

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Staff Training on Food Allergies and Cross-Contact Prevention

This SOP details **staff training on food allergies and cross-contact prevention**, focusing on educating employees about common food allergens, recognizing symptoms of allergic reactions, and implementing strict procedures to avoid cross-contact during food preparation and service. The goal is to ensure a safe dining environment by minimizing allergen exposure and enhancing staff awareness and response to allergy-related incidents.

1. Purpose

Ensure staff are properly trained to handle food allergies, prevent cross-contact, and respond to allergy-related emergencies.

2. Scope

Applies to all kitchen, waitstaff, and management personnel involved in food preparation, service, and customer care.

3. Responsibilities

- **Management:** Schedule training, monitor compliance, review and update SOP.
- **Staff:** Participate in training, follow procedures, report incidents.
- **Trainers:** Deliver up-to-date, comprehensive training on food allergies and cross-contact.

4. Training Procedures

- **Identification of Common Food Allergens:** Educate staff on the "Big 9" allergens (milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soy, sesame).
- **Recognizing Symptoms:** Train staff to identify mild to severe allergic reaction symptoms (e.g., hives, swelling, difficulty breathing, dizziness, anaphylaxis).
- **Guest Communication:** Staff must actively ask about food allergies, document requests, and immediately notify the kitchen of allergy orders.
- **Cross-Contact Prevention:**
 - Clean and sanitize surfaces, utensils, and equipment before and after use.
 - Store allergenic products separately from other ingredients.
 - Use dedicated tools and gloves wherever necessary.
 - Label and cover food appropriately.
- **Emergency Response:** Instruct staff on use of emergency protocols, such as calling for medical help and using epinephrine auto-injectors if available.

5. Documentation

- Record all completed staff training sessions.
- Maintain up-to-date allergy awareness certificates and incident logs.

6. Review and Update

This SOP must be reviewed at least annually or whenever there are updates to allergen information, policies, or procedures.

7. References

- FDA Food Code
- Local and national food safety guidelines
- Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE)