



Better Choice **STAFFING**

**A Better Choice Staffing
Safety Handbook Restaurant
BACK of House (BOH)**



A BETTER CHOICE STAFFING SAFETY HANDBOOK RESTAURANT BACK OF HOUSE (BOH)

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1. Introduction

Purpose of the Safety Handbook

This Safety Handbook provides employees of A Better Choice Staffing with a guide to the safety policies, procedures, and practices necessary for a safe working environment. Our goal along with your host employer, is to prevent workplace accidents, injuries, and illnesses by promoting safety awareness and adherence to OSHA regulations.

Commitment to Safety

At A Better Choice Staffing, our employees are our most valuable asset. Ensuring their health and safety is our top priority. We are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace through training, proper equipment, and continuous improvement of our safety practices.

Safety Policy Statement

Our safety policy aims to eliminate or minimize risks associated with our operations. All employees are expected to follow the safety guidelines and procedures outlined in this handbook. Safety is a core value that everyone must uphold, reflecting our culture of care and responsibility.

Safety is a Team Effort

Creating and maintaining a safe work environment is a collective responsibility. Everyone, from management to part-time and seasonal staff, must work together to identify and address potential hazards. Your active participation in our safety program is crucial to its success.

2. Multi-Employer Worksite Responsibilities

As a staffing agency, A Better Choice Staffing shares responsibility with host employers for employee safety. Our employees must follow both A Better Choice Staffing safety policies and host employer site-specific rules. Supervisors and safety coordinators will collaborate to address hazards jointly and ensure OSHA compliance.

Division of Safety Responsibilities

This Safety Handbook is intended to provide general guidance on workplace safety practices. A Better Choice Staffing and the host employer share responsibilities for employee safety in compliance with OSHA regulations and the laws of the State of Florida. The following policy governs the division of responsibilities between A Better Choice Staffing and the host employer.

General Safety Training

A Better Choice Staffing will provide all leased employees with training on general safety rules, hazard awareness, and their basic rights and responsibilities under OSHA.

Site-Specific Training

The host employer (the company to which employees are assigned) is responsible for providing all training, instruction, and supervision related to the specific hazards and conditions of its job site.

Training Documentation

The party providing the training (either A Better Choice Staffing or the host employer) will maintain documentation of that training, in accordance with OSHA and applicable Florida law.



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Incident & Accident Reporting

Any work-related injury, illness, or accident that occurs at the host employer's job site will be reported and recorded by the host employer in accordance with OSHA recordkeeping requirements. A Better Choice Staffing must be promptly notified of any such incident to coordinate care, compliance, and employee support.

In case of any ambiguity or overlap, this clause shall govern the division of responsibilities between A Better Choice Staffing and the host employer.

Host Management Responsibilities:

- Providing a safe work environment and supervision.
- Supplying appropriate tools, equipment, and PPE.
- Ensuring all employees receive proper safety training.
- Conducting regular safety inspections and addressing unsafe conditions.
- Investigating incidents and implementing corrective actions.

Host Supervisor's Responsibilities

- Promoting safety awareness and leading by example.
- Ensuring employees are trained on safe work practices.
- Conducting frequent safety inspections.
- Taking prompt corrective action when unsafe conditions or behaviors are observed.
- Investigating and reporting all incidents.
- Complete annual safety leadership training covering hazard recognition, incident reporting, corrective action tracking, and employee engagement.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Following all safety policies and procedures.
- Reporting unsafe conditions and practices immediately.
- Keeping work areas clean and orderly.
- Operating equipment only if authorized and trained.
- Reporting all incidents to management immediately and completing incident reports promptly.

3. Employee Safety Responsibilities

General Safety Rules

Employees of A Better Choice Staffing must adhere to the following general safety rules to ensure their safety and the safety of their coworkers:

Conduct:

- Always maintain professional behavior to ensure a safe and respectful workplace.
- All employees must work in an injury-free manner, displaying accepted levels of behavior.
- Conduct that places the employee or others at risk, or which threatens or intimidates others, is not tolerated.

No Drugs and Alcohol

Purpose

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive workplace. The presence or use of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or alcohol in the workplace poses serious safety and health risks to all employees. This policy is established in compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and the laws of the State of Florida.



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Prohibited Conduct

- Employees are strictly prohibited from using, possessing, distributing, selling, or being under the influence of illegal drugs, controlled substances (without a valid prescription), or alcohol while on duty, on company premises, or at a client's job site.
- Prescription or over-the-counter medications that may impair an employee's ability to safely perform work must be reported to a supervisor or HR prior to performing job duties.

Workplace Safety

- Employees must report to work fit for duty and free from the effects of drugs or alcohol that could impair job performance or safety.
- Any employee who is suspected of being impaired or under the influence at work will be immediately removed from duty and may be subject to drug or alcohol testing, consistent with Florida law.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

- A Better Choice Staffing and host employers reserve the right to conduct pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, and random drug and/or alcohol testing as permitted by Florida's Drug-Free Workplace Program.
- Refusal to submit to required testing or a positive test result may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Workers' Compensation Notice (Florida Law)

- Under Florida law, an employee who refuses to take a required drug or alcohol test, or who tests positive, may forfeit eligibility for workers' compensation medical and indemnity benefits.

Disciplinary Action

- Any violation of this policy will result in corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No Firearms

- To ensure the safety and security of all employees, clients, and visitors, A Better Choice Staffing prohibits the possession, use, or display of firearms or other weapons in the workplace, on job sites, or while conducting company business, except as specifically permitted by Florida law.

General Prohibition

- Employees are prohibited from carrying firearms or other dangerous weapons while on duty, at any job site, or in any company-provided vehicle or facility. This prohibition applies regardless of whether the employee holds a valid concealed weapon or firearm license.

Exceptions Under Florida Law

- In accordance with Florida Statute § 790.251 ("Preservation and Protection of the Right to Keep and Bear Arms in Motor Vehicles Act of 2008"), employees may lawfully keep a firearm locked inside or locked to a private motor vehicle in a parking lot when the employee is lawfully in such area. Nothing in this policy is intended to infringe upon rights granted under Florida law regarding secured storage of firearms in private vehicles.

Enforcement

- Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Host employers may also enforce additional site-specific firearm and weapon restrictions, which employees are required to follow at all times.

Housekeeping:

- Always keep work areas clean and safe.
- Dispose of trash and waste in approved containers.
- Wipe up spills immediately and put tools and equipment away after use.
- Ensure that aisles, exits, fire extinguishers, emergency equipment, electrical panels, and controls are free of obstruction.



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Injury Reporting:

- Report all work-related injuries to your supervisor immediately. OSHA requires fatalities to be reported within 8 hours, and inpatient hospitalizations, amputations, or loss of an eye within 24 hours.
- Follow up with your supervisor after any medical appointments related to a work injury.
- Provide your supervisor with any paperwork received during medical appointments.

Reporting Unsafe Conditions

Employees must report unsafe work practices or hazards to a supervisor immediately so corrective action can be taken.

In the event of an incident, the following procedures must be followed:

Immediate Action:

- Report all incidents, no matter how minor, to your supervisor immediately.
- Supervisors must investigate and document all incidents using an Incident Report form.
- Ensure the injured employee receives proper medical attention.
- Near-miss reports will be reviewed to identify hazards and implement corrective measures before accidents occur.

Incident Investigation:

- Supervisors will investigate incidents to identify root causes and corrective actions.
- The injured employee will participate in the investigation and provide necessary information.

Corrective Actions:

- Based on the investigation, appropriate corrective actions will be implemented to prevent recurrence.
- Supervisors will monitor the effectiveness of the corrective actions.

Documentation:

- All incident reports and related documentation will be maintained in personnel files.
- Records of training, certifications, hazard identification, and corrective actions will be kept up to date.

Return to Work Program

Policy Statement

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to supporting employees who are injured on the job and assisting them in returning to safe and productive work as soon as possible. This program complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regarding reasonable accommodations and aligns with OSHA whistleblower protections, ensuring that employees have the right to refuse unsafe work without retaliation. It also incorporates Florida's workers' compensation reporting requirements.

Immediate Reporting of Injuries

- All work-related injuries must be reported to a supervisor immediately, no later than the end of the shift.
- Employees must complete and sign a Report of Injury or Illness form.
- Employers are required to file the First Report of Injury (Form DWC-1) with the insurance carrier within 7 days of knowledge of the injury, as mandated by Florida law.
- Timely reporting is essential. Delayed reporting may jeopardize claim approval under Florida's workers' compensation system.
- Florida law also requires posting of the Workers' Compensation Notice (DFS-F2-DWC-25) in a visible workplace location.



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Medical Treatment & Evaluation

- Injured employees must seek medical treatment from an authorized provider. Coordination with the authorized treating physician is required under Florida workers' compensation law to ensure compliance and proper return-to-work planning."
- The treating physician will complete a Return-to-Work Evaluation form.
- Employees must submit this evaluation form to the Safety Director by the next business day following treatment.

Transitional or Light Duty Work

- Temporary light duty assignments are available for up to 60 days, with progress reviews every 30 days.
- Transitional or light duty beyond 60 days, up to a maximum of 6 months, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- All transitional work assignments will respect medical restrictions and comply with ADA reasonable accommodation standards.

Return to Regular Duty

- Employees must submit a Return-to-Work form from their treating physician confirming they are medically cleared for full duty.
- Employees with permanent restrictions will be reviewed to determine whether essential job functions can still be performed with or without reasonable accommodation.

Communication Requirements

- Injured employees must keep the company informed of their recovery status on a weekly basis.
- Employees must share medical updates within 24 hours of each appointment.
- Failure to provide required updates may result in reduction of benefits and may lead to disciplinary action.

4. Safety Orientation and Training

Safety Orientation Training

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to providing comprehensive safety orientation and training for all employees. This training is essential for ensuring a safe work environment and compliance with OSHA standards. The following topics will be covered during the safety orientation:

Company-Specific Accident and Incident Data

- Review of past accidents and incidents.
- Lessons learned and preventive measures implemented.

Hazards Associated with the Work Area

- Identification of common hazards such as tray carrying, hot beverage service, or handling POS/electrical equipment.
- Strategies for mitigating these hazards.

Hazards Associated with Specific Job Tasks

- Detailed discussion of risks associated with particular tasks.
- Safe practices to follow for each task.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Types of PPE are required for various tasks.
- Proper use, care, and maintenance of PPE.
- Illustration: Quick-reference PPE chart for common BOH tasks



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Emergency Procedures

- Steps to take in the event of an emergency (fire, severe weather, medical emergencies).
- Location of emergency exits, first aid kits, and emergency contact numbers.

Incident & Accident Reporting

- Procedures for reporting accidents and near-misses.
- Importance of prompt reporting for effective incident management.

Periodic Safety Inspections

To maintain a safe working environment, periodic safety inspections will be conducted. These inspections aim to identify potential hazards and ensure compliance with safety protocols.

Inspection Schedule

- Regularly scheduled inspections (monthly, quarterly).
- Unannounced spot checks.

Inspection Areas

- Work areas, equipment, and tools.
- Storage areas for chemicals and PPE.
- Emergency exits and first aid stations.

Inspection Procedures

- Checklists are to be utilized to promote comprehensive inspections.
- Documentation of findings and corrective actions taken.

Employee Involvement

- Encouragement of employee participation in safety inspections.
- Reporting of hazards and suggestions for improvements.

Safety Meetings

Effective communication is crucial for maintaining a culture of safety. Regular safety meetings will be held host employer to discuss safety-related topics and address employee concerns. Such as, Stress management and mental health awareness training for BOH staff.

Safety Meeting Schedule

- Weekly Safety & Service Talks.
 - Host employer will hold at job site
 - Examples: slips/trips, tray handling, POS safety, guest service tips.
- Monthly safety committee meetings.
 - Host employer will hold at job site
 - Examples: Compliance reviews, discuss the root cause of the incident and what could have been done to prevent it.

Meeting Agenda

- Review of recent incidents and near-misses.
- Discussion of upcoming projects and associated hazards.
- Training on new safety procedures or equipment.

Documentation

- Minutes of safety meetings will be recorded and maintained.
- Action items and follow-up tasks will be tracked.

Communication Channels

- Use of bulletin boards, newsletters, and emails to disseminate safety information.



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- Open-door policy for employees to report safety concerns and suggestions.

5. 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:

Hazard Communication Program

In addition to OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard, Florida law gives employees the Right-to-Know about chemical hazards in the workplace. This means you are entitled to receive information and training about any hazardous substances you may be exposed to while working, and you can ask for this information at any time without fear of retaliation.

- Employees must be trained to recognize and handle hazardous chemicals safely.
- Employees will receive initial and annual refresher training on Hazard Communication, including site-specific labeling and SDS use.
- Employees must also ensure that SDSs are readily accessible during all shifts.
- 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.**

Slips, Trips, and Falls

- Aisles must be kept free of obstructions at all times to comply with OSHA walking-working surface standards.
- Clean spills immediately; post '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.

• **Illustration: Photo of slip hazard area with signage and mat in use.**

Electrical Safety

- All electrical outlets located in wet or damp areas, such as bars and service stations, must be protected by Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI).
- Only licensed electricians or qualified personnel may repair electrical equipment.
- Electrical panels must always remain accessible with a minimum clearance of 36 inches.
- All damaged cords must be immediately removed from service.

First Aid

- At least one employee trained in First Aid and CPR/AED must be present on every shift, in compliance with OSHA standard. Certification will be through a nationally recognized provider (e.g., Red Cross, AHA).
- First aid kits must meet ANSI Z308.1 standards, be fully stocked, and inspected monthly.
- Supervisors must maintain inspection logs.
- First aid kits must be checked monthly and restocked as needed.

• **Illustration: Chart of first aid procedures.**



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6. Emergency Action Plans

Annual evacuation drills must be conducted, documented, and evacuation procedures reviewed.

Fire Evacuation Procedures

- Know primary and secondary evacuation routes.
- Proceed to designated assembly areas.
- Do not re-enter until cleared by emergency personnel.

Fire Safety

- Annual hands-on fire extinguisher training is required if employees are expected to use extinguishers.
- Training records for fire extinguisher drills must be maintained, and employees must participate in annual fire extinguisher training exercises.
- 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 always unlocked. Exit signs must remain illuminated.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Example: Use the PASS method—Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep.

- **Illustration: Diagram showing extinguisher types.**

Hurricane & Severe Weather Preparedness

Severe Weather Procedures

- Cease outdoor work and seek shelter during lightning or storms.
- Move to the designated storm shelter areas (interior rooms, basements, or other safe areas).
- Follow supervisor instructions for securing equipment.

Hurricane Preparedness

Florida is uniquely vulnerable to hurricanes, tropical storms, and severe weather events. To protect employees and ensure continuity of operations.

Pre-Storm Preparation

- Monitor Alerts: Employees must stay informed through the National Hurricane Center (www.nhc.noaa.gov) and local emergency management broadcasts.
- Secure Work Areas: Host employers are responsible for securing equipment, chemicals, and supplies prior to storm impact.
- Emergency Supplies: Verify first aid kits, bottled water, flashlights, and batteries are available.

During Storm or Evacuation

- Work Suspension: Outdoor or non-essential work will be suspended when severe weather warnings are issued.
- Evacuation Orders: If local authorities issue evacuation orders, employees are required to comply immediately.
- Sheltering in Place: If evacuation is not possible, employees will move to designated interior safe areas away from windows and glass.

Post-Storm Recovery

- Return-to-Work Notification: Employees may only return to job sites once local authorities declare the area safe.



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- Hazard Inspections: Supervisors will inspect for hazards (downed power lines, flooding, structural damage) before operations resume.

Medical Emergency Procedures

- Call 911 immediately.
- Provide first aid if trained and safe to do so.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) to avoid contact with bodily fluids.
- Report all medical emergencies to a supervisor.

