

SOP: Food Storage Guidelines

This SOP details **food storage guidelines**, emphasizing proper temperature control and accurate labeling to ensure food safety and quality. It covers standards for storing perishable and non-perishable items, monitoring refrigeration and freezer temperatures, rotation of stock using FIFO principles, and clear labeling with dates and contents to prevent contamination and spoilage. These procedures help maintain food freshness, comply with health regulations, and minimize waste.

1. Purpose

To establish and maintain safe food storage practices, ensuring food quality, safety, and regulatory compliance.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all staff involved in the storage, handling, or monitoring of food items in the facility.

3. Responsibilities

- **Managers:** Ensure SOP implementation and staff training.
- **Staff:** Follow guidelines for storage, labeling, and temperature checks.

4. Procedures

4.1 Storage Guidelines

- Store perishable foods (meat, dairy, produce) in refrigerators or freezers immediately upon delivery.
- Ensure non-perishable items (canned, dried goods) are stored in a clean, dry, and pest-free area.
- Do not store food directly on the floor; use shelves or pallets at least 6 inches above the ground.

4.2 Temperature Control

Food Type	Temperature Range
Refrigerated foods	0Â°C to 4Â°C (32Â°F to 40Â°F)
Frozen foods	-18Â°C (0Â°F) or lower
Dry storage	10Â°C to 21Â°C (50Â°F to 70Â°F), low humidity

- Check and document temperatures of refrigerators and freezers at least twice daily.
- Calibrate thermometers regularly.

4.3 Stock Rotation (FIFO)

- Implement “First In, First Out” (FIFO) for all food products.
- Place new stock behind existing items to ensure earlier products are used first.
- Regularly inspect items for spoilage or expiration.

4.4 Labeling Procedures

- Clearly label all food items with:
 - Product name
 - Date received and/or prepared
 - Expiration or “use by” date
 - Initials of person labeling
- Use waterproof, food-safe labels.
- Remove and discard expired or unlabeled items promptly.

5. Monitoring & Documentation

- Maintain daily temperature logs for all cold storage units.
- Perform regular inspections of storage areas for cleanliness and pest control.
- Document removal and disposal of expired or spoiled products.

6. Corrective Actions

- Immediately move food to correct temperature range if improper storage detected.
- Discard any food that has been out of temperature or shows signs of spoilage.
- Report equipment malfunctions to management for prompt repair.