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Introduction

This manual ensures all kitchen personnel understand workplace hazards and adopt safe practices as required by OSHA. It must be reviewed during onboarding and updated annually or after any incident.

Purpose of the Safety Handbook

To inform and educate employees about the safe practices, procedures, and expectations while performing job-related tasks.

Commitment to Safety

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. Safety is our top priority.

Safety Policy Statement

All employees are expected to follow safety protocols. Supervisors will enforce regulations, and violations will be addressed promptly.

Safety is a Team Effort

Everyone must work together to ensure a safe working environment. Communication and collaboration are key.

Employee Safety Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for following safety rules, wearing PPE, and reporting unsafe conditions.

General Safety Rules

No horseplay, always use PPE, report hazards immediately, and follow all posted warnings and instructions.

Reporting Unsafe Conditions

Notify a supervisor immediately of any hazard. Use the hazard report form if needed.

Incident Reporting Procedures

All incidents must be reported within 24 hours. An investigation will be conducted, and corrective actions will be taken.

Return to Work Program

Injured employees will be provided with transitional work opportunities as they recover.

Safety Orientation and Training

All new hires must complete a safety orientation. Refresher training courses are held annually or as needed.

Safety Orientation Training

Covers hazard communication, PPE, emergency procedures, and safe use of tools and equipment.

Periodic Safety Inspections

Supervisors will perform monthly safety inspections to ensure compliance and identify hazards.

Safety Meetings and Communication

Weekly Safety Huddles and quarterly safety meetings will be conducted to reinforce safety awareness.

Emergency Action Plans

Annual evacuation drills must be conducted, documented, and evacuation procedures reviewed (29 CFR 1910.38(f)).

Each job site must have a posted emergency plan detailing evacuation routes and emergency contacts.

Fire Evacuation Procedures

Sound the alarm, evacuate the area using designated routes, and report to the assembly point.

Severe Weather Procedures

Seek shelter immediately. Supervisors will monitor weather alerts and communicate actions.

Medical Emergency Procedures

Call 911 immediately. Provide first aid if trained and stay with the injured until help arrives.

Emergency Contact Information

Maintain an updated emergency contact list at each job site and with the HR department.

OSHA Compliance and General Safety Programs

To maintain a safe work environment and comply with federal and state regulations, A Better Choice Staffing has implemented the following OSHA-mandated compliance programs:

1. Hazard Communication Program (29 CFR 1910.1200)

- ☐ Employees must also ensure that SDSs are readily accessible during all shifts (29 CFR 1910.1200(g)(8)).
- ☐ Employees must be trained to recognize and handle hazardous chemicals safely.
- ☐ All containers require OSHA labels with product name, signal word, hazard statement, pictograms, and manufacturer details.
- ☐ All Safety Data Sheets (SDS) will be kept in a binder at the host stand and in the manager's office. Employees must know their location and be trained on how to read them.
- ☐ Chemicals must never be mixed unless approved, as this can create toxic or flammable reactions (e.g., bleach and ammonia).
- ☐ Example: Cleaning supplies like degreasers must have visible OSHA-compliant labels.
- ☐ [Illustration: SDS binder and a properly labeled spray bottle.](#)

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- ☐ The employer is responsible for maintaining PPE and replacing it as needed (29 CFR 1910.132(a)).
- ☐ Non-slip shoes, cut-resistant gloves, heat-resistant mitts, and eye protection must be used as appropriate.
- ☐ Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be worn in accordance with the specific requirements of each job task, including gloves, goggles, aprons, and slip-resistant footwear.
- ☐ Employees are responsible for inspecting PPE before use and replacing damaged items immediately.
- ☐ Managers will train employees on how to properly put on, remove, clean, and dispose of PPE.
- ☐ Example: Use cut-resistant gloves when chopping onions or cleaning slicers.
- ☐ [Illustration: visual of kitchen PPE items \(gloves, apron, face shield\).](#)

3. Fire Safety (29 CFR 1910 Subpart L)

- ☐ Training records for fire extinguisher drills must be maintained, and employees must participate in annual fire extinguisher training exercises (29 CFR 1910.157(g)(4)).
- ☐ Know the types and locations of fire extinguishers (Class K for grease, ABC for general use).
- ☐ All employees will receive annual hands-on fire extinguisher training.
- ☐ Regular cleaning of grease traps, hoods, and cooking equipment is required to prevent fire buildup.
- ☐ Fire extinguishers will be visually inspected monthly and documented on the inspection tag.
- ☐ Exit doors and exit routes must remain clear and unlocked at all times. Exit signs must remain illuminated.
- ☐ Never leave cooking unattended.
- ☐ Example: Use the PASS method—Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep.
- ☐ [Illustration: Diagram showing extinguisher types.](#)

4. Machine & Equipment Safety

- ☐ Only trained staff can operate kitchen equipment (mixers, slicers, dish machines).
- ☐ All safety guards must be in place during operation.
- ☐ Lockout/Tagout procedures must be followed during maintenance or cleaning.
- ☐ Never bypass safety guards or interlocks.
- ☐ Example: Always unplug a slicer before cleaning.
- ☐ [Illustration: Label parts of a mixer or slicer showing danger zones.](#)

5. Slips, Trips, and Falls (29 CFR 1910.22)

- ☐ Aisles must be kept free of obstructions at all times to comply with OSHA walking-working surface standards (29 CFR 1910.22(b)).
- ☐ Keep floors dry and use wet floor signs.
- ☐ Extension cords may not cross walkways. When cords are in use, they must be secured against walls or covered by protective mats.
- ☐ Wear slip-resistant shoes.
- ☐ Carry loads without blocking vision.
- ☐ Example: Place a mat at dishwashing station to prevent slips.
- ☐ [Illustration: Photo of slip hazard area with signage and mat in use.](#)

