



FOOD HYGIENE POLICY

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ASSURANCE STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure safe practice among food handlers in accordance with the policies of Sanctuary Trust and current legislation.

Related Policies and Statements: Hand Hygiene, Environmental Cleaning and Spills Management; and the Catering Specification documents.

This Policy is in two Parts. Part 1 covers food handling procedures. Part 2 outlines the procedure to deal with a suspected outbreak.

PART 1 Food Handling Procedures

1. Introduction and scope of this Policy

All food handling, storage, preparation and service activities must be conducted in safe and hygienic areas, in accordance with current policies and legislation, including:

- The Health Act – ‘Hygiene Code’ 2006
- Food Hygiene (Eng) Regulations 2006
- Food Hygiene (EC) Regulations 852/2004
- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1970
- The Food Hygiene (Amendment) Regulations 1990
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

This Policy covers catering staff, Sanctuary Trust and contract staff groups involved in beverage and food provision and services including but not limited to:

- Sanctuary Trust staff and volunteers who are responsible for the Meals and Catering Provisions Service
- External contractors providing food services to Sanctuary Trust
- Nomad Outside Catering
- Staff food and beverage preparation areas

Each Service must identify the potential food hazards within their area of operation, and implement effective control, monitoring and recording procedures at those points critical to food safety.

To comply with Food Hygiene Legislation, all areas within Sanctuary Trust that prepare food will need to carry out a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) that identifies hazards within the food chain and lay down systems of “good practice” to minimise operational risk.

2. Aims of the Policy

The fundamental objective of the Food Hygiene Policy is to protect human life and health. The Policy also aims to identify procedures for safe practice for all food handlers, to prevent cross contamination and potential food-related illness for service users, staff and visitors to:

Ensure that staff are fully aware of all potential food hazards.

Ensure that high standards of personal and environmental hygiene are adhered to at all stages to ensure that food safety is not compromised.

Satisfy current legal requirements.

Minimise the risk of customer complaints or other action against the organisation.

3. Duties and Responsibilities

All managers with responsibility for services that handle food must ensure that all relevant staff are aware of, and adhere to, this Policy. A food handler is anyone who is involved in the handling or preparation of food goods and beverages.

This Policy will be regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with developments in legislation, with particular reference to identifying points that are critical to food safety.

Sanctuary Trust management are responsible for the provision of appropriate premises for food prepared within the organisation.

4. Training

All food handlers must receive food handling training and updates of an appropriate content, length and frequency to reflect their role and food handling responsibilities.

5. Food Premises

Food premises should be kept clean, maintained in good repair and well ventilated. The layout and design, sitting and size must allow adequate working space to allow for the hygienic performance of all food handlers and to avoid airborne contamination.

Drainage should be designed to prevent waste from a contaminated area draining towards a clean area. Toilets should not open directly into any room where food is handled.

Hand wash basins should be located conveniently. Separate sinks for washing food should be available.

Dishwashers should reach thermal disinfection temperatures (see Standards for the Clinical Environment Policy).

6. Temperature Control

It is a legal requirement that temperature checks are completed throughout the entire food chain (from delivery to consumption).

7. Delivery and receipt of food

7.1 Food delivered under contract

Sanctuary Trust must ensure that all companies who supply food to Sanctuary Trust comply with the following legal requirements:

- High risk foods * will be delivered chilled between 0-4°C.
- Fresh meat poultry and fish will be delivered chilled between 0 - 4°C.
- Fresh fish preferably should be iced.
- Frozen foods will be delivered at or below -18°C. There must be no evidence of defrosting or freezer burn.
- Cook-chill products will be delivered at 3°C.

** High risk foods are usually those which contain protein and are intended for consumption without treatment which would destroy such organisms, e.g.:*

- i all cooked meat and poultry;*

- ii *cooked meat products including gravy and stock;*
- iii *milk, cream, artificial cream, custards and dairy produce;*
- iv *cooked eggs and products made with eggs, for example mayonnaise, but excluding pastry, bread and similar baked goods;*
- v *shellfish and other seafood, for example, oysters;*
- vi *cooked rice.*

Food that does not reach these standards will be rejected at the point of delivery and returned to the supplier.

7.2 Purchase of food from other suppliers

Where food is purchased from outside suppliers; this may be required to meet service users' needs and preferences (dietary, cultural, personal), or to replicate a domestic setting, i.e. smaller package sizes and portions. Shopping for food may also be used as an intervention with service users.

When purchasing food from outside suppliers, staff must be satisfied that premises are hygienic. Food should be purchased from an outlet where food and food ingredients can be traced and records maintained. If there is any temperature abuse e.g. frozen food defrosting en-route between purchase and storage / use, the staff member must ensure that the food is not consumed unless the instructions on the packaging state that it is safe to do so. The use of a cool bag to transport certain foodstuffs will reduce this risk. Food will then be treated as fresh but must not be refrozen in the defrosted state. If eggs are purchased they must all be individually stamped with a 'use by' date. All food items must be purchased before the 'sell by date' and used by the 'use by date'. Staff must not bring food items from home for use with customers and service users and must comply with all of the food hygiene standards outlined throughout the policy.

7.3 Management of food brought into Sanctuary Trust Premises by staff, service users, and visitors

Service users, visitors and staff bringing food into the organisation do so at their own risk and will need to be informed of the organisation's Food Hygiene Policy. Hot food brought into the organisation by service users, visitors and staff must be consumed straight away and not reheated or mixed with food provided by the organisation. Staff should maintain records of the food outlets providing meals from any external source to ensure traceability in the event of an enteric outbreak where food may be implicated.

Service user and staff cold food stored in the fridge must be stored in clean, sealed containers that are clearly labelled with the name, contents and the date. If the food is not consumed this must be discarded at the end of the day.

8. Food Storage

The correct storage of foods is important to ensure adequate provision throughout the year. Failure to ensure satisfactory conditions of temperature, humidity, stock rