

## OPAL Food Policy

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Who this document applies to:	All staff and all volunteers.

## **1. Policy statement**

This policy sets out how OPAL Services manages the preparation and distribution of food. It ensures that our practices meet UK legal requirements, safeguard the health of our members, and uphold our charitable values.

## **2. Purpose and aims of this policy**

The organisation will manage food safety on a constant and consistent basis. It will aim for continual improvement with a regular review of the policy taking place through the Board of Trustees.

This will include;

- 2.1 Appropriate systems for the storage and preparation of food.
- 2.2 Appropriate systems for the distribution of food.
- 2.3 Appropriate systems for the assessment and management of risk associated with allergens.
- 2.4 Appropriate systems for the assessment and management of risks associated to cross-contamination of foods.
- 2.5 Suitable and adequate information, instruction and training to all employees and volunteers that are involved with preparation, cooking and distribution of food.

## **3. Responsibilities under this policy.**

### **3.1 Responsibilities of the Board**

The Board of Trustees of OPAL Services (Rural West Cheshire) has overall responsibility for all aspects of Food Safety and for ensuring appropriate arrangements are made to comply with all statutory requirements of the UK Food Safety Act 1990; Food Hygiene Regulations 2006; General Food Law (Regulation (EC) 178/2002) and all guidance from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and local Environmental Health Officers (EHOs).

The Board are ultimately responsible for providing:

- Sufficient resources (equipment, facilities, and funding) to enable safe food management.
- Ensuring staff and volunteers handling food have access to appropriate food hygiene training

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the policy and procedures are implemented is delegated to staff and through them to volunteers. This delegated responsibility will be reflected in staff job descriptions and volunteer role descriptions.

### **3.2 Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers involved in the preparation, cooking and/or distribution of food are required to comply with the following;

### **3.2.1 Food Safety & Hygiene**

- Completing required food hygiene training before handling food.
- Following all hygiene procedures (e.g. handwashing, use of protective clothing, cleaning routines).
- Checking food on arrival to ensure it is safe, in-date, and properly labelled.
- Storing food in the correct conditions (dry, chilled, or frozen) and following the "First In, First Out" (FIFO) system.

### **3.2.2 Preparation & Distribution**

- Preparing food in a safe and clean environment.
- Ensuring hot food reaches 75°C or above, and cold food is kept at or below 8°C.
- Clearly labelling and communicating allergen information in line with Natasha's Law.
- Treating beneficiaries with dignity and distributing food fairly.

### **3.2.3 Allergen & Dietary Awareness**

- Taking care to prevent cross-contamination during storage, preparation, and serving.
- Being aware of common allergens and ensuring information is shared clearly with beneficiaries.

### **3.2.4 Record-Keeping & Reporting**

- Recording temperature checks where required.
- Reporting any concerns about food quality, hygiene, or safety to the manager/supervisor immediately.
- Completing the food diary
- Documenting and escalating any incidents, complaints, or near misses.

## **4. The approach to the monitoring of Food Safety**

The Board acknowledges the need to continuously monitor standards of Food Safety in the organisation and in particular to monitor that the policy is being effectively applied.



A proactive approach to monitoring will be in place, which includes:

- regular supervision and discussion in which Food Safety matters are considered and encouraged.
- annual risk assessments undertaken in respect of venues and working environments.
- Food Safety related issues raised at service committees and Board meetings being dealt with promptly and that this includes a focus on whether the Food Safety is effective.

OPAL will have a system of recording and reporting all incidents to the OPAL Manager and the documents will be retained by OPAL in accordance with the current Records Retention Schedule.

The OPAL Manager is responsible for reporting notifiable accidents to Board and to, dependent on the issue, the Local Authority Environmental Health Officer and/or the Food Standards Agency.

## **5. Learning and development**

OPAL aims to ensure that every employee or volunteer has the necessary competence in Food Safety to fulfil their responsibilities under this policy.

Initial Food Safety awareness training/information should be provided and undertaken during the induction period, with job specific training, in particular Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety, given as required by the role.

## **6. Record Keeping**

Every OPAL Service that prepares, cooks and serves a lunch to beneficiaries will be registered with the Local Authority as a Food Business. If the service prepares and cooks food at different venues, eg OPAL Clubs, each venue will be registered as a Food Business.

Each OPAL Food Business is to have its own Safer Food Better Business pack and each pack is to be completed. Every time food is served the food diary is to be completed by the employee and/or volunteers.

## **7. Associated policies, procedures, guidelines and forms**

- Preparing & Cooking Food information pack
- Serving Food & Refreshments information pack



Older People Active Lives

- E-coli factsheet
- Allergy factsheet

## **8 Associated Legislation**

- Food Safety Act 1990
- Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
- Regulation (EC) No. 178/2002 (General Food Law Regulation)
- Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 (Food Hygiene Regulation)