

Kitchen/Food Service Observation

Kitchen/Food Service Observation: Complete the initial brief kitchen tour upon arrival at the facility, with observations focused on practices that might indicate potential for foodborne illness. Make additional observations throughout the survey process in order to gather all information needed. Refer to the current FDA Food Code as needed.

***For Risk-Based Surveys (RBS) only:** You do not have to complete the initial brief kitchen tour upon arrival at the facility. Investigate Critical Element (CE)1, CE2 and CE12 (all mapped to F812) which can occur at any time during an RBS if there are Ombudsman concerns, active intakes, or onsite concerns specific to the kitchen, sanitary practices, or food-borne illness. Only investigate the other CEs if concerns arise.*

Initial Brief Tour of the Kitchen: Review the first two CEs to ensure practices prevent foodborne illness.

- Potentially hazardous foods, such as beef, chicken, pork, etc., have not been left to thaw at room temperature.
- Food items in the refrigerator(s) are labeled or dated.
- Potentially hazardous foods such as uncooked meat, poultry, fish, and eggs are stored separately from other foods (e.g., meat is thawing so that juices are not dripping on other foods).
- Hand washing facilities with soap and water are separate from those used for food preparation.
- Staff are practicing appropriate hand hygiene and glove use when necessary during food preparation activities, such as between handling raw meat and other foods, to prevent cross-contamination.
- Cracked or unpasteurized eggs are not used in foods that are not fully cooked (per observation or interview).
- Food is prepared, cooked, or stored under appropriate temperatures and with safe food handling techniques.
- Staff are employing hygienic practices (e.g., not touching hair or face without hand washing) and then handling food.
- Facility staff are wearing hair restraints (e.g., hairnet, hat, and/or beard restraint) to prevent hair from contacting food, per current Food Code requirements.

1. During the initial brief tour, are foods stored and/or prepared under sanitary conditions? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812

2. During the initial brief tour, does the facility store, prepare, distribute, and serve food in a manner that prevents foodborne illness to the residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812

Follow Up Visits to the Kitchen: If staff are preparing food during the initial brief tour, proceed with observations. If not, answer the remaining items in future trips to the kitchen.

Storage Temperatures

- Refrigerator temperatures that are at or below 41 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) (check temperatures between meal service activities to allow for stable temperatures).
- Freezer temperatures maintained at a level to keep frozen food solid.
- Internal temperatures of 41°F or lower for potentially hazardous, refrigerated foods (e.g., meat, fish, milk, egg, poultry dishes) that are not within acceptable ranges:

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- What are the temperatures?
- What foods are involved?

3. Is the food stored at the appropriate temperatures? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F812** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Food Storage

- Frozen foods are thawing at the correct temperature.
- Foods in the refrigerator/freezer are covered, dated, and shelved to allow circulation.
- Foods are stored away from soiled surfaces or rust.
- Canned goods have an uncompromised seal (e.g., punctures).
- Staff are only using clean utensils when accessing bulk foods and/or ice.
- Containers of food are stored off the floor, on surfaces that are clean or protected from contamination (e.g., 6 inches above the floor, protected from splash).
- There are no signs of water damage from sewage lines and/or pipelines.
- There are no signs of negative outcome (e.g., freezer burn, foods dried out, foods with a change in color).
- Raw meat is stored so that juices are not dripping onto other foods.
- Food products are discarded on or before the expiration date.
- Staff are following the facility's policy for food storage, including leftovers.

4. During follow-up visits to the kitchen, are foods stored under sanitary conditions? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F812** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Food Preparation and Service

- Hot foods are held at 135°F or higher on the steam table.
- Cold foods are held at 41°F or lower.
- Food surfaces are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized after preparation of fish, meat, or poultry.
- Cutting surfaces are sanitized between uses.
- Equipment (e.g., food grinders, choppers, slicers, and mixers) are cleaned, sanitized, dried, and reassembled after each use.
- If staff is preparing resident requests for soft cooked and undercooked eggs (i.e., sunny side up, soft scrambled, soft boiled), determine if a pasteurized egg product was used.
- Proper final internal cooking temperatures (monitoring the food's internal temperature for 15 seconds determines when microorganisms can no longer survive and food is safe for consumption). Foods should reach the following internal temperatures:
 - Poultry and stuffed foods: 165°F;
 - Ground meat (e.g., ground beef, ground pork, ground fish) and eggs held for service: at least 155°F;
 - Fish and other meats: 145°F for 15 seconds;

