

SOP: Menu Planning, Customization, and Dietary Accommodations

This SOP details the process of **menu planning, customization, and dietary accommodations**, ensuring the development of diverse, balanced, and appealing menus that cater to various dietary needs and preferences. It includes guidelines for assessing dietary requirements, incorporating nutritional standards, offering customization options, managing allergen information, and providing clear communication with guests to enhance their dining experience safely and inclusively.

1. Purpose

To provide a standardized process for planning menus, offering customization, and accommodating dietary requirements to ensure customer satisfaction, food safety, and inclusivity.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all menu development, meal preparation, and front-line service staff involved in the food service operation.

3. Responsibilities

- **Menu Planners:** Develop menus following these guidelines.
- **Kitchen Staff:** Prepare meals as specified, adhering to dietary accommodations.
- **Service Staff:** Communicate options and relay special requests accurately.
- **Management:** Oversee implementation and periodic review of procedures.

4. Procedure

4.1. Assessing Dietary Requirements

1. Gather data on customer demographics and common dietary restrictions/allergies (e.g., vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, nut-free, kosher, halal).
2. Review previous feedback and special requests to identify trends.
3. Consult with nutrition professionals as needed.

4.2. Incorporating Nutritional Standards

1. Ensure each menu provides a balanced selection of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and micronutrients.
2. Follow guidelines from relevant health authorities regarding nutrition and portion sizes.
3. Update nutritional information with any menu changes.

4.3. Menu Customization Options

1. Design menus to include customizable elements (e.g., choice of sides, sauces, protein sources).
2. Clearly indicate which menu items can be modified to suit dietary needs.
3. Provide staff with scripts and checklists to guide guests through customization choices.

4.4. Managing Allergen Information

1. Identify all major allergens present in recipes and ingredients.

2. Label menu items with appropriate allergen information using icons or notes.
3. Train staff on allergen cross-contact prevention and emergency procedures.

4.5. Communication with Guests

1. Ensure menus are clear, accurate, and reflect current offerings, including customizable options and allergen details.
2. Encourage staff to ask guests about dietary needs or preferences proactively.
3. Provide a process for special dietary requests and follow up to ensure compliance and satisfaction.

5. Documentation and Review

- Maintain records of menu iterations, special requests, and allergy incidents.
- Regularly review and update menus and procedures based on feedback and best practices.

6. Training

- Provide ongoing staff training on menu offerings, customization processes, dietary accommodations, and allergen management.
- Document all training sessions and competency checks.

7. References

- National and local food safety and nutrition guidelines
- Allergen management protocols
- Company policies on customer service and inclusivity