To The Point

Protecting Food from Contamination





When it comes to restaurant food safety, there are local food safety rules and requirements established by the city, county, district, and state. The following principles provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (USDA) are minimal guidelines for food preparation safety. The USDA website, as well as state and local requirements should be referenced for more information.

Personal Hygiene

- Clean clothing and no open toed shoes.
- Hair restraints such as hairnets and/or hats. Beards also require restraints.
- Frequent handwashing and at any time immediately after completing one task before moving to the next to avoid cross contamination.
- No eating, chewing gum, smoking, or chewing tobacco allowed in food prep area, storage or service areas.

 Frequent changing of disposable gloves to avoid cross contamination. Gloves should be changed if the employee touches their face or nose, or they inadvertently sneeze or cough into their hands.

Food Preparation

- Food equipment, utensils, and food contact surfaces are properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized before every use.
- Frozen food is thawed under refrigeration, in the microwave, cooked to proper temperature from frozen state, or in cold running water.
- Food is handled with suitable utensils, such as single use gloves or tongs.
- Clean reusable towels are used only for sanitizing equipment and surfaces and not for drying hands, utensils, or the floor
- Food is cooked to the proper internal temperature and is tested with a clean, calibrated thermometer. Temperature is documented.

Utensils and Equipment

- Utensils and equipment are cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- Work surfaces and utensils are clean.
- Food cart or container used to transport food is cleaned daily.
- Thermometer is cleaned and sanitized between uses.
- Can opener is clean.

Food Storage

- Store all food at least 6 to 8 inches off the floor.
- Food is stored in the original container or a food grade container.
- There are no bulging or leaking canned goods.
- Food is protected from contamination.
- Chemicals are clearly labeled and stored away from food.

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For more information about protecting your business, contact your local independent agent or broker.