Emergency Contact Information

- Emergency numbers must be posted for fire, police, poison control, etc.
- Employees must familiarize themselves with locations of first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and exits.
- Emergency Medical Services (Ambulance): 911
 - Injury Hotline: (844) 789-2567
 - Hotline will connect you with a nurse who will do a phone assessment and direct you to the nearest assigned urgent care facility.
 - Safety Director: Steven Tabarinni, (239) 823-8524
 - Please leave a voicemail if there is no answer.

7. Job-Specific Safety Precautions

Ergonomics Guidelines

Safe Lifting

- Lift with your legs, not your back. Avoid twisting while lifting, pivot with the feet instead.
- Do not lift beyond safe capacity—ask for help.
- Use tray stands; take breaks to avoid strain.

- Illustration: Diagram showing proper lifting technique.

Standing and Walking Ergonomics

- Rotate between standing and walking tasks, when possible, to reduce strain on legs and lower back.
- Maintain Upright Posture: Stand tall with shoulders back and knees slightly bent, avoid locking knees for long periods.

Footwear Guidelines

- Wear non-slip, closed-toe shoes as required by OSHA and company policy.
- Choose shoes with cushioned insoles and proper arch support.
- Replace worn-out shoes to reduce slip/trip risks and fatigue.

Burn Prevention & First Aid

- 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.

Allergen Awareness

- BOH staff must clearly confirm receipt of the allergy information and verify with FOH before food is served.
- BOH must document allergy communication on order tickets/POS when applicable.
- Employees must know how to prevent cross-contact and respond to allergic reactions.
- Only trained/authorized staff may administer an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Call 911 immediately.



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Sanitation & Hygiene

- 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.
- Sanitize surfaces regularly.
- Employees must have access to potable drinking water, and all food and beverages must be stored in a sanitary manner.
- Employees experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, or fever are not permitted to work until they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Food Safety Practices

Safe food handling is critical to protect our guests, employees, and the reputation of our establishment. All Back of House employees are required to follow these practices, which align with Florida's adoption of the FDA 2017 Food Code.

General Food Safety Rules

- Maintain Safe Food Temperatures: Cold foods at $\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$, hot foods at $\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$.
- Cook to Proper Temperatures: Poultry to 165°F , ground beef to 155°F , seafood to 145°F . Always use a calibrated thermometer.
- Prevent Cross-Contamination: Use separate, color-coded cutting boards and utensils for raw proteins and ready-to-eat (RTE) foods.
- Handwashing: Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds after restroom use, after touching raw food, after handling waste, or before working with RTE foods.

Glove Use / Bare-Hand Contact with RTE Foods

- Bare-hand contact with RTE foods is prohibited; use utensils, deli tissue, or single-use gloves.
- Hands must be washed before putting on gloves.
- Gloves are single-use only and must be changed if torn, contaminated, or when switching between raw and RTE foods.
- Florida permits Alternative Operating Procedures (AOP) for bare-hand contact only with strict written controls and approval.

Handwashing Facilities & Signage

- Handwashing sinks must be stocked with soap, warm running water, and single-use towels or hand dryers at all times.
- Clear handwashing signage must be posted in restrooms and kitchen/BOH areas, visible to staff, and in languages understood by employees.

Employee Illness & Exclusions

- Employees must report immediately if experiencing vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, sore throat with fever, or if diagnosed with Norovirus, Shigella, STEC (E. coli), Hepatitis A, or Typhoid fever.
- Ill employees must be restricted or excluded from food handling duties until symptoms are resolved and/or medical clearance is provided.
- Conditional employees or those recently exposed to foodborne illness may also be restricted under specific conditions.
- Employees may also report food safety concerns to the Florida Department of Business & Professional Regulation (DBPR) Division of Hotels and Restaurants at (850) 487-1395 or online at www.myfloridalicense.com



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Food Contact Surfaces & Cross-Contamination Controls

- All food contact surfaces must be smooth, non-absorbent, corrosion-resistant, and easily cleanable.
- Utensils, equipment, and cutting boards used for raw foods must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before use with RTE foods.
- Any food that may have been contaminated must be discarded immediately.
- Cleaning and sanitizing schedules must be strictly followed.
- 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.**

Bloodborne Pathogens

- Employers must offer Hepatitis B vaccination at no cost to employees with occupational exposure risk.
- The company maintains a written Exposure Control Plan, reviewed annually and available in the Safety Binder.
- All contaminated sharp objects, such as needles, syringes, or broken glass, 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 Standard. Annual training is required under OSHA Standard.
- Always wear gloves when cleaning up any blood or bodily fluid exposure to comply with OSHA sustained while prepping.
- Annual training is required under OSHA Standard.

• **Illustration: Graphic showing glove use and biohazard cleanup procedure.**

Machine & Equipment Safety

Training Requirements

- Authorized Employees (those who service or maintain equipment) must complete annual Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) training.
- Affected Employees (those who operate equipment but do not service it) will receive awareness-level training on the purpose and use of LOTO.
- Training records will be maintained by management and made available upon request.

General Safety Rules for Machine & Equipment Use

- Only trained employees may operate or service equipment.
- Never bypass guards, interlocks, or safety devices.
- Report malfunctioning or damaged equipment immediately.
- Ensure proper personal protective equipment (PPE) is worn when using or servicing equipment.

Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) Procedure

Before performing any servicing, cleaning, or maintenance on BOH equipment (e.g., mixers, slicers, grinders, dish machines), follow this step-by-step procedure:



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- Preparation: Identify all energy sources (electrical, mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, thermal). Review machine-specific energy control procedures.
- Notification: Inform affected employees that equipment will be shut down and locked out.
- Shutdown: Power down equipment using normal stopping procedures (e.g., “off” button, switch).
- Isolation: Disconnect or isolate the machine from its energy source(s).
- Lockout: Apply lock(s) to the energy-isolating device(s). Attach a durable 'Danger—Do Not Operate' tag with employee name, date, and reason for lockout.
- Release of Stored Energy: Safely release or block any stored energy (e.g., discharge capacitors, bleed air, release springs).
- Verification: Attempt to operate the equipment controls (start button, switches) to confirm that energy has been isolated. Return controls to the 'off' position.
- Perform Work: Authorized employees may now safely service, clean, or maintain the equipment.
- Restoring Equipment to Service: Inspect the area to ensure all tools and personnel are clear. Remove locks/tags (only by the employee who applied them). Reconnect energy sources and notify employees before restarting equipment.

Enforcement

- Failure to follow these procedures may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Supervisors will conduct periodic audits to verify compliance with OSHA standards and internal policy.

• **Illustration: Label parts of a mixer or slicer showing danger zones.**

Noise Exposure Safety

- Back of House operations such as dishwashing, food prep, and areas with multiple machines can create hazardous noise levels. OSHA requires employers to protect employees from occupational noise exposure.

Requirements and Practices

- Noise Monitoring: Employers must measure workplace noise if exposure may reach or exceed 85 decibels averaged over 8 hours (TWA).
- Hearing Conservation Program: If exposure exceeds this limit, employees will be included in a hearing conservation program, which provides:
 - Free hearing protection devices (earplugs, earmuffs).
 - Annual training on the risks of noise, proper use of hearing protection, and safe work practices.
 - Audiometric testing at baseline and annually to track hearing health.
- Employee Responsibilities:
 - Wear assigned hearing protection consistently in posted “High Noise” areas.
 - Keep hearing protection clean and replace it if damaged.
 - Report unsafe noise conditions, ringing in the ears, hearing difficulty, or damaged/missing hearing protection to a supervisor immediately.

Best Practices

- Use hearing protection properly whenever in high-noise zones.



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- Cooperate fully with noise monitoring and testing programs.
- Follow supervisor instructions during safety briefings and refreshers.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

OSHA requires employers to assess the workplace to determine if hazards are present (or likely to be present) that necessitate the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is critical in protecting employees from injuries related to cuts, burns, slips, chemical exposure, and potential inhalation hazards.

Employer Responsibilities

Establish and enforce a respiratory protection program if employees may be exposed to inhalation hazards such as strong cleaning chemicals. This program must comply with OSHA and include:

- Conduct a hazard assessment to identify when PPE is required.
- Provide appropriate PPE at no cost to employees.
- Maintain PPE in safe, sanitary condition and replace it as needed.
- Medical evaluation and clearance.
- Fit testing to ensure proper respirator use.
- Training on hazards, limitations, and correct use.
- Recordkeeping and periodic program review.

Employee Responsibilities

- Wear PPE as instructed for all designated tasks.
- Inspect PPE before each use to ensure it is in good condition.
- Replace or report any damaged or defective PPE immediately.
- Follow all training on the proper donning, removal, cleaning, and disposal of PPE.

Required PPE Examples

- Foot Protection: Non-slip shoes must be worn at all times to prevent slips and falls.
- Hand Protection:
 - Cut-resistant gloves when chopping, slicing, or cleaning sharp equipment.
 - Heat-resistant mitts when handling hot pans, trays, or ovens.
 - Disposable gloves and aprons when handling food or cleaning chemicals.
- Eye Protection: Safety glasses or goggles when using chemicals that could splash.
- Respiratory Protection (when applicable): Respirators will only be introduced if hazard assessments identify inhalation risks (e.g., heavy use of cleaning chemicals). Employees will be enrolled in the respiratory protection program at that time.

Training

- Proper use, care, and limitations of PPE.
- How to correctly put on and remove PPE to avoid contamination.
- Cleaning and storage procedures for reusable PPE.
- Reporting and replacing damaged or missing PPE.
- **Illustration: Quick-reference PPE chart for common BOH tasks.**
- **Illustration: certification documents that Employee has completed the hazard assessment for (BOH) operations.**

Heat Illness Prevention (Best Practice – OSHA Guidance)

Employees working outdoors (patios, valet areas, outdoor hosting) are at risk of heat stress.



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- Supervisors must emphasize hydration, shade, and acclimatization, in line with OSHA's Heat Illness Prevention guidance.
- Access to potable drinking water must always be available.
- Rest breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas.
- Monitoring for signs of heat illness (dizziness, headache, nausea).
- Gradual acclimatization for new or returning employees to hot environments.

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.
- Minor Cuts: For a minor cut, apply pressure to stop the bleeding, clean the wound with soap and water, and apply a bandage. Report all injuries to a manager, no matter how small.
- Illustration: Diagram of proper grip and knife storage rack.



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Glassware Safety

- Report broken or chipped glassware immediately.
- Wear gloves when handling sharp or broken items.
- Use broom/dustpan for large pieces, damp paper towel for tiny shards.
- Never pick up broken glass with bare hands.
- Never carry broken glass by hand, use a bus tub or tray.
- Place ALL broken glass in “Broken Glass Only” container (never in trash).

