

# Preventing Contamination at Food Bars

**PURPOSE:** To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all items held on food bars are protected from contamination.

**SCOPE:** This procedure applies to anyone who is responsible for maintaining and monitoring the self-service food bars.

**KEY WORDS:** Contamination, Self-Service, Salad Bars, Food Bars

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow California Retail Food Code requirements.
3. Follow Employee Health Policy, Personal Hygiene, and Washing Hands SOPs.
4. Follow manufacturer's instructions for pre-heating and pre-chilling food bar equipment before use.
5. Place all exposed food under sneeze guards.
6. Provide an appropriate clean and sanitized utensil for each container on the food bar.
7. Replace existing containers of food with new containers when replenishing the food bar.
8. Assist customers who are unable to properly use utensils.
9. Ensure that customers use a clean dish when returning to the food bar.
10. Store eating utensils with the handles up or in a manner to prevent customers from touching the food contact surfaces.
11. Avoid using spray chemicals to clean food bars when in use.

## MONITORING

1. Monitor and record temperatures of food in accordance with the Holding Hot and Cold Potentially Hazardous Foods SOP.
2. Continually monitor food containers to ensure that utensils are stored on a clean and sanitized surface or in the containers with the handles out of the food.
3. Continually monitor customers' use of the food bar to ensure that customers are not:
  - a. Touching food with their bare hands
  - b. Coughing, spitting, or sneezing on the food
  - c. Placing foreign objects in the food
  - d. Using the same plate for subsequent trips

**CORRECTIVE ACTION**

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Remove and discard contaminated food.
3. Demonstrate to customers how to properly use utensils.
4. Discard the food if it cannot be determined how long the food temperature was above 41°F or below 135°F.

**VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice employees are assigned to maintain food bars during all hours of operation. Foodservice employees will record temperatures of food items and document corrective actions taken on the Hot and Cold Holding Temperature Log. The foodservice manager will complete the Food Safety Checklist daily. This form is to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year. Foodservice employees will document any discarded food on the Damaged or Discarded Product Log. The foodservice manager will verify that appropriate corrective actions are being taken by reviewing, initialing, and dating the Damaged or Discarded Product Log each day. The Hot and Cold Holding Temperature Log and the Damaged or Discarded Product Log are to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

**DATE IMPLEMENTED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVIEWED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVISED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_