LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After working through this Management: Preparing for a Health Department Inspection on-line course, you will be able to do the following:

- State the purpose of Health Department inspections
- List factors that make food unsafe
- Explain guidelines for storage of cold and dry foods
- Describe ways to ensure general cleanliness in the Dietary department
- Explain the basics of personal hygiene and appropriate clothing for Dietary staff
OVERVIEW

This course, Management: Preparing for a Health Department Inspection – F371, covers the purpose of the State Health Department, basics of meal preparation and presentation, proper food storage, general sanitation, personal hygiene, a checklist for preparing for an inspection, and a survey checklist of items evaluated by the Health Department. You may print out this course and use it for in-house staff training.

FEATURES

The first section, Introduction, provides an overview of the purpose of Department of Health inspections and lists pertinent OBRA regulations.

The Food Preparation Procedures section covers meal preparation and food safety and the responsibilities of Dietary staff in ensuring that meal rounds proceed safely and efficiently.

The section entitled Proper Food Storage provides a list of factors that make food unsafe and provides food-storage guidelines and essential information on temperature logs.

The section entitled General Sanitation covers the cleanliness of kitchen equipment, floors, and work surfaces.

The section on Personal Hygiene provides an overview of Dietary staff requirements for clothing and cleanliness.

The Dietary Records section covers menus and lists and provides a Dietary checklist, to ensure that food preparation, presentation, and storage are managed properly.

The final section, The Inspectors Are Here!, explains the inspection process and provides an inspection survey, to better prepare Dietary staff for Health Department inspections.

OVERVIEW

The purpose of a Department of Health inspection is twofold:

1. Ensure that food is prepared in a safe manner
2. Ensure that food is served in a sanitary manner

By inspecting the food-preparation premises, the Department of Health can assist the facility in identifying any existing or potential problems.

Areas of focus during inspections are as follows:

- Food safety

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◊ temperature
◊ preparation
◊ distribution
◊ storage

• Food preparation area
  ◊ cleanliness
  ◊ contamination

• Personal hygiene of staff

Remember: *The time to prepare for a Department of Health inspection is before it occurs, or 365 days a year!!*

**REGULATIONS**

OBRA regulations that govern the safety of preparation, storage, and distribution of food:
Tag F371 438.35(i) Sanitary Conditions
The facility must –
§483.35(i)(1) Procure food from sources approved or considered satisfactory by Federal, State or local authorities; and
§483.35(i)(2) Store, prepare, distribute and serve food under sanitary conditions.
The intent of this requirement is to ensure that the facility:
• Obtains food for resident consumption from sources approved or considered satisfactory by Federal, State or local authorities; and
• Follows proper sanitation and food handling practices to prevent the outbreak of foodborne illness. Safe food handling for the prevention of foodborne illnesses begins when food is received from the vendor and continues throughout the facility’s food handling process.

**MEAL PREPARATION**

Meal preparation is an essential part of the Dietary department’s responsibilities. If meals are not prepared properly, serious problems can occur:
• Contamination, causing illness among residents
• Unappealing to residents, therefore causing them to refuse meals
• Deficiencies, citations and punitive actions by the Department of Health according to the Scope and Severity of each F-Tag cited

Proper meal preparation requires the conscientious care and competence of Dietary staff members. When preparing food for residents, it is important to consider the following:
• Cleaning fresh fruits and vegetables

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• Proper thawing of frozen foods
• Proper storing of perishable items, to prevent spoilage
  ◊ frozen foods
  ◊ dairy products
  ◊ leftovers
  ◊ salads with mayonnaise
    ▪ egg
    ▪ potato
    ▪ pasta
    ▪ tuna
    ▪ chicken
    ▪ Cole slaw
• Accurate dates and labels on stored foods
• Proper reheating of leftovers

TRAY PRESENTATION

Tray presentation is a reflection of the Dietary department. It needs to be monitored closely, to ensure that meals are served in a manner to support residents’ needs with dignity. Dietary staff should implement the following guidelines:

• Tray card (or menu)
  ◊ clean
  ◊ neatly placed on tray
  ◊ visible to staff
  ◊ visible to resident

• Dishware and utensils
  ◊ adequate supply
  ◊ appropriate for intended use
  ◊ clean, dry, free of stains
  ◊ free of chips and other blemishes
  ◊ no paper or plastic service ware in use

• Tray
  ◊ clean, dry, free of stains
  ◊ in good repair
  ◊ no spillage
  ◊ dishes and silverware neatly placed to avoid contact with bare hands during service

• Napkins

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clean, neat, dry
◊ in correct position under flatware to avoid contact with bare hands during service
◊ substantial to allow wiping mouth and hands without falling apart

• Appropriate garnishment on all meals
• Condiments, seasonings and sauces
  ◊ appropriate
  ◊ visible
  ◊ accessible
  ◊ salt, pepper & sugar packets dry

• Food neatly placed on plate, with no spillage and generous rim on plate to avoid finger &/or thumb contact with food

• Adaptive equipment present as needed, clean, in good condition and placed in a manner to avoid handling of eating parts or bare hands when serving

• Food quality and temperature control: Dietary manager and/or cook should take and record the temperature of all menu items prior to meal service and of a test tray at the end of the meal service.
  ◊ routine meal rounds performed by dietary manager, clinical dietitian, regional dietitian to observe food distribution and service, and possible cross-contamination
  ◊ routine quality checks performed by dietary manager, administrator, director of nursing services, regional dietitian

**MEAL ROUNDS**

Aside from the obvious need for nutrition, meals are an important and stimulating part of the day for most residents. Careful and efficient distribution of meals are important aspects of the Dietary department’s responsibilities. There is a possibility of cross-contamination of foods by staff and other residents, and meal rounds will help identify problem areas and allow the dietary manager and registered dietitian to implement corrective actions including staff retraining. The following checklist will assist you in ensuring that meals are distributed properly to all residents and that any potential problems can be identified and corrected before they become inspection issues.

Meal set-up and distribution:

- Adequate supervision by nursing staff
- Residents in their places prior to meal service
- Nursing staff meet the food cart in a timely manner
- Residents receive food within 15 - 20 minutes of it leaving the kitchen and while temperatures still within the safety range
- Environment pleasing and calm
- Appropriate lighting
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- Appropriate temperature – neither too hot or too cold in dining areas
- Appropriate music for the residents to listen to
- Residents cleanly dressed, correctly positioned, well groomed to receive their meal

Proper positioning of residents:
- Positioned properly in bed, wheelchair, or at table, including feet positioning
- Compliance to positioning plans of physical or speech therapy
- Positioned to facilitate independence in eating
- Seated for socialization
- Residents properly dressed or covered, including socks and/or shoes or slippers

Assistance and intervention by nursing staff:
- Trays properly set up
- Meal served describing menu read
- Residents who cannot self-feed are assisted
- Cross-contamination of food is avoided while assisting residents
- Adding condiments, margarine to foods without bare hands contact
- Opening containers, individual portions without touching ingredients
- Intervening when resident takes food from other residents and providing another clean tray to the resident whose food was tampered with

Restorative techniques
- Adaptive devices as needed correctly handled and placed
- Hands washed between feeding or assisting residents

FACTORS THAT MAKE FOOD UNSAFE

Proper refrigeration and careful handling of dry and cooked foods may mean the difference between profit and loss. More important, proper food storage may actually be a matter of life and death. The following is a partial list of factors that could contribute to making foods unsafe to eat:

- Obtaining food from unsafe sources
- Failure to refrigerate properly
- Maintaining food on steam table at incubating (warm) temperature
- Handling of foods by infected employees with poor hygiene
- Failure to reheat food to temperature that will kill bacteria
- Incorporating raw or contaminated ingredients in foods that require no further cooking
- Failure to clean and sanitize kitchen equipment
- Cross-contamination from workers touching contaminated raw foods (usually of animal origin) and then touching other foods
• Processing cooked or prepared food in equipment that has not been properly sanitized after use for contaminated raw foods
• Improper dry storage practices

**GENERAL STORAGE GUIDELINES**

Here are some general guidelines for food storage:

• Follow proper thawing procedures.
• Cook thawed foods promptly.
• Never refreeze foods once thawed unless cooked first.
• Place old stock in front, to be used first (First In, First Out - FIFO)
• Keep dry storage areas temperatures below 85°F.
• Keep freezers at below 0°F and refrigerators at below 41°F.
• Remove soiled or heavy wrappings and boxes or crates prior to storing foods.
• Use space wisely, but do not overcrowd food in the storage space.
• Do not cover shelves with paper or foil as it decreases air circulation.
• If hot or warm liquids are put in the refrigerator, follow these steps:
  1. Pour liquids into small shallow pans or containers and fill to no more than 2 inches deep.
  2. Stir or shake often or use ice bath or iced paddle.
  3. Maintain a cooling temperature log to ensure cooling from 140°F to 70°F in 2 hours, and from 70°F to 41°F in the next 4 hours. (HACCP 2-step guidelines)
  4. Plan corrective action to be taken if food does not cool to 70°F in the first 2 hours (reheat to 165°F for 15 seconds) or discard foods that cannot be reheated for safety.

**TEMPERATURE LOGS**

Temperature logs should be maintained for the following:

**Equipment:**

• Dishwashing machines (include ppm for low temperature machines)
• Refrigerators and freezers
• Walk-in storage units

**Food:**

• Internal (ambient) temperature of at least one food each time refrigerator temperature is logged

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• Hot foods on steam table
• Cold foods on tray line
• Meats cooked ahead of time while cooling
• Soups, stews and gravies prepared ahead of time while cooling (HACCP 2-step method)
• Puddings and custard if cooled in bulk while cooling (HACCP method for PHF)
• Rice and potatoes while cooling (HACCP method for PHF)
• Internal (ambient) temperatures of all foods in refrigerator or freezer when there is an equipment failure until food moved to another storage location.

COLD FOOD

You use a refrigerator every day, but how much do you know about refrigeration? Take a look:
• Refrigeration does not kill bacteria.
• Refrigeration prevents bacteria from growing and multiplying.
• Refrigeration prevents food spoilage and maintains quality and flavor.

The following table should be used as a guide for storing foods that need to be chilled or frozen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTIMUM REFRIGERATOR TEMPERATURE</th>
<th>FOOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40°F to 41°F</td>
<td>Fruits, vegetables, eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40°F to 41°F</td>
<td>Processed foods, pastries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38°F to 41°F</td>
<td>Dairy products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38°F to 41°F</td>
<td>Fresh meats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32°F to 36°F</td>
<td>Fresh poultry, fish and seafood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-10°F to 0°F</td>
<td>Frozen foods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DRY FOOD

Dry foods will not keep indefinitely. Here are some hints on storing them properly:
• Follow the dented-can procedure.
• Rotate stock: First In, First Out (FIFO)
• Keep food off the floor
• Keep storage area clean and well maintained
• Check for vermin infestation
• Reseal tightly all open packages (zip-lock bags are recommended) and label with date opened, or store contents in appropriate containers and label with name of contents and date opened
• Label all foods once removed from original containers
• Date open containers
• Tighten all lids and seal all covers
• Do not store food scoops in the ingredient bins or the ice machine

The storeroom must be well ventilated and at a temperature between 70°F and 85°F.
• Open windows (if screened)
• Use wall vents
• Use slatted shelves
• Use door vents
• Use a fan (include fan in weekly cleaning schedule)

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Keeping kitchen equipment clean is essential to the sanitary preparation of food. Clean equipment helps to eliminate the following problems:
◊ odors
◊ growth of molds, yeast, and bacteria

Follow these guidelines, to ensure that the food you serve to the residents is clean, fresh, and healthy:
• Clean and sanitize the refrigerator and freezer, inside and out, at least once a week.
• Clean ceiling and wall vents.
• Ensure that maintenance cleans the ice machine according to manufacturers instructions or your facility’s policy and procedures.
• Ensure that scoop is kept out of the ice bin.
• Remove grease and built-up dirt from stove/oven hoods.
• Clean sinks and remove food or other debris from sink strainer.
• Clean all inside of storage drawers and compartments at least monthly and whenever replacing stock.
• Look up! Be sure maintenance cleans freezer and refrigerator coils according to manufactures instructions, top of freezers and refrigerators, light fixtures, sprinklers, and fans routinely.
• To ensure clean vents and ceilings, use a flat mop with disposable magnetic towels and expandable handle (Swiffer type).
• Scrub, sanitize and thoroughly air dry pots prior to storing upside down.
• Clean the can opener after every use daily, run removable parts through the dishmachine, remove the base and clean under it at least monthly.
• Thoroughly clean and remove stains from all dishware and utensils. Air dry prior to storing.
  ◊ dishes
  ◊ glassware
  ◊ eating utensils, including adaptive equipment
  ◊ serving utensils
  ◊ water and juice pitchers
  ◊ all other containers

