



Food Safety

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Summary of Changes

Section	Change
Whole Procedure	Change to new format



Food Safety

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1.0 Introduction

This Food Safety Procedure is compiled by using information in the Cooksafe Food Safety Assurance System produced by the Food Standards Agency.

1.1 Cooksafe Food Assurance System

The [Cooksafe](#) system sets out the food hygiene practices required to meet current food safety regulations. In particular it stresses the need to handle food properly in a safe, clean environment and is applicable for use in registered care homes.

The Cooksafe system is applicable for care homes, but not applicable for houses of multiple occupancy, supported people's private homes and offices that are not registered with the local environmental health departments, but this procedure will apply their relevant safety standards for Ark workplaces.

2.0 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

The Food Hygiene (Scotland) Regulations 2006 refer to a system that promotes the concept of hazard analysis. HACCP is a process containing the seven main principles of such a system:

- identification of food safety hazards that can cause injury or illness;
- determining the points in the food operation at which controls are critical to food safety;
- deciding the critical limits that will apply at those points;
- monitoring procedures to ensure that the controls are working properly;
- corrective actions if the critical controls are not working;
- checking that the HACCP system is operating as intended, i.e. verification; and
- establish record keeping and documentation procedures.

It is important not to consider HACCP in isolation as the only way of managing food safety standards. As well as operating to HACCP principles, there is an obligation to operate to rules of good practice and general hygiene.

3.0 Cleaning and Hygiene

Cleaning and hygiene when supporting people with food is important to prevent food poisoning.

Good cleaning practice will reduce harmful bacteria to a safe level on food equipment, on surfaces and will help to reduce the risk of cross contamination;

All locations where we support people with food should:

- have kitchens (including extraction devices and filters) are kept clean and in good repair;
- the kitchen size, layout and design allows adequate cleaning;
- good ventilation is available;
- suitable temperatures for food storage are maintained;
- methods of food preparation avoid cross contamination by foodstuffs, equipment and external sources such as pests;
- adequate numbers of washbasins and lavatories are provided;
- hand washing facilities are convenient for food handlers and separate from food preparation facilities;

Anyone with infected wounds, skin infections, sores, diarrhoea, vomiting or gastro-enteritis should not work in food handling areas.

This is also applicable to support staff who should not help people to eat or prepare meals if they have such symptoms, nor for two days after any symptoms have ended.

3.1 Cleaning and Disinfection

All equipment and areas within food preparation areas / kitchens need to be maintained in a clean condition. However equipment and surfaces that come into contact with food also require to be disinfected, the frequency and time of cleaning of kitchens should be recorded.

Sinks, washbasins, taps and any other items that are liable to come into contact with food either directly or indirectly should also be disinfected.

A bactericidal detergent should be used for all surfaces, equipment and utensils used in the preparation of high-risk food. Washing in a commercial dishwasher at a high temperature can disinfect small items. Surfaces and equipment should be disinfected before, during and after working.

Staff should be encouraged to 'clean up' frequently during preparation and service, and to wipe up any spillages immediately.

Disposable wipes should preferably be used for washing, wiping or drying. If cloths are used, they must be clean.

4.0 Temperature Control

Temperature control is vital to food safety. Harmful bacteria are a hazard in many foods that are handled and they tend to multiply rapidly at room temperature. Since bacteria are invisible to the naked eye and cannot be removed from food, bacteria number control is the only option. A reduction in bacteria numbers can be achieved by cooking or reheating, and their growth potential minimised by keeping food hot or cold.

4.1 Temperature Information

The following temperature can be relied upon to keep food safe.

Simmering/ Boiling	100°C
Reheating	Not less than 82°C
Cooking	75°C or above
Hot Holding	Above 63°C
Cooling	Food should be cooled as quickly as possible and then refrigerated
Refrigeration	5°C or below - for a list of foods that have to be stored below 5°C see Appendix 1
Freezing	-18°C or below

Temperatures of foods during cooking are vitally important in food safety. The core temperature of cooked foods can be checked during cooking by using a sterilised probe thermometer and when cooking is completed, the core temperature should be at least 75°C. Once used, the thermometer must be cleaned using sanitised alcohol wipes.

It is equally important that refrigeration and freezing temperatures are monitored. Fridge temperatures should be between 1° and 5°C, freezers below -18°C.

Staff must check that fridges and freezers operate at the correct temperature and that foods are stored at the correct temperature, thermometers fitted to fridge and freezers can be used to record temperatures.

A regular cleaning and maintenance regime for fridges and freezers must also be established to monitor correct performance.

5.0 Food Handling

Raw and cooked foods must be kept separate throughout each stage in food preparation, to prevent cross contamination from surfaces, equipment and food handlers. Separate fridges for raw and ready cooked food are ideal in care homes, but for most workplaces there will be one refrigerator. In this case, ready cooked food must be stored above raw and raw meat must also be stored separately from raw vegetables.

