

FOOD SAFETY DURING AN EMERGENCY

Food safety emergency plans inform staff on what to do when events interrupt normal foodservice operations. Emergency plans support staff with directions that help them respond effectively to an event.

During an emergency, food safety concerns arise from:

- Contaminated food and water
- Cross-contamination of food and equipment with elements from the disaster
- Lack of control for time and temperature of foods



Emergency Plan Checklist

- ✓ Information for local emergency contacts, utilities, suppliers
- ✓ Emergency staff list, tasks, and contact numbers, emails
- ✓ Paper copies of important documents and records
- ✓ Backed up electronic files offsite
- ✓ Emergency kits for handwashing, disinfecting, and sanitizing
- ✓ Emergency menu(s) based on shelf stable foods

Immediate Response Checklist

- ✓ Prior to imminent event, transfer foods from vulnerable sites and storage locations.
- ✓ Consult local health authority.
- ✓ Coordinate with local officials on potential duration.
- ✓ Activate staff contact process via email/phone/text.
- ✓ Assess impact to operations.
- ✓ Work with State agency and other state officials.

Meal Service Response Checklist

- ✓ Determine if and how foodservice can continue.
- ✓ Discard foods and disposable serving supplies exposed to contaminants.
- ✓ Follow disinfecting processes for any facilities or food contact surfaces exposed to disaster contaminants.
- ✓ Make personal protective equipment (PPE) available for staff.

Once the facility is cleared to resumed foodservice:

Focus on Time and Temperature Control (TCS) foods.

Isolate and discard any TCS foods that exceed time and temperature control guidelines.

Use Time as public health control measure – Record the time that foods leave temperature control. Discard any foods not consumed within 4 hours.

Use Temperature as a public health control measure – Record the temperatures for cold foods and the internal cooking and hot holding temperatures for cooked foods. Maintain hot foods at 135 °F and cold foods at 41 °F.

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