6. Burn Prevention & First Aid (29 CFR 1910.151)

- ☐ Use oven mitts and potholders when handling hot cookware and avoid overfilling pans with oil.
- ☐ Label hot surfaces and containers clearly.
- ☐ First aid kits must be ANSI-compliant, fully stocked, and readily accessible.
- ☐ Burns should be treated under cool water and reported immediately.
- ☐ First aid kits must be accessible and checked monthly.
- ☐ Example: Treat burns under cool water and notify a supervisor.
- ☐ [Illustration: Chart of burn first aid procedures.](#)

7. Sanitation & Hygiene (29 CFR 1910.141).

- ☐ Employees must wash hands for a minimum of 20 seconds using soap and warm water:
 - ☐ Before handling food
 - ☐ After restroom use
 - ☐ After handling trash or dirty dishes
 - ☐ After coughing, sneezing, or touching face/hair.
- ☐ Wash hands frequently.
- ☐ Sanitize surfaces regularly.
- ☐ Employees must have access to potable drinking water, and all food and beverages must be stored in a sanitary manner (29 CFR 1910.141(b)).
- ☐ Employees experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, or fever are not permitted to work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

8. Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030)

- ☐ The company maintains a written Exposure Control Plan, reviewed annually and available in the Safety Binder.
- ☐ All contaminated sharps or materials must be disposed of in red, labeled biohazard containers.
- ☐ Employees must immediately report exposures to blood or bodily fluids to a supervisor for medical evaluation.
- ☐ Use universal precautions for all bodily fluids: treat all blood or bodily fluids as infectious.
- ☐ Wear gloves and use EPA-registered disinfectants for cleanup.
- ☐ Employees must complete annual Bloodborne Pathogens training in compliance with OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030(g)(2)(i).
- ☐ Example: Wear gloves to clean up a cut sustained while prepping.
- ☐ [Illustration: Graphic showing glove use and biohazard cleanup procedure.](#)

9. Food Safety Practices

- ☐ Maintain food temperatures: Cold $\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$, Hot $\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$.
- ☐ Use separate, color-coded cutting boards to prevent cross-contamination.
- ☐ Wash hands for 20 seconds after restroom use, touching raw food, or handling waste.
- ☐ Example: Cook poultry to 165°F , ground beef to 155°F , seafood to 145°F ; use a thermometer to confirm.
- ☐ [Illustration: Temperature chart for common foods.](#)

10. Knife & Sharp Object Safety

- ☐ Use proper cutting techniques including the claw grip and cutting away from the body.
- ☐ Knives should be kept sharpened to reduce slippage and stored in a secure location.
- ☐ Example: Do not leave knives in sinks or covered by towels.
- ☐ [Illustration: Diagram of proper grip and knife storage rack.](#)

11. Ergonomics and Lifting Safety

- ☐ Lift with your legs, not your back. Avoid twisting while lifting.
- ☐ Do not lift beyond safe capacity—ask for help.
- ☐ Use tray stands; take breaks to avoid strain.
- ☐ [Illustration: Diagram showing proper lifting technique.](#)

12. Workplace Violence & Harassment (OSHA General Duty Clause, Section 5(a)(1))

- ☐ A Better Choice Staffing enforces a zero-tolerance policy for workplace violence, harassment, or intimidation.
- ☐ Employees must immediately report threats, harassment, or violent behavior to a supervisor or HR.
- ☐ All reports will be promptly investigated, and retaliation against employees who report safety or harassment concerns is strictly prohibited.
- ☐ Supervisors will receive de-escalation and intervention training consistent with OSHA best practices.
- ☐ Respectful conduct required.

13. Incident Reporting & Recordkeeping (29 CFR 1904)

- ☐ Rotate tasks to avoid repetitive strain injuries and take breaks as scheduled.
- ☐ Incident reports must be completed within 24 hours.
- ☐ Maintain an OSHA 300 Log of recordable incidents and post OSHA 300A summaries annually.
- ☐ Example: A minor cut still requires incident reporting and first aid.
- ☐ [Illustration: Sample incident form with sections to complete.](#)

14. Employee Training Requirements

- ☐ All employees must complete initial safety training within their first week of employment and annual refresher training thereafter.
- ☐ Training records must be maintained for at least three years (29 CFR 1910.9(d)).
- ☐ Required training includes:
 - ☐ Proper PPE fitting and use.
 - ☐ Fire extinguisher drills.
 - ☐ Hazard Communication and SDS review
 - ☐ Bloodborne Pathogen procedures
 - ☐ Lifting ergonomics and back safety
- ☐ [Illustration: Table summarizing required training and frequencies.](#)

15. Employee Rights & Responsibilities

- ☐ Employees have the right to a safe workplace and to report unsafe conditions without retaliation.
- ☐ Employees are responsible for following all safety policies, using PPE correctly and attending training.
- ☐ Example: Reporting a wet floor without fear of punishment.
- ☐ [Illustration: OSHA poster describing employee rights.](#)

16. Acknowledgment of Safety Procedures

- ☐ All employees must sign the Safety Handbook acknowledgment form annually or after any updates.
- ☐ Failure to follow safety policies, including refusal to wear PPE or deliberate violation of safety procedures, may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from work assignments.
- ☐ [Illustration: Copy of acknowledgment form template.](#)