

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

ALLERGEN FREE MEAL PREPARATION

PURPOSE: To prevent allergen contamination when preparing allergen free meals. The goal is to reduce and/or eliminate allergic reactions through prevention, education, awareness, communication, and emergency response.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to food preparation staff such as: line cooks, chefs, sous chefs, food handlers, dishwashers, porters, and anyone else who contacts food and beverages and food contact surfaces in the kitchen area.

DEFINITIONS:

1. ALLERGEN means
 - a. Milk, egg, wheat, soybeans, peanuts, fish (such as bass, flounder, or cod), crustacean shellfish (such as crab, lobster, or shrimp), tree nuts (such as almonds, pecans, or walnuts), and sesame.
 - b. A food ingredient that contains protein derived from a food listed above.
2. CROSS-CONTAMINATION means the passing of bacteria, microorganisms, or other harmful substances indirectly from one surface to another through improper or unsanitary equipment, procedures, or products.
3. CROSS-CONTACT occurs when one food comes into contact with another food and their proteins mix. As a result, each food then contains small amounts of the other food, often invisible to us. Such contact may be either direct (e.g., placing cheese on a hamburger) or indirect via hands or utensils.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Pre-service training

1. All staff must receive training from Person in Charge (PIC) PRIOR TO preparing allergen-free meals.
2. Staff shall receive training regarding:
 - a. The procedures in this SOP.
 - b. The nine major food allergens.
 - c. How to receive shipments and identify cross-contact that may have occurred during transport and proper methods of storage to prevent cross-contact.
 - d. Which foods in the facility contain the nine major food allergens.
 - e. Personal hygiene steps to reduce cross-contact.
 - f. What equipment is available to prepare allergen-free meals.
 - g. Cleaning and sanitizing steps to prevent cross-contact.
 - h. How to mark or otherwise identify an allergen-free meal.

Operations (special instructions):

1. Follow Southern Nevada Health District regulations.
2. Be aware of the establishment's ability to prepare allergen free meal.
 - a. Review a list of all ingredients and products to determine which products and ingredients, including sub-ingredients, contain allergens.
 - b. Evaluate each step in the process (receiving, storage, preparation, and service), noting paths of allergenic ingredients.
 - c. Identify ingredients and processing aids, such as spray oils and release agents, the establishment utilizes that may contain allergenic ingredients.

ALLERGEN FREE MEAL PREPARATION SOP

Steps in Preparing the Allergen-Free Meal

1. Wash, rinse, and sanitize all areas and equipment that will be used for preparing allergen-free meals even if those surfaces had already been previously cleaned for normal use.
2. Wash hands thoroughly and put on a clean pair of gloves before preparing an allergen-free meal. It may be necessary to change aprons as well.
3. Use dedicated equipment or physically separate products to prevent cross-contact.
 - a. Use color-coded or specially-marked supplies, uniforms, equipment, and utensils designated for preparing allergen-free meal.
 - b. Avoid using same cooking medium (e.g., oil or water) and surface (e.g., grill, prep table) when processing both ingredients with and without allergens.
4. Use ingredients that have been designated “allergen free” on their packages or otherwise determined to be safe in allergen-free meals.
5. Prepare food in a manner that eliminates cross-contact. All preparation, including garnishes, should be done by only one food handler who is dedicated to ensuring the meal is allergen free and who is not multi-tasking.
6. Cover meal with a clean lid to prevent cross-contact and mark or otherwise identify as an allergen-free meal. No additional handling should be done once the meal has been covered.
7. Notify PIC or designated employee once allergen-free meal is prepared and ready for service.
8. Wash, rinse, sanitize, and store special equipment for allergen-free meals so that the equipment is ready and available for next use.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

1. Discard any food that may be contaminated by cross-contact during preparation and start over with a clean plate. Do not reuse any food (e.g., using same bun or replace garnishes).
2. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
3. Retrain employee to become aware of the top nine allergenic ingredients.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

PIC or designated employee will ensure all staff are trained and following this SOP. This may be done using allergy drills or quizzing of staff.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: _____ **APPROVED BY:** _____