STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Food Receiving and Storage SOP

Document no.	SOP-KIT-003
Revision	1.0
Owner	Kitchen Manager
Effective date	September 15, 2026
Review cycle	Every 12 months

1. Purpose

To make sure every delivery is inspected for safety and quality before it enters the kitchen, and that stored food is rotated and held at a safe temperature.

2. Scope

Applies to all food and beverage deliveries and to dry, refrigerated and frozen storage areas in the kitchen. Ongoing equipment temperature monitoring is covered by a separate SOP.

Definitions

FIFO	First in, first out. Placing newer stock behind older stock so the oldest is used first.
Danger zone	The temperature range in which bacteria multiply quickly on food, generally between 41 and 135 degrees Fahrenheit, or as defined by your local food code.
Cross-contamination	Harmful bacteria or allergens transferring from one food or surface to another.

3. Responsibilities

Receiving Clerk	Inspects, temperature-checks and accepts or rejects each delivery, then moves accepted items into storage.
Kitchen Manager	Approves rejections and vendor issues, checks storage organization, and manages vendor relationships.
Line Cook	Pulls stock using FIFO and reports anything found out of date or damaged in storage.
Executive Chef	Sets accepted supplier list and quality specs, and reviews recurring vendor issues.

RACI matrix

Activity	Receiving Clerk	Kitchen Manager	Line Cook	Executive Chef
Inspect and temperature-check deliveries	R/A	I	-	-
Accept or reject a delivery	R	A	-	I
Shelve stock using FIFO	R/A	I	C	-
Report vendor quality issues	R	A	C	I
Set approved suppliers and	I	C	-	R/A

Activity	Receiving Clerk	Kitchen Manager	Line Cook	Executive Chef
quality specs				

R = Responsible, A = Accountable, C = Consulted, I = Informed

4. Materials and PPE

Materials, tools and systems

- Purchase orders and delivery invoices
- Calibrated probe thermometer
- Receiving log or inventory app
- Food-safe labels and marker
- Hand truck or cart for moving cases
- Shelving with dry, refrigerated and frozen zones clearly marked

Personal protective equipment

- Cut-resistant gloves for opening cases
- Back support belt for heavy lifting

5. Procedure

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.1	**Match the delivery to the purchase order** Before accepting anything, the receiving clerk compares the delivery invoice against the original purchase order for items, quantities and prices ordered.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.2	**Inspect the delivery vehicle and packaging** Check that the delivery truck is clean and holding items at the right temperature, and that boxes and cases are not crushed, torn, wet or leaking.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.3	**Temperature-check refrigerated and frozen items** Insert the probe thermometer into a sample item from each temperature-sensitive case and record the reading on the receiving log before moving product inside. **Checkpoint:** Refrigerated food reads at or below 41 degrees Fahrenheit and frozen food is solid, with no signs of thawing and refreezing, or as required by your local food code.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.4	**Check quality and appearance** Inspect produce for bruising or spoilage, check that cans are not dented or bulging, and confirm seafood smells fresh and packaging is intact.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.5	**Reject product that fails inspection** Set aside any item that fails temperature, quality or damage checks, note the reason on the invoice, and get the kitchen manager's sign-off before sending it back with the driver. **Warning:** Never accept product that is out of temperature or shows signs of pest activity, even if it looks otherwise fine.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.6	**Move accepted product into the kitchen promptly** Move refrigerated and frozen items into storage first, within a few minutes of unloading, before handling dry or shelf-stable goods.	Receiving Clerk	☐

Step	Task	Owner	Done
5.7	**Label and date incoming stock** Label items that will be repackaged or decanted with the product name and received date, and leave manufacturer dates visible on sealed original packaging.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.8	**Shelve using FIFO by storage zone** Place new stock behind existing stock of the same item, and store raw proteins on the lowest shelf below ready-to-eat food and produce to prevent drip contamination. **Checkpoint:** Older stock is in front of newer stock and raw proteins are stored below ready-to-eat items.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.9	**Update the receiving and inventory log** Record quantities received, any rejections, and the invoice total in the receiving log or inventory app, and file the signed invoice for accounts payable.	Receiving Clerk	☐
5.10	**Report vendor issues to the kitchen manager** Summarize any recurring quality, temperature or short-shipment issues with a vendor and pass them to the kitchen manager for follow-up with the supplier.	Kitchen Manager	☐
5.11	**Rotate stock during routine pulls** When pulling items for prep, line cooks check dates and use the oldest labeled item first, flagging anything close to or past its use-by date.	Line Cook	☐
5.12	**Spot-check storage organization** The kitchen manager periodically checks storage areas for correct FIFO rotation, labeling, and separation of raw and ready-to-eat food.	Kitchen Manager	☐

6. Quality checks

- Refrigerated and frozen deliveries pass temperature checks before entering storage.
- Rejected deliveries are documented with a reason and manager sign-off.
- Stored items follow FIFO with raw protein below ready-to-eat food.
- Receiving log entries match invoice quantities and totals.

7. Records

- Receiving log with temperatures and acceptance decisions
- Signed delivery invoices
- Rejected delivery documentation
- Vendor issue tracking notes

8. KPIs

- Percent of deliveries passing inspection on the first attempt
- Number of rejected deliveries per vendor per month
- Storage spot-check pass rate
- Days of inventory on hand by category

9. Common mistakes

- Accepting a delivery without checking temperature because the driver is in a hurry.
- Leaving refrigerated product on the loading dock while finishing paperwork.
- Placing new stock in front of older stock instead of rotating it to the back.

- Storing raw seafood above ready-to-eat salad ingredients.

10. Revision history

Revision	Date	Description	Reviewed by
1.0	September 15, 2026	Initial release	Ilia Pirozhenko

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Date

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