

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Safe Handling and Disposal of Food Waste

This SOP provides comprehensive guidelines for the **safe handling and disposal of food waste**, outlining best practices to minimize health hazards, prevent contamination, and reduce environmental impact. It includes procedures for segregating food waste, proper storage techniques, handling protocols to avoid exposure to pathogens, and approved disposal methods such as composting or disposal through authorized waste management services. The objective is to maintain a clean and sanitary environment while promoting sustainability and regulatory compliance.

### 1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for the safe handling, storage, and disposal of food waste in order to:

- Minimize public health risks
- Prevent cross-contamination
- Promote environmental sustainability
- Ensure compliance with local regulations

### 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the handling, storage, and disposal of food waste in food service, preparation, or storage areas.

### 3. Responsibilities

- **Supervisors:** Ensure all staff are trained and SOP procedures are followed.
- **Staff:** Follow safe handling and disposal protocols at all times.
- **Waste Management Personnel:** Ensure timely and compliant removal of food waste.

### 4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Food Waste	Any unconsumed or discarded edible material from food preparation, serving, or storage.
Composting	The natural process of recycling organic material into nutrient-rich soil amendments.
Cross-contamination	Transfer of harmful bacteria or substances to food from other objects, surfaces, or waste.

### 5. Procedure

#### 5.1 Segregation of Food Waste

- Sort food waste from other types of waste (e.g., recyclables, plastics, hazardous waste).
- Designate colored bins or containers for food waste, clearly labeled and accessible.

#### 5.2 Safe Handling Practices

- Wear disposable gloves when handling food waste.
- Avoid direct contact with waste to reduce risk of pathogen exposure.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling waste.

#### 5.3 Storage of Food Waste

- Store food waste in leak-proof, covered containers to prevent spillage and odor.
- Keep containers in a designated, well-ventilated area away from food preparation spaces.
- Empty containers regularly (at least daily) to avoid buildup.

#### 5.4 Disposal Methods

##### 1. Composting

- Transfer suitable food waste (e.g., fruits, vegetables, grains) to composting bins or facilities.
- Do not compost meat, dairy, or oily foods unless permitted locally.

## **2. Authorized Waste Management Services**

- Arrange for approved waste contractors to collect and dispose of non-compostable food waste.
- Retain collection records for regulatory compliance.

## **6. Cleaning and Disinfection**

- Clean and disinfect all food waste bins and storage areas daily.
- Use approved disinfectants following manufacturer instructions.

## **7. Training**

- Provide training on food waste segregation, handling, and disposal processes to all relevant staff every 12 months or upon onboarding.
- Maintain training records.

## **8. Compliance and Documentation**

- Ensure compliance with local, state, and federal waste disposal regulations.
- Keep records of disposal methods, collection schedules, and any incidents related to food waste handling.

## **9. References**

- Local Environmental Agency Waste Management Guidelines
- Food Safety Regulations (specify applicable laws or codes)