8. ADA & Florida Accommodation Rights

A Better Choice Staffing complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Florida Civil Rights Act (Fla. Stat. § 760). This includes accommodations for both physical and mental health conditions.

- Right to Reasonable Accommodation: Employees with medical conditions (including anxiety, depression, PTSD, or physical limitations from repetitive strain) may request reasonable accommodations. Examples include:
 - Adjusted shift scheduling or rest breaks.
 - Modified duties (e.g., limiting exposure to heat or heavy lifting).
 - Use of assistive devices (e.g., ergonomic mats, anti-fatigue shoes).
 - Temporary reassignment to less strenuous roles.
- Confidentiality: Medical and mental health information is confidential and only shared with those who need to know for workplace safety and accommodation.
- Interactive Process: If an employee requests accommodation, HR and management will engage in an interactive process to identify reasonable solutions that balance employee needs with business operations.
- Protection from Retaliation: Employees cannot be disciplined, demoted, or terminated for requesting accommodations or disclosing a medical condition in good faith. This protection is guaranteed under OSHA whistleblower laws and the ADA.
- Resources Available:
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with counseling and referral services.
 - National 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.
 - Mental health hotlines and local Florida-based support resources.

9. Workplace Violence & Harassment

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and violence-free work environment for all employees, customers, and visitors. We have a zero-tolerance policy for all forms of workplace violence and harassment. All employees are expected to treat one another, our customers, and our vendors with dignity and respect at all times.

Workplace Harassment

Harassment is any unwelcome conduct based on a protected characteristic (e.g., race, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation). This includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome jokes, slurs, epithets, or name-calling.
- Offensive physical contact, gestures, or threats.
- Intimidation, ridicule, or mockery.
- Displaying offensive pictures or objects.
- Spreading rumors or gossip.



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- Bullying, including actions that intentionally undermine a person's work.



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Workplace Violence:

Workplace violence is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other disruptive behavior that occurs at the workplace or is related to our business. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical attacks, hitting, punching, or kicking.
- Threats of violence, either direct or implied.
- Stalking or following a person.
- Intentionally damaging company or employee property.
- Bringing a weapon onto company property.

Employee Responsibilities

Your role is crucial in maintaining a safe and respectful workplace.

- Be a Responsible Bystander: If you witness any form of violence or harassment, do not ignore it. Your prompt action and reporting are essential.
- Do Not Engage: If you are the target of violent or harassing behavior, do not attempt to handle the situation alone or confront the individual. Your safety is our top priority.
- Know Your Role: Understand and follow the company's workplace violence and harassment policy. Treat others with respect, stay alert to unsafe behaviors, and report any incidents immediately using the proper channels.

Reporting Procedures

We encourage you to report any incidents of violence, threats, or harassment immediately. All reports will be handled with discretion and sensitivity.

- Report to Management: Report the incident to your direct supervisor or manager on duty as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Alternate Reporting: If the alleged harasser or perpetrator is your direct supervisor, report the incident to a senior manager or Human Resources.
- Provide Details: When reporting, be prepared to provide details such as the date, time, location, names of those involved, and a description of the event.
- We will maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible, sharing information only on a need-to-know basis to conduct a proper investigation and take appropriate action.
- The company strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against an employee who, in good faith, reports an incident, cooperates in an investigation, or testifies about harassment or violence.

10. Sexual harassment Prevention

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment. This policy applies to all employees, managers, customers, and vendors. Sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated. Any employee who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition to federal protections, Florida law prohibits employment discrimination and harassment under the Florida Civil Rights Act (Fla. Stat. § 760).]



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What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical. This policy prohibits two main types of sexual harassment:

- **Quid Pro Quo:** This occurs when a manager or someone in a position of authority demands sexual favors in exchange for job benefits, such as a raise, promotion, or continued employment.



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- **Hostile Work Environment:** This is created by behavior that is severe or pervasive enough to make the work environment intimidating, hostile, or offensive. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Unwanted sexual jokes, comments, or stories.
 - Displaying sexually suggestive images.
 - Making inappropriate gestures or sounds.
 - Unwanted physical contact, including hugging, patting, or brushing against someone.

Customer Harassment

- Directly but calmly tell the customer to stop the behavior.
- Immediately inform your manager. You have the full support of the company to refuse service to any customer who engages in harassing behavior. The manager will handle the situation from that point forward.

Reporting and Investigation Procedure

If you experience or witness sexual harassment, you must report it immediately. Your report is crucial for us to take appropriate action. We will handle all reports with the utmost confidentiality.

- Step 1: Report the incident to your direct manager, a senior manager, or Human Resources.
- Step 2: Provide as much detail as possible, including who was involved, what was said or done, where and when it happened, and if there were any witnesses.
- Step 3: The company will launch a prompt and thorough investigation into the complaint. You may be asked to provide a written statement.

No Retaliation Policy

We strictly prohibit retaliation against any employee who makes a good-faith complaint of sexual harassment or participates in an investigation. Retaliation is an independent violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Your Responsibility

Every employee is responsible for helping us maintain a respectful and safe workplace. This means:

- Treating all coworkers, managers, and customers with respect.
- Familiarizing yourself with this policy.
- Reporting any form of sexual harassment you experience or witness.

11. Active Shooter/Armed Intruder Response

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to ensuring employees know how to respond in the unlikely event of an active shooter or armed intruder. While OSHA does not prescribe a specific method, the Department of Homeland Security recommends the “Run-Hide-Fight” protocol, which is widely recognized as an effective best practice for workplace safety.

