



County of San Diego
Department of Environmental Health
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GUIDELINES FOR FOOD DEFENSE

BACKGROUND:

It is the responsibility of each food facility to provide safe and wholesome food to their customers. Food and water systems cannot be protected against every possible hazard; however this guideline checklist was developed to assist the retail food facility operator in reducing potential hazards.

SECURITY:

- Limit access to food preparation and storage areas.
- Do not allow non-essential personnel in food processing and storage areas.
- Lock doors and windows allowing only authorized personnel in these areas. Fire exits must not be blocked.
- Monitor visitors and delivery personnel. Consider a visitor log.
- Report unusual activity to a manager or security



APPROVED SOURCE:

- Confirm that suppliers have a food safety and security plan in place.
- Check-in the deliveries, do not allow an unattended delivery.
- Keep a list of where food products are purchased and maintain copies of invoices/bill of lading for tracking all purchases.
- Create a written plan with the procedures for the food facility's receipt of foods.
- Use approved food sources only. All produce should be washed before using.
- Be aware of delivery conditions and product quality. Inspect for tampering, discoloration, pinholes or unusual packages.

STORAGE:

- Maintain security and integrity of storage areas. Focus on potential contamination points.
- Chemical and cleaning items should be stored in a designated area away from food and utensils.
- All food items and condiments are to be adequately protected from contamination in covered, approved containers.

GUIDELINES FOR FOOD DEFENSE (CONTINUED)

FOOD DISPLAY / BUFFET:

- Self serve or buffet areas may be at risk. Develop a monitoring plan to observe the area and not just during replenishing.
- Do not refill partially empty containers. Place a clean or new container of fresh product in the serving area. This breaks the cycle of potential contamination.
- Sneeze guards and/or food covers are required to provide protection from droplet contamination.
- Remove all food from service that has been tampered with.



WATER / ICE:

- Provide/verify backflow prevention devices are on beverage dispensers.
- Secure the ice machine(s) inside the facility to prevent contamination.
- Water and ice must come from an approved source. It should be delivered so as to be protected from contamination. Do not place bags of ice on the floor.

EMPLOYEES:

- All employees should receive adequate food handler training, with records maintained by management.
- Set a policy for employee screening or background checks.
- Provide adequate training for new employees with appropriate supervision.
- Employees should wear clean uniforms.
- Provide secure lockers for employee belongings away from the food preparation and storage area.



GOVERNMENT LIAISON:

- Report suspect foodborne illness (e.g. vomiting, diarrhea and/or fever) to the Department of Environmental Health at (858) 505-6814.
- After hours, holidays and weekends contact the Environmental Health Specialist through the County Communications at (858) 565-5255.
- For confirmed tampering contact 911 immediately. Additionally notify the Department of Environmental Health at (858) 505-6900.

Additional food safety information and resources on the internet:

www.cdc.gov

www.fda.gov

www.usda.gov

www.sdcdeh.org