

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Food Preparation and Cooking Procedures

This SOP details the **food preparation and cooking procedures** essential for maintaining hygiene, ensuring food safety, and achieving consistent culinary quality. It covers proper ingredient handling, sanitation practices, cooking temperature controls, cross-contamination prevention, and presentation standards to guarantee safe and delicious meals.

1. Purpose

To outline standardized steps to prepare, cook, and present food in a manner that ensures safety, hygiene, and consistent quality.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all kitchen staff involved in food preparation, cooking, and plating within the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- All kitchen staff must adhere to these procedures at all times.
- Supervisors must monitor compliance and provide ongoing training.

4. Procedures

4.1 Ingredient Receiving and Handling

- Check all ingredients upon delivery for quality and integrity.
- Store perishable items at **4Â°C (40Â°F)** or below; frozen items at **-18Â°C (0Â°F)** or below.
- Label items with date received and use-by date (FIFO: First In, First Out).
- Wash hands thoroughly before and after handling ingredients.

4.2 Personal Hygiene and Sanitation

- Wear clean uniforms, hair restraints, and minimal jewelry.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds:
 - Before starting work
 - After handling raw food
 - After using the restroom, eating, or touching face/hair
- Keep work surfaces, utensils, and equipment sanitized before use.

4.3 Preparation Procedures

- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meats, seafood, vegetables, and ready-to-eat foods.
- Prepare food in the designated areas to prevent cross-contamination.
- Clean and sanitize equipment between different food tasks.

4.4 Cooking Procedures

Food Item	Minimum Internal Temperature	Rest Time (if applicable)
Poultry (whole or ground)	74Â°C / 165Â°F	None
Ground Meats	71Â°C / 160Â°F	None
Beef, pork, lamb, veal (steaks, chops, roasts)	63Â°C / 145Â°F	3 minutes
Seafood	63Â°C / 145Â°F	None
Egg dishes	71Â°C / 160Â°F	None

- Use a calibrated food thermometer to check temperatures.
- Avoid partial cooking; cook food completely in one cycle.

4.5 Cross-Contamination Prevention

- Store raw foods below cooked/ready-to-eat foods in refrigeration units.
- Never reuse marinades or sauces used on raw foods.
- Use color-coded boards and utensils.

4.6 Hot and Cold Holding

- Keep hot foods at or above **60°C (140°F)**.
- Keep cold foods at or below **4°C (40°F)**.
- Monitor temperatures at least every 2 hours; take corrective actions as needed.

4.7 Food Presentation

- Ensure portion sizes are consistent as per guidelines.
- Plate food neatly and garnish as specified by recipes or standards.
- Serve immediately after plating or keep appropriately covered until service.

5. Documentation

- Keep temperature logs for storage, cooking, and holding areas.
- Record cleaning and sanitation activities daily.
- Report deviations and corrective actions to supervisor immediately.

6. Review and Training

- SOP will be reviewed annually or as needed.
- Staff will receive initial and refresher training on these procedures.