RUN – Evacuate if Safe.

- Leave belongings behind—your life is the priority.
- Help guests evacuate, if possible, but do not delay if they refuse.
- Know primary and secondary exits.
- Call 911 once safe; provide location, intruder description, weapons seen, and injuries.

HIDE – Shelter in Place

- Move guests into secure areas (kitchen, office, storage).
- Lock and barricade doors with heavy items.
- Silence cell phones, turn off lights, stay out of sight.
- Remain quiet and reassure guests calmly.



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FIGHT – Last Resort

- If directly confronted and life is in danger, act aggressively.
- Use improvised weapons (chairs, fire extinguisher, utensils).
- Commit fully to stopping the intruder.
- Engage only if life is in immediate danger.

Law Enforcement Response

- Keep hands visible and empty when officers arrive.
- Follow instructions immediately.
- Do not run toward or touch officers.
- Expect to be treated as a potential threat until cleared.

Post-Incident Recovery

- Follow the emergency plan for staff and guest reunification.
- Provide observations and witness statements to law enforcement.
- Participate in debriefings and request counseling resources if needed.
- From time to time, the company may hold short training sessions or practice discussions or drills to review how to respond to an armed intruder or active shooter. These sessions are designed to keep everyone familiar with the Run-Hide-Fight steps and to make sure staff know what to do in an emergency.

12. Guest De-escalation Procedures

Employees may encounter intoxicated or aggressive customers. In these situations, staff must remain calm and professional. Your safety comes first. De-escalation means calming the situation and involving management, not winning an argument.

Stay Calm and Professional

- Keep your voice steady and calm.
- Maintain open body language (avoid crossing arms or pointing).
- Take a deep breath before responding.

Listen Actively

- Let the guest speak without interruption.
- Show understanding with phrases like “I understand.”
- Restate the concern: “So the issue is with the wait time, correct?”

Maintain Safety Boundaries

- Keep at least one arm’s length distance.
- Stand at an angle, not directly face-to-face.
- Ensure you always have a clear exit path.

Defuse with Empathy

- Acknowledge frustration without admitting fault.
- Example: “I can see this has been frustrating, and I want to help.”
- Offer safe, policy-approved solutions.

Avoid Escalating Behaviors

- Do not argue or raise your voice.
- Avoid physical contact.
- Do not take insults personally.



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Involve Management

- Call a manager if the guest refuses to calm down.
- Do not make promises outside company policy.
- Follow Responsible Alcohol Service guidelines if alcohol is involved.

Call Security or Authorities

- Notify management immediately if a guest becomes aggressive or threatening.
- Contact security or law enforcement if safety is at risk.
- Never attempt to physically remove a guest.

Documentation of the Incident

- Complete an incident report after the situation.
- Record guest behavior, staff actions, and witnesses.
- Helps management review and prevent future incidents.

13. Recordkeeping & Documentation

Accident Prevention Program

- Written accident prevention program is required.
- Competent person conducts frequent inspections.
- Records kept of inspections, hazards, and corrective actions.
- Job Hazard Analyses (JHAs) documented and maintained.
- Annual review/update of training materials is required.

OSHA Injury & Illness Records

- OSHA 300 Log completed for all recordable cases.
- OSHA 301 Incident Report prepared for each injury/illness.
- OSHA 300A Annual Summary posted Feb 1 – Apr 30
- Entries made within 7 days of learning of case.
- Records must be retained for at least 5 years.
- Privacy protections observed for sensitive cases

- **Illustration: Sample incident form with sections to complete.**

Training Documentation

- All employees must complete initial safety training within their first week of employment and annual refresher training thereafter.
- Training rosters/sign-in sheets maintained with dates & topics.
- Training materials (slides, handouts, manuals) stored.
- Records include trainer's name, date, and subject covered.
- Refresher training documented for new hazards, tasks, or equipment.
- Training records must be maintained for at least three years.

- **Illustration: Table summarizing required training and frequencies.**

- **Illustration: Table of OSHA record retention periods.**

Medical & Exposure Records

- Employee exposure records (air monitoring, noise, chemicals) maintained.
- Medical surveillance records kept where required.
- Exposure records must be retained for 30 years minimum.
- Medical records must be retained for employment duration + 30 years.
- Employees must be informed of access rights to records.
- Confidentiality of medical information ensured.



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14. Acknowledgment & Enforcement

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.
- Employees have the right to refuse unsafe work if they reasonably believe they face a real and imminent danger of serious injury or death. This right is protected under OSHA Section 11(c) Whistleblower protections, which prohibits retaliation against employees who refuse unsafe work or report safety concerns in good faith.
- Employees must raise the concern to employer before refusal, if possible.
- Employers must promptly investigate all unsafe work reports.

- **Illustration: OSHA poster describing employee rights.**

Enforcement of Safety Rules

A Better Choice Staffing is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. All employees are expected to follow company safety rules, OSHA requirements, and state regulations at all times. Failure to comply with safety policies may result in disciplinary action.

Progressive Discipline Policy

To ensure fairness and consistency, the company follows a progressive discipline process for safety rule violations:

- Step 1: Verbal Warning – For the first violation, the employee will be counseled on the rule, reminded of expectations, and advised of the consequences of further violations.
- Step 2: Written Warning – If the violation is repeated or a new violation occurs, a written warning will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- Step 3: Suspension – Continued violations may result in unpaid suspension from work. The duration of suspension will depend on the severity of the infraction.
- Step 4: Termination – Employees who disregard safety rules after prior discipline, or who commit a serious safety violation that places themselves or others at risk of injury, may be subject to immediate termination.

Note

Management reserves the right to accelerate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, based on the severity of the violation (e.g., willful disregard for safety, intentional damage, or conduct resulting in serious injury).

Employee Acknowledgment

- Employees must sign a written acknowledgment of company safety policies.
- Acknowledgments are kept in personnel files for compliance documentation.
- Acknowledgment ensures awareness of responsibilities.
- 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.
- **Acknowledgment form template.**



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Appendix: OSHA Citations and Titles Referenced

Item	OSHA Title / Section	Description
29 CFR 1904	Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illnesses	Rules for recording/reporting workplace injuries & illnesses
29 CFR 1910	Occupational Safety and Health Standards (General Industry)	General industry standards for workplace safety and health
29 CFR 1910.1020	Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records	Employee rights to access exposure and medical records
29 CFR 1910.103	Hydrogen	Safety requirements for handling hydrogen
29 CFR 1910.1030(f)	Bloodborne Pathogens	Requirements for Hepatitis B vaccination & post-exposure evaluation
29 CFR 1910.1030(g)(2)(i)	Bloodborne Pathogens Training	Training requirements to prevent exposure to bloodborne pathogens
29 CFR 1910.1200	Hazard Communication (HazCom)	Chemical labeling and hazard communication requirements
29 CFR 1910.1200(g)(8)	Hazard Communication: SDS	Employers must maintain and provide Safety Data Sheets
29 CFR 1910.132	PPE General Requirements	General rules for providing personal protective equipment
29 CFR 1910.132(a)	PPE Provision	Employers must provide and ensure use of PPE
29 CFR 1910.132(d)	PPE Hazard Assessment	Employers must assess hazards and document PPE needs
29 CFR 1910.133	Eye and Face Protection	Requirements for protective eyewear and face shields
29 CFR 1910.134	Respiratory Protection	Rules for respirator use, fit testing, and training
29 CFR 1910.135	Head Protection	Standards for hard hats and helmets
29 CFR 1910.137	Electrical Protective Equipment	Insulating gloves, sleeves, mats, etc. for electrical safety
29 CFR 1910.138	Hand Protection	Rules for protective gloves selection/use
29 CFR 1910.141	Sanitation	Workplace sanitation requirements
29 CFR 1910.141(b)	Water Supply	Requirements for potable water access
29 CFR 1910.151	Medical Services & First Aid	Medical and first aid service availability requirements
29 CFR 1910.151(b)	First Aid Personnel	First aid training must be available on-site
29 CFR 1910.157	Portable Fire Extinguishers	Requirements for fire extinguisher placement and maintenance
29 CFR 1910.157(g)(4)	Fire Extinguisher Training	Employees must be trained in fire extinguisher use
29 CFR 1910.22	Walking-Working Surfaces	Housekeeping and maintenance of walking-working surfaces
29 CFR 1910.22(b)	Surface Conditions	Walking surfaces must be kept clean and hazard-free
29 CFR 1910.30	Fall Protection Training	Training requirements for fall hazards and equipment
29 CFR 1910.30(b)(1)	Specific Fall Training	Employees must be trained to recognize fall hazards
29 CFR 1910.303	Electrical: General Requirements	Standards for electrical equipment safety
29 CFR 1910.38	Emergency Action Plans	Requirements for written emergency action plans
29 CFR 1910.38(f)	EAP Training	Employers must review and train employees on EAPs
29 CFR 1910.9(d)	Compliance Duties – More than One Employer	When multiple employers share a workplace, each employer is responsible for protecting their own employees and ensuring compliance with OSHA standards.
29 CFR 1910.9 (c)	Compliance Duties – Training Documentation	Employers must keep records showing that employees received required OSHA training.
29 CFR 1910.95	Occupational Noise Exposure	Sets rules to protect workers from harmful noise levels at work.
29 CFR 1910.147	The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout)	Rules for shutting off, locking, and tagging machines to stop accidental startup or release of energy during maintenance or cleaning.
29 CFR 1910.303(b)(1)	Electrical – General Requirements	Requires all electrical equipment to be installed and maintained so it does not create recognized hazards that could cause death or serious injury (such as electric shock, fire, or explosion).
OSHA General Duty Clause Section 5(a)(1)	Workplace Free of Hazards	Employers must provide a workplace free of recognized hazards
OSHA Section 11(c)	Whistleblower Protection	Protects employees against retaliation for OSHA complaints



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Appendix: Illustrations Referenced in the Safety Handbook

(Pictorials, Diagrams, Table, etc. to be added)

- SDS binder and a properly labeled spray bottle.
- Photo of Slip hazard area with signage and mat in use.
- Chart of first aid procedures.
- Diagram showing proper lifting technique.
- Chart of burn first aid procedures.
- Temperature chart for common foods.
- Graphic showing glove use and biohazard cleanup procedure.
- Label parts of a mixer or slicer showing danger zones.
- Visual of kitchen PPE items (gloves, apron, face shield).
- Certification documents that Employee has completed the hazard assessment.
- Diagram of proper grip and knife storage rack.
- Sample incident form with sections to complete.
- Table summarizing required training and frequencies.
- Table of OSHA record retention periods.
- OSHA poster describing employee rights.
- Acknowledgment form template.