Cooked meats or ready to eat foods must never be placed where raw meats have been handled or stored. See Appendix 2 for more information on how to prevent cross contamination.

6.0 Personal Hygiene Standards

Personal hygiene is an important part of food hygiene and applies to every employee that supports people with food safety:

- hands and fingernails are to be washed thoroughly before starting work, before handling food, after handling raw foods or waste, after eating or drinking, after using the toilet and after blowing of the nose;
- hair should be tied back and preferably covered;
- Food handlers should not spit, sneeze or cough over food;
- food handlers should not smoke in a food preparation area;
- cuts and sores must be covered with a waterproof dressing; and
- jewellery should not be worn.

7.0 Waste

Waste can be regarded as any items of food, ingredients, packaging materials or soiled cleaning cloths that are not suitable for further use and are intended to be discarded:

- no types of other waste should be stored in a food preparation area;
- food waste should be removed frequently from food preparation areas and placed in containers with suitably fitting lids;
- sufficient containers should be provided;
- cardboard and paper need not be placed in a lidded container but must be stored such that they do pose a hazard to food areas; and
- Refuse awaiting collection must be stored outside in lidded bins on a hard standing and collected at least weekly.

8.0 Pest Control

Pests can carry harmful bacteria that may contaminate food or food preparation areas by direct or indirect contact. These bacteria may be passed to the food and/or preparation areas by contact with their hair, faeces or urine.

Hygiene standards should be maintained in order to control pests such as rats, mice and insects, and if suspected, a reputable pest control contractor should be instructed to undertake a survey and treatment as necessary:

- food contaminated by pests must be destroyed immediately.
- the building must be maintained in a good state or repair. There should be no gaps in floor, walls, and roof and window openings.
- wire screens should be used on all air vents.
- drain covers should be fitted.
- all holes in the building fabric in food preparation areas must be sealed.
- kitchen doors that open to the outside and are used for long periods of time should also be suitably screened using a close fitting insect-proof screen door.
- electronic fly killing devices may be required.

9.0 Food at Training, Meetings and Other Events

When food is being supplied for training courses, meetings and other events it should:

- be purchased/supplied from a reputable source, preferably locally;
- be stored suitably for its type of food e.g. meats, dairy in fridges etc;
- be transported in refrigerated transport or cool boxes, as appropriate;
- not left lying out for more than 4 hours; and
- be disposed of at the end of the meeting/event.

10.0 Staff Training

All support staff who prepare or handle food should complete Ark e-learning courses on Food Safety.

Module 1 -Introduction to Food Safety.

Module 2 – Food Safety in Practice.

11.0 Implementation and Review

11.1 Implementation

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that this procedure, and the policy that support it, are followed by all employees and Board Members.

11.2 Review

The Chief Executive will ensure that this procedure is reviewed at least every three years, and that any amendments required are submitted to the Board of Management for approval.

Appendix 1 – Foods that need to be stored below 5c;

- cooked products containing meat, fish, and eggs, soft or hard cheeses, cereals, pulses or vegetables;
- cooked pies containing meat, fish or vegetables, and sausage rolls;
- smoked or cured fish and meat;
- slices of smoked or cured meats;
- ripened soft cheeses;
- prepared vegetable salads and coleslaw;
- uncooked or partly cooked pastry or dough containing meat or fish, or pizzas;
- sandwiches or rolls containing meat, fish or substitutes, ripened soft cheese or vegetables;
- some dairy based desserts;
- cream cakes;
- products containing whipped cream; and
- cooked rice or pasta;

Appendix 2 – How to Prevent Cross Contamination

- serving tongs and utensils must be used rather than hands to avoid touching foods;
- cover, protect and date code foods;
- Thorough hand washing with bactericidal soap is essential between handling raw and ready to eat food;
- defrosting must be carried out in a refrigerator and the item(s) should be covered, for meat and poultry, place the meat in a lipped dish large enough to contain drip, and place at the bottom of the fridge;
- wherever possible, hot food is to be prepared and served without delay. If food has to be cooled, then it must be cooled rapidly to room temperature;
- When re-heating foods, heat rapidly so that the food reaches a core temperature of not less than 82°C;
- Shell eggs should not be used in recipes which involve no cooking (e.g. mayonnaise, mousses, and binders to sandwich fillings). Pasteurised egg products are now widely available and should be used for these items as well as recipes such as scrambled egg, omelettes and quiches. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for pasteurised egg. Store shell eggs, preferably under refrigeration, separate from other foods. Cracked eggs should not be used;
- All salad vegetables and fresh fruit must be thoroughly washed in cold running water. For salads, salad wash tablets should be used, which will give additional