistent sneezing, coughing, or a runny nose that causes discharge from the eyes, nose or mouth does not work with:
  - Exposed food
  - Clean equipment, utensils, and linens
  - Unwrapped single service or single use articles