
Kitchen Volunteer

The kitchen coordinator oversees the preparation and service of the evening meal(s) by the kitchen volunteers. There must be at least four, but no more than ten, kitchen volunteers (including the kitchen coordinator) to prepare and serve meals. Teenagers aged 13-17 may volunteer in the kitchen, but there must be an adult supervising them. If there is no kitchen coordinator, the coordinator will fulfill that role.

The REACH Center serves nutritious meals, without charge, to homeless persons who stay at the shelter. Meals are served on a regular basis (dinner, 7-8:30 PM, and breakfast, 6-6:45 AM) in a clean, secure environment. The physical facility is kept safe and appropriate for storing and distributing donated food. Food is wholesome and free from spoilage, filth, or other contamination, and safe for human consumption. Food is obtained from sources that comply with all laws relating to food and food labeling.

Choke and CPR Posters are on display in the kitchen beside the freezer and at the food service window.

Hand Washing posters are throughout the building and above each sink.

General Food Handling and Meal Preparation

- Plastic gloves and effective hair restraints must be worn at all times.
- Food handlers must wash their hands and exposed arms thoroughly with soap and warm water before starting kitchen duties and during the duration of their service to remove soil and contamination, and especially after using toilet facilities. Only the hand sinks are to be used for hand washing. These are located in the kitchen and in each REACH Center bathroom. The three-compartment sink may not be used for hand washing.
- Clothes worn by kitchen staff must be reasonably clean.
- Shirt pockets must be emptied.
- Jewelry or hats that could fall into food are not permitted.
- Areas must be free of insects and foreign matter that could contaminate food.
- The ice scoop must not be left inside the ice machine.
- Cutting boards are to be used only for meat or only for vegetables, so that there is no cross-contamination. There are two cutting boards for that purpose. After each use, wash cutting boards in the dishwasher and allow them to air dry.
- Kitchen workers must not be infected with a communicable disease; be a carrier of a disease; or afflicted with boils, infected wounds, or acute respiratory infection.
- Food must be prepared in a commercial kitchen either at the REACH Center or other location such as a church or business and not in someone's home.
- Shelter residents are not permitted in the food storage cabinets or kitchen area.
- **All leftovers must be properly covered, labeled, and dated.**
- **The dishwasher must be de-limed every week.**
- Dirty dish towels and cleaning towels must be placed in the dirty towel basket for laundering.

- When purchasing food:
 - Canned food should be free of dents, rust, or bulging lids.
 - Refrigerated foods should feel cold.
 - Frozen foods should be solid with no signs of thawing.
 - Packaging should be free of holes or tears.
 - Pay attention to the dates on food products. If the sell by date has passed, do not purchase the product. If the use by date has passed, do not use the product.
 - Purchase perishable foods such as meat, poultry, and seafood last. Use plastic bags for these items so that juices do not spill on other groceries.
 - Meats contain safe handling Instruction labels regarding safe storage, proper thawing, preventing the spread of bacteria, thorough cooking, and storage of leftovers. Follow these instructions.
 - When bagging groceries, pack cold foods together so that they will remain chilled longer.
 - Take groceries directly to their destination to be refrigerated and stored.
- Cook to the following temperatures:
 - Poultry and stuffed meats-165 degrees F for at least 15 seconds.
 - Ground meats, fish, pork, eggs from shells, and foods containing eggs from shells that are not served immediately-150 degrees F for at least 15 seconds.
 - All other foods including eggs from shells that are served immediately-145 degrees F for at least 15 seconds.
- Reheat hot foods to 165 degrees F or above.
- Hot-hold hot foods at 140 degrees F or above.
- Ready-to-serve cold foods, such as tuna salad, must be pre-chilled to 45 degrees F or below.
- Frozen food may be thawed under cold, continuously running water; in the refrigerator; or in a microwave oven.
- When cooling hot foods, the temperature of the food item must pass through the 120 to 70 degrees F range in two hours or less, and the 70 to 45 degrees F range in four hours or less. This can be accomplished by one or more of the following methods:
 - Immediately place an uncovered hot food item in the refrigerator.
 - Store a hot food item in shallow pans in the refrigerator.
 - Maintain a food depth of three inches or less.
 - Place the container with the food in it in ice water and stir constantly.
 - Store in an uncovered container while cooling.
 - Reconstitute the hot food item with cold water, ice, or other cold ingredients.
 - Cut large roasts into slices about three inches thick.
- Cold-hold cold foods at 45 degrees F or below.
- Store raw foods separately from and below cooked foods.
- Store refrigerated foods at 45 degrees F or below, and frozen foods at 0 degree F or below.

Storage

- Store food containers 18 or more inches above the floor on clean racks or in closed storage cabinets designated for food only.
- Do not store cleaning or hygiene supplies in the kitchen or in storage cabinets designated for food only.
- Do not store any food whatsoever on the floor.



- Store leftover food in the refrigerator in new or properly sanitized reusable food storage containers (plastic bags may not be used), and label and date them using masking tape and permanent marker. Leave food uncovered in the refrigerator until it reaches 45 degrees F, and then cover it. Discard all food not used for the next evening meal.
- Store only food, paper goods, and kitchen equipment on kitchen shelving.
- Remove all cooked, leftover food from the shelter at the end of the week.

Cleaning Kitchen Equipment and Small Wares

- Clean all kitchen surfaces (tables, sinks, ovens, ice machine, etc.) every evening with a water-bleach solution (2 tablespoons of bleach per gallon of water). Use paper towels or clean white kitchen towels for this. Clean spills in the refrigerator, freezer, microwave, or on other equipment in the same manner.
- Protect all small wares such as utensils, cups, glasses, bowls, trays, and plates from contamination. Handle clean utensils by their handles only. Handle clean cups, glasses, and bowls so that fingers and thumbs do not contact inside surfaces or lip-contact surfaces. Wash items in the dishwasher and then air dry.
- Clean the insides of equipment such as the refrigerator, freezer, and dishwasher as needed, but at least weekly.
- Clean stove tops and ovens each evening.
- Clean the kitchen hood weekly.
- Keep trash in appropriate receptacles and empty as needed, but at a minimum, once evening. Take trash immediately to the dumpster in the parking lot. Clean each container thoroughly on the inside and outside with a bleach/water solution.
- Mop the kitchen floor with pink floor sanitizer and water solution each evening.
- Clean baseboards, drains, and walls as needed, but not less than weekly, with a degreaser/disinfectant or water/bleach solution.
- Report cracks or loose tiles to the volunteer coordinator or REACH staff for immediate repair.

Training

Kitchen volunteers will be trained by the coordinator or the kitchen coordinator in proper kitchen procedures and guidelines using this document and hands-on training. They will also be shown how to use fire extinguishers and the Ansul Fire-X emergency system. Coordinators and staff meet weekly during the shelter season at shelter support committee meetings to discuss shelter operations including kitchen procedures and guidelines.

All menu items will be cooked hot, served, cooled, and stored in the refrigerator following the procedures mentioned above. Items may be reheated the following night according to guidelines above. If reheated items are not consumed, leftovers will be discarded.