

## FOOD SAFETY for the CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM - *At A Glance*

The National School Lunch Act requires:

- Sponsors to implement a food safety program that is based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles. The food safety program must apply to every location where food is stored, prepared, or served for child nutrition programs.
- Each site participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs must:
  - Obtain at least two food safety inspections each school year, conducted by a State or local governmental agency responsible for food safety inspections;
  - Post, in a publicly visible location, a report on the most recent food safety inspection; and
  - Provide a copy of the food safety inspection report to the public upon request.

### DEFINITIONS

**Hazard analysis:** a review of the food service operation to find areas where food safety problems might occur

**Critical Control Points (CCP):** points in food preparation and processing where controlling a step (such as cooking) is essential to ensure food safety

**Control Measures:** steps taken to reduce the likelihood of food contamination

**Critical Limits:** the time and temperature ranges for food preparation and service (either cold or hot) that keep food safe

**Process Approach:** a method of grouping menu items into one of three processes depending on the number of times the food goes through the temperature “danger zone,” which is between 41 °F and 135 °F

**Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** written instructions for a food service task that reduces food safety hazards

A sponsor’s overall food safety program must include a written plan for each individual site. Three main points are essential to developing this program: sanitation, temperature control, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Food safety programs must include:

1. Sanitation - ensure that all food preparation areas are clean and sanitary, such as workers’ hands, utensils, and food contact surfaces. Properly clean items before, throughout, and after food preparation. Avoid cross contamination.
2. Temperature - provide steps to properly control temperature of foods; keeping cold foods cold and hot foods hot, and be sure to record those temperatures. Use of a basic, properly calibrated food thermometer (digital or dial) to check for proper temperatures is necessary.
3. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) - include step-by-step processes for each aspect of meal preparation, storage, and service. Must be used both for sanitation and to verify that proper Critical Control Points (CCPs) and temperatures are being observed, as well as other aspects of a foodservice operation.

### RESOURCES

Individual training and additional resources for Food Safety can be found on the ODE Child Nutrition training webpage.

**SEVEN STEPS OF A FOOD SAFETY PLAN** - minimum elements that must be included in a Food Safety Plan based on HACCP principles.

<p><b>1. Develop, document in writing, and implement SOPs.</b></p>	<p>SOPs are step-by-step written instructions for routine food service tasks that affect the safety of food, indirectly or directly, such as proper dishwashing procedures or proper cooking procedures. Each SOP should include instructions on monitoring, documentation, corrective actions, and periodic review of the processes they cover.</p>
<p><b>2. Identify and document in writing all menu items according to the Process Approach to HACCP.</b></p>	<p>The Process Approach to HACCP is a method of classifying food preparation into three broad categories. These categories are based on the number of times a menu item makes a complete trip through the temperature danger zone.</p> <p><b>Process #1 – No Cook</b> -The menu item does not go completely through the danger zone in either direction.</p> <p><b>Process #2 – Same Day Service</b> -The menu item takes one complete trip through the danger zone (going up during cooking and down through holding). This item is served on the same day.</p> <p><b>Process #3 – Complex Food Preparation</b> -The menu item goes through both heating and cooling, taking two or more complete trips through the danger zone. This may be a product prepped one day and served the next.</p> <p>Document the appropriate process for each menu item. This can be done in a variety of ways, including writing the process number directly on the recipe, or developing a list of menu items in each of the three processes.</p>
<p><b>3. Identify and document Control Measures and Critical Limits.</b></p>	<p>Control Measures are any means taken to prevent, eliminate, or reduce hazards. Collectively, Control Measures include Critical Control Points (CCPs) and the corresponding Critical Limits established in each of the three processes. Document in writing the CCPs and Critical Limits for each Process Approach category in the food safety program. The Critical Limits will vary depending upon the menu item and the recipe used to prepare each item. Recipes should include CCPs and Critical Limits.</p>
<p><b>4. Establish monitoring procedures.</b></p>	<p>Control measures, including CCPs, Critical Limits and SOPs, must be monitored, controlled, and documented in writing. Monitoring involves making direct observations or taking measurements to see that the food safety program is being followed. Monitoring will identify when there is a loss of control so that corrective action can be taken.</p>
<p><b>5. Establish corrective actions.</b></p>	<p>Whenever a critical limit is not met, a corrective action must be carried out immediately. The Food Safety Plan must include corrective actions. Corrective actions should be determined for all SOPs and CCPs. A list of appropriate corrective actions must be included in the school Food Safety Plan. It is also important to document corrective actions when they are taken.</p>
<p><b>6. Keep records.</b></p>	<p>Records are needed to verify that the food safety program is working. These records will normally involve the Food Safety Plan and any monitoring, corrective action, or calibration records produced in the operation of the food safety program based on HACCP principles. Maintain records of cooking, cooling, and reheating temperatures and other CCPs in the food preparation process. Records must be retained for 3 years plus the current operating year.</p>
<p><b>7. Review and revise your overall food safety program periodically.</b></p>	<p>There should be an ongoing as well as a periodic review of the activities described in the Food Safety Plan. This step ensures that the food safety program is operating according to what is specified in each school's plan. Review and revise the food safety program at least annually or as often as necessary to reflect any changes in the facility.</p>