



# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER Food Service Workers



## Three Steps to a Safer Workplace

**Active observation and follow-up will go a long way toward making your workplace safer. Follow these three steps:**

- 1. Identify hazards or “what can hurt you at work.”** Walk through areas to look for things that can hurt employees, and monitor whether known hazards have been fixed. If you answer “no” to any of the questions below, follow-up is needed.
- 2. Propose solutions.** Assess what changes you can make on your own, and what you need to partner on.
- 3. Take action to make sure the problem is resolved.** Use the *Make the Workplace Safer* Tracking Chart at the end of this document.

## Step 1: Identify Hazards

NAME		LOCATION		DATE
Hazard		Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
<b>SAFETY HAZARDS</b>				
1	Do workers have access to knives that are the right size and type for different tasks?			
2	Are knives kept sharp? Are knives safely stored in a separate area?			
3	When doing a lot of cutting, do workers wear cut-resistant gloves that cover the wrists and fit well?			
4	Before using a machine (such as a meat slicer), do workers check that machine guards are in place?			
5	Do grills and other hot surfaces have built-in guard bars? Do fryers have splash guards?			
6	Do workers use potholders, gloves or heat-resistant mitts when using the stove, oven or other hot appliances?			
7	Are nonslip, stable floor mats used in wet areas?			
8	Are food debris and spills cleaned up immediately to avoid slips and falls?			

## MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER: Food Service Workers

Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed	
<b>SAFETY HAZARDS</b>				
9	Are walkways and work areas kept free of clutter?			
10	Are shelves and storage racks stable and secure?			
11	Do workers use a ladder or footstool to reach for objects in high places? Are ladders placed on a stable, dry surface? Are ladders fully open and locked?			
12	Do workers wear non-skid shoes?			
13	Are grill and duct work regularly cleaned to remove flammable residue? Are grease traps regularly emptied? (Look for a cleaning sticker or log.)			
14	Are grease traps regularly emptied? (Look for a log showing when trap has been pumped.)			
15	Are portable fire extinguishers available and accessible (free and clear of clutter)? Inspected monthly?			
<b>ERGONOMICS</b>				
16	Are countertops in food preparation areas height-adjustable to reduce risk of ergonomic injury?			
17	Are heavy items stored in easy-to-reach areas to avoid over-reaching and bending?			
18	Are workers able to carry out work without stooping to the floor, twisting, reaching overhead or bending to the side? Is there enough space to work so that workers do not have to put their bodies in an awkward position?			
19	When possible, do workers use food processors, mixers and other aids to avoid repetitive movements?			
20	Are workers able to work at a comfortable speed without too many repetitive movements?			
21	Do workers avoid lifting bulky or heavy materials or equipment?			
22	Do food carts have large wheels that can roll easily over different floor surfaces?			

## MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER: Food Service Workers

Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
<b>INFECTIOUS DISEASES</b>			
23	Do workers wash their hands with soap and running water at required times during the day (e.g., before handling food, after using the bathroom)?		
24	Do workers who take trays to patients' rooms or handle used trays wear disposable gloves to avoid contact with blood or Other Potentially Infectious Materials (OPIM)?		
<b>CHEMICALS</b>			
25	Do workers know the names and health effects of chemicals that they use? Do workers have what they need to work safely with the chemicals they use?		
26	Are chemicals (such as disinfectant) diluted according to the manufacturer's directions?		
27	Do workers wear latex-safe gloves, goggles and splash aprons when handling hazardous chemicals?		
<b>OTHER</b>			
28	Is an emergency eye/face wash accessible (free and clear of clutter) for use when handling hazardous chemicals? An emergency shower when handling hazardous chemicals in quantities greater than one gallon? Equipment flushed weekly? (Look for log or tag.)		
29	Do walk-in freezers have a panic bar or inside release so workers can't be trapped inside?		
30	Do workers take frequent breaks in cool areas to reduce heat-related illness?		
31	Do workers notify maintenance staff when equipment needs repair? Do workers lock out and tag out equipment that is in need of repair so others do not use until repairs are made?		
32	Are there any new hazards or other hazards that have not been addressed?		If yes, please describe below:

# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER: Food Service Workers

## WORKER KNOWLEDGE

Employees should receive health and safety training and orientation when they start employment, whenever a new hazard is identified, and periodically as a refresher on some topics. Examples of knowledge people should have are listed below. **Do workers in the department know:**

Hazard	Yes	No	Comments/Solution Needed
1 The hazards common to your work, what protective measures are in place and what safety practices to follow?			
2 The hazards of potentially infectious materials and the precautions to use?			
3 The hazards of chemicals you work with and how to work with them safely?			
4 How to obtain and use a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for chemicals you work with?			
5 What to do in case of a chemical exposure or spill?			
6 How to use a fire extinguisher?			
7 How to safely use machines and equipment?			
8 How to choose, wear, remove and dispose of protective clothing and equipment?			
9 How to avoid ergonomic injuries due to awkward positions, repetitive motions and heavy lifting?			
10 How to recognize and respond to threats and potentially violent people or situations?			
11 What to do in case of an emergency at work?			
12 How to identify safety concerns and who to report them to?			
13 Any other information or training needed?			If yes, please describe below:



# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER

## FOLLOW-UP & TRACKING CHART



### Step 2: Propose Solutions

**For any “no” answers, think about solutions or ways to address the problem.**

- First, think about ways to remove the hazard. This makes your workplace safer and ensures all workers are protected.
- If that’s not possible, think about any policies, procedures or personal protective equipment that is necessary.
- Think about what changes you can make on your own and what changes you need to partner with others (such as other workers, supervisors, facility management) to do.

Write your suggestions for solutions on the “Step 1: Identify Hazards” checklist and on the tracking chart on the next page.

### Step 3: Take Action

**Report any safety hazards you identify. Use the following chart to track and make sure the problems are resolved.**

1. Give a copy of your hazard checklist findings to your supervisor or department manager, your UBT labor co-lead, and your Safety Team representative.
2. Decide who else should receive a copy of your findings, such as members of the UBT or Safety Committee or your shop steward. Make a note of who you gave it to and the date.
3. Follow up after a few weeks. If the problem was not addressed or resolved, think about your next steps.
  - + Who should be informed?
  - + Who can help you advocate for the needed solution?

# MAKE THE WORKPLACE SAFER FOLLOW-UP AND TRACKING CHART

NAME		LOCATION		DATE
Safety/Health Problem	What solution is needed?	Date reported and to whom	1 month follow up	Next Steps
			Corrected Is being addressed Not being addressed Don't know/Other:	
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