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- When cooking raw animal foods in the microwave, foods should be rotated and stirred during the cooking process so that all parts of the food are heated to a temperature of at least 165°F and allowed to stand covered for at least 2 minutes after cooking to obtain temperature equilibrium; and
- Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables: cooked to a hot holding temperature of 135°F to prevent the growth of pathogenic bacteria that may be present.
- Food items that are reheated to the proper temperatures:
 - The potentially hazardous food (PHF) or time/temperature controlled for safety (TCS) food that is cooked and cooled must be reheated so that all parts of the food reach an internal temperature of 165°F for at least 15 seconds before holding for hot service; and
 - Ready-to-eat foods that require heating before consumption are best taken directly from a sealed container (secured against the entry of microorganisms) or an intact package from an approved food processing source and heated to at least 135°F for holding for hot service.
- Food is cooked in a manner to conserve nutritive value, flavor, appearance, and texture.
- Nourishments and snacks that are held at room temperature are served within 4 hours of delivery. Potentially hazardous foods (e.g., milk, milk products, eggs) must be held at appropriate temperatures.
- Staff properly wash hands with soap and water to prevent cross-contamination (i.e., between handling raw meat and other foods).
- Food is covered when traveling a distance (e.g., down a hallway, to a different unit or floor), based upon standards of practice for infection control and food safety.
- Staff utilize hygienic practices (e.g., not touching hair, face, nose, etc.) when handling food.
- Staff wash hands before serving food to residents after collecting soiled plates and food waste.
- Opened containers of potentially hazardous foods or leftovers are dated or used within 7 days in the refrigerator or according to facility policy.
- Proper cooling procedures were observed, such as cooling foods in shallow containers, and not deep or sealed containers, facilitating foods to cool quickly as required.
- Potentially hazardous foods are cooled from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours; from 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours; the total time for cooling from 135°F to 41°F should not exceed six hours.
- Food procured from vendors meets federal, state, or local approval.
- Review the policies and procedures for maintaining nursing home gardens, if applicable.
- The time food is put on the steam table and when meal service starts. If unable to observe, determine per interview with the cook.
- How staff routinely monitors food temperatures on the steam table (review temperature logs).
- When staff starts cooking the food. If unable to observe, determine per interview with the cook.
- What cooking methods are available and used (e.g., steamer, batch-style cooking).
- Ensure staff do not compromise food safety when preparing modified consistency (e.g., pureed, mechanical soft) PHF/TCS foods.
- Ask staff about their knowledge of the food safety practice and facility policy around the particular concern identified.
- Does the facility have written policies (e.g., eggs) that honor resident preferences safely?
- Does the facility have a written policy regarding food brought in by family or visitors?
- Ask staff what the facility practice is for dealing with employees who come to work with symptoms of contagious illness (e.g., coughing, sneezing, nausea, fever, vomiting) or open wounds.

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- If a foodborne illness outbreak occurred, did you report the outbreak to the local health department?
 - Was the facility food service identified as the cause of the outbreak and what remediation steps were taken?
5. Does the facility provide each resident with a nourishing, palatable, well-balanced diet that meets his/her daily nutritional and dietary needs, taking into consideration the preferences of each resident? ☐ Yes ☐ No F800 ☐ *N/A, RBS*
6. Does the facility provide food prepared by methods that conserve nutritive value, flavor, and appearance and provide food and drink that is palatable, attractive, and at a safe and appetizing temperature? ☐ Yes ☐ No F804 ☐ *N/A, RBS*
7. Is food prepared in a form to meet individual needs of the residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No F805 ☐ *N/A, RBS*
8. Was food procured from approved or satisfactory sources and was food stored, prepared, distributed, and served in accordance with professional standards for food service safety? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812 ☐ *N/A, RBS*
9. Does the facility have a policy regarding use and storage of foods brought to residents by family and other visitors to ensure safe and sanitary storage, handling, and consumption? ☐ Yes ☐ No F813 ☐ *N/A, RBS*
10. During follow-up visits to the kitchen, does the facility store, prepare, distribute, and serve food in a manner that prevents foodborne illness to the residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812 ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Dinnerware Sanitization and Storage

- High Temperature Dishwasher (heat sanitization):
 - Wash: 150-165 degrees F;
 - Final Rinse: 180 degrees F (160 degrees F at the rack level/dish surface reflects 180 degrees F at the manifold, which is the area just before the final rinse nozzle where the temperature of the dish machine is measured; or 165 degrees F for a stationary rack, single temperature machine).
- Staff ensure dishwasher temperatures are:
 - For a stationary rack, single temperature machine, 74°C (165°F);
 - For a stationary rack, dual temperature machine, 66°C (150°F);
 - For a single tank, conveyor, dual temperature machine, 71°C (160°F);
 - For a multi-tank, conveyor, multi-temperature machine, 66°C (150°F); or
 - For the wash solution in spray-type washers that use chemicals to sanitize, must not be less than 49°C (120°F).
 - Sanitizing solution must be at level required per manufacturer's instructions.
- Low Temperature Dishwasher (chemical sanitization):
 - Wash - 120 degrees F; and

