

# HACCP-Based SOPs Education Module

---

## Food Storage

**Definition:** To ensure all food, chemicals, and supplies are stored in a manner that ensures quality and maximizes safety of the food served to children.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Employees who will be receiving and storing food should maintain storage areas, including dry, refrigerated and freezer storage, by following these steps:

#### Storage Upon Receiving:

1. Place foods in the proper storage area (refrigerator or freezer) quickly to avoid bacterial growth.
  - 41°F or lower – refrigerator temperatures
  - 26°F to 32°F or below – deep chill storage temperatures
  - 0°F or below – freezer temperatures
  - 50° to 70°F at 50 to 60% humidity – dry storage temperatures
2. Place foods into appropriate storage areas immediately upon receipt in the following order:
  - Refrigerated foods  
Store foods in designated refrigerators. If food products are stored together in a refrigerator, they should be placed on shelves in the following order:
    - Prepared or ready-to-eat foods (top shelf)
    - Fish and seafood items
    - Whole cuts of raw beef
    - Whole cuts of raw pork
    - Ground or processed meats
    - Raw poultry (bottom)
  - Frozen foods
  - Dry foods
3. Keep all food items on shelves that are at least 6" above the floor to facilitate air circulation and proper cleaning.
4. Store food out of direct sunlight.
5. Place chemicals and supplies in appropriate storage areas, away from food.
6. Use First In First Out (FIFO) rotation of products in all storage areas to assure that oldest products are used first. Products with the earliest use-by or expiration dates are stored in front of products with later dates. Mixing old food with new food is not acceptable.
7. Make sure all goods are dated with receiving date and use-by date, as appropriate.
8. Store food in original container if the container is clean, dry, and intact. If necessary, repackage food in clean, well-labeled, airtight containers. This also can be done after a package is opened. Food is NEVER put in chemical containers and chemicals are NEVER placed in food storage containers.

9. Store potentially hazardous foods no more than 7 days at 41°F from date of preparation.
10. Store pesticides and chemicals away from food handling and storage areas. Pesticides and chemicals must be stored in original, labeled containers.

Storeroom sanitation:

1. Maintain clean and uncluttered storage areas. Storage areas should be positioned to prevent contamination from areas where garbage is stored.
2. Dispose of items that are beyond the expiration or “use by” dates.
3. Store all items on shelves at least 6” above the floor to facilitate air circulation and proper cleaning.
4. Check for signs of rodents or insects. If there are signs of the presence of rodents or insects, notify the unit supervisor.

Temperature Control:

1. Check the temperatures of all refrigerators, freezers, and dry storerooms at the beginning of each shift. This includes both internal and external thermometers, where appropriate.
  - Refrigerator temperatures should be between 36 and 41°F.
  - Freezer temperatures should be between -10 and 0°F.
  - Storeroom (dry storage) temperatures should be between 50 and 70°F.
2. Record temperatures on the appropriate temperature log with employee initial.
3. Notify unit supervisor immediately of any unacceptable temperatures.
4. Limit overloading refrigerated storage areas, as this prevents air flow and makes the unit work harder to stay cold.
5. Use caution when cooling hot food in the refrigerator, as this warms the unit and can put other foods into the temperature danger zone.
6. Keep units closed as much as possible to maintain proper temperatures.
7. Defrost all units on a regular schedule to aid in proper maintenance and air circulation.

**MONITORING:**

A designated employee will monitor temperature logs of storage rooms, freezers, and refrigerators. Review logs to make sure there are no temperature deviations. Document all corrective action taken on the appropriate forms. Follow up on all reported problems. Cleaning and sanitizing of all storage areas should be in master cleaning schedule.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION:**

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Foods that are stored properly and/or fall below temperature