FLOORS AND WORK SURFACES

Kitchen work surfaces must be kept clean to prevent the following:
• Accumulation of dust, dirt, and grease
• Spread of bacteria and germs into food (cross-contamination)
• Spoiled food getting into new food

Consider the kitchen floor as a work surface, which must also be kept clean:
• Clean frequently – at least 3 times a day after each meal and whenever dirty during the day.
• Mop up spills.
• Discard dropped food.
• Keep free of grease.
• Take floor safety mats outside to wash thoroughly every night and air dry before replacing.

STAFF INSPECTIONS

It is important that the dietary manager do his/her part in ensuring a clean and safe food-preparation environment:
1. Conduct daily sanitation inspections.
2. Look at the kitchen, storeroom, serving line through an inspector’s eyes.
3. Post sanitation checklists, so employees can see when they have been awarded good scores, or how to improve mediocre or poor scores.
4. Maintain temperature and ppm logs.
5. Request maintenance and repairs of all equipment malfunctioning and ensure they are done timely.
6. Ensure dumpsters are inspected several times a day for closed lids, clean area, flies and other animals such as birds getting into the trash.

HAND WASHING

Proper and frequent hand washing is essential in preventing contamination of foods and spread of diseases.

- Post procedure on proper hand washing.
- Periodically conduct personal hygiene checks of employees’ appearance and hands.
- Hands should be washed in the hand-washing sink, away from food.
- Paper towels should be used and properly discarded.
- A trash basket with a lid, or one with a push lid, should be used for discarding paper towels.

A basic description of the proper hand washing procedure is as follows:
1. Rotate knob on paper-towel dispenser or push handle (as applicable), so you can easily pull towels out after washing without touching surface.
2. Wet hands with warm water (water temperature should be 110°F).
3. Apply soap thoroughly:
   ◊ under nails
   ◊ between all finger joints
   ◊ 2 to 3 inches above wrists
4. If necessary, use a clean brush to remove any stubborn substances. Ensure brushes are sanitized after each use.
5. Use a vigorous, rotating, frictional motion, rubbing the hands together while you count the seconds; at least 10 seconds per food code requirements.
6. Rinse hands well. *Do not turn off water yet!*
7. Pull paper towels from dispenser and dry hands well with paper towels. *Hold on to paper towels or if too wet, remove one more with which to shut the water faucets.*
8. Shut off water faucets using the paper towels.
9. Dispose of paper towels, being careful not to touch the trash can.
10. Be sure washing facilities are clean before leaving.

If there is a possibility that your hands have been exposed to more-than-ordinary levels of contamination, it is advisable to follow this additional procedure:
1. Soak hands in an approved disinfectant for 60 seconds.
2. Rinse well.
3. Towel dry.
4. After disinfecting, do not use soap because it destroys the effectiveness of the disinfectant.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING

In addition to meal preparation and kitchen cleanliness, Dietary staff must be concerned with their own appearance and appropriate use of clothing. To ensure neatness and that clothing does not get in the way of safe food preparation, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Adhere to facility dress requirements for Dietary staff
  ◊ Uniform as required
  ◊ Clothing should be clean and neat
- Shoes
  ◊ comfortable
  ◊ provide adequate support
  ◊ non-slip soles
  ◊ no high heels or open toes
- Hair
  ◊ short or tied back
  ◊ clean and neat
  ◊ hair nets or caps worn
- Jewelry
  ◊ No loose bracelets
  ◊ No dangling charms
  ◊ No dangling earrings

THE INSPECTORS ARE HERE!

Congratulations! You have finished the course and are ready for inspection. Now you just wait patiently, and practice everything you have learned on a daily basis. It is helpful for employees to be watchful and remind each other of good sanitation methods. Don’t limit yourselves to doing what is necessary for your position, but be mindful of everything around you. If a co-worker is busy, or forgets to cover or put food away timely, do it or remind them. When going in and out of storage areas, keep your eyes open and correct any deficiencies you may find; for example, a package left open, a scoop in the dry ingredient bin, a refrigerated food past the 72 hours, a label missing. The department manager should follow the DIETARY DEPARTMENT CHECKLIST to always be ready for inspection. And most important, as soon as you hear the announcement “the inspectors are here!”, all employees should follow the SURVEY CHECKLIST.
The following checklist is a helpful guide for the Dietary department manager.

**CHECKLIST**

- Check monthly work schedule for department employees.
- Check timecards to be sure hours are in the budget.
- Check to be sure all staff members arrive on time for their shifts.
- Check that all orders get placed (groceries, milk, produce, bread,).
- Check that groceries are stored promptly, especially meat.
- Check dishwashing procedure.
- Check dishwasher chemicals and/or temperatures.
- Check temperature logs are maintained daily. Fill any holes.
- Check that kitchen cleaning is accomplished as necessary, at least daily.
- Check cold food storage ambient temperatures, and spot check internal food temperatures.
- Check refrigerator for storage of leftover foods.
- Check temperature logs for all equipment.
- Check supplements and snack list to ensure accuracy.
- Check prepared food against food listed on the menu. **Taste it!**
- Check that all therapeutic diets are prepared and served correctly.
- Check that alternate meal and daily substitutes are prepared.
- Check tray distribution, ensuring that meals are on time.
- Check tray card set-up (should be set up according to nursing list, to enable distribution within 15 minutes).
- Call R.D. with any diet orders not on the menu.
- Conduct meal rounds.
- Ensure residents interviewed within 24 hours of admission. Re-interview those residents with low intakes.
SURVEY CHECKLIST

When you learn that the Health Department has arrived to conduct an inspection you will have approximately 10 minutes to prepare. The following checklist should be used at least weekly to ensure that the Dietary department is in proper order prior to survey day:

Food storage
- Check all storage areas for covered, labeled, dated food.
- Discard food over 72 hours old.
- Plan for utilizing food less than 48 hours old.
- Check dry storage area for dust, debris, spills.
- Check dry storage area for dented cans.
  - Mark “not for use,” or
  - Remove to separate area.
- Check staples bins, to ensure cleanliness, and scoops not left inside bins.
- Check that all open dry goods are dated and sealed tightly.
- Check refrigerators/freezers for cleanliness.
- Check that raw thawed/thawing meats are not next to other food products, such as produce, dairy, or cured meats that will not undergo cooking at high temperatures.

Food temperature
- Check all thermometers for appropriate temperatures.
- Check internal food temperatures in all refrigerators.
- Check meat-cooling process and verify rapid cooling.
- Check food temperatures 30 minutes prior to meal service.
  - Check temperature of cold beverages.
  - Ice all beverages at tray line.
  - Check temperature of desserts.
- Have plan ready to implement if needed for rapid heating of hot foods or rapid cooling of cold foods.
- Check all temperature logs to ensure current status.
- If any logs show inappropriate temperatures, ensure availability of a repair work order or a QAA study to correct the problem.

Personal Hygiene
- Check for aprons, hairnets, appropriate clothing and shoes on all staff.
- Check for use of gloves.
  - If employees wear gloves, remind them to change their gloves after touching any nonfood items or preparation areas.
Review hand washing procedure.
Check for paper towels, hand washing soap, and trash basket with push lid for towel disposal in sink area.
Remind all employees not to touch their hair, face, or eyeglasses while working, and to wash hands if they do.
Remind all employees to remove their aprons before leaving the kitchen area for any reason, and replace the apron upon return.
**STUDY QUESTIONS**

What is the twofold purpose of the Department of Health?
What are the three areas of focus during Department of Health inspections?
What problems can occur if temperatures are not maintained properly?
What are examples of perishable food items?
What are at least eight factors that contribute to food being unsafe?
What are at least five general guidelines for food storage?
What are at least five pieces of Dietary equipment that should have temperature logs kept on them?
What are at least six guidelines to follow when storing dry foods?
What are at least three aspects to appropriate Dietary clothing and personal appearance?
What are at least five items that the Health Department inspects related to food storage?
What are at least five items that the Health Department inspects related to food temperatures?
What are at least five items that the Health Department inspects related to personal hygiene?