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- Final Rinse - 50 ppm (parts per million) hypochlorite (chlorine) on dish surface in final rinse.
- The chemical solution must be maintained at the correct concentration, based on periodic testing, at least once per shift, and for the effective contact time according to manufacturer's guidelines.
- Manual water temperature solution shall be maintained at no less than 110°F. After washing and rinsing, dishes are sanitized by immersion in either:
 - Hot water (at least 171°F) for 30 seconds; or
 - A chemical sanitizing solution. If explicit manufacturer instructions are not provided, the recommended sanitation concentrations are as follows:
 - Chlorine: 50 – 100 ppm minimum 10 second contact time
 - Iodine: 12.5 ppm minimum 30 second contact time
 - QAC space (Quaternary): 150 – 200 ppm concentration and contact time per manufacturer's instructions (Ammonium Compound).
- Dishes, food preparation equipment, and utensils are air dried. (Drying food preparation equipment and utensils with a towel or cloth may increase risks for cross-contamination.).
- Wet wiping cloths are stored in an approved sanitizing solution and laundered daily.
- Clean and soiled work areas are separated.
- Dishware is stored in a clean, dry location and not exposed to splash, dust, or other contamination, and covered or inverted.
- Ask staff how they test for proper chemical sanitization (observe them performing the test).
- Ask staff how they monitor equipment to ensure that it is functioning properly. (Review temperature/chemical logs).

11. Were dishes and utensils cleaned and stored under sanitary conditions? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812 ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Equipment Safe/Clean

- Refrigerators, freezers, and ice machines are clean and in safe operating condition.
- Fans in food prep areas are clean.
- Utensils/equipment are cleaned and maintained to prevent foodborne illness.
- Food trays, dinnerware, and utensils are clean and in good condition (e.g., not cracked or chipped).
- Appropriate equipment and supplies to evaluate the safe operation of the dish machine and the washing of pots and pans (e.g., maximum registering thermometer, appropriate chemical test strips, and paper thermometers).
- How does the facility identify problems with time and temperature control of PHF/TCS foods and what are the processes to address those problems.
- Whether the facility has, and follows, a cleaning schedule for the kitchen and food service equipment.
- If there is a problem with equipment, how staff informs maintenance and follows up to see if the problem is corrected.

12. Is the food preparation equipment clean? ☐ Yes ☐ No F812

13. Is essential kitchen equipment maintained in safe operating condition? ☐ Yes ☐ No F908 ☐ *N/A, RBS*

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Refuse/Pest Control

- Is there evidence of pests in the food storage, preparation, or service areas?
- Is the facility aware of the current problem?
- If the facility is aware of the current problem, what steps have been taken to eradicate the problem?
- Is garbage and refuse disposed of properly?
- Is there documentation of pest control services that have been provided?
- Notify team of observations and review other areas of the environment for pest concerns under the Environment task.

14. Was garbage and refuse disposed of properly? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F814** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

15. Was food storage, preparation, and service areas free of visible signs of insects and/or rodents? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F925** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Unit Refrigerators

- Snack/nourishment refrigerators on the unit are maintained to prevent the potential for foodborne illness.
- Proper snacks/nourishment refrigerators' temperatures are maintained and food items are dated and labeled.

16. Are snack/nourishment refrigerators on the unit maintained with the proper temperature and food items are dated and labeled so as to prevent the potential for foodborne illness? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F812** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Menus

- Ensure staff are following the menus.
- Menus meet the nutritional needs of the residents.

17. Does the facility follow the menus and does the menu meet the nutritional needs of the residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F803** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

Dietary Staff

- Interview dietary staff members to ensure the facility has a full-time qualified dietitian or other clinically qualified professional either full-time, part-time, or on a consultant basis (refer to the regulation for qualification details).
- If a qualified dietitian or other clinically qualified nutrition professional is not employed full-time, interview staff to ensure the person designated as the director of food and nutrition services is qualified (refer to the regulation for qualification details).
- Interview staff to ensure they have appropriate competencies and skill set to carry out functions of the food and nutrition services, taking into account resident assessments, care plans, number, acuity, and diagnoses of the facility's population in accordance with the facility assessment.

18. Does the facility have a qualified dietitian, other clinically qualified nutrition professional, and/or director of food and nutrition services who met the required qualifications in the timeframe allowed? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F801** ☐ *N/A, RBS*

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19. Does the facility have a sufficient number of competent staff to safely and effectively carry out the functions of the food and nutrition services? ☐ Yes ☐ No **F802** ☐ *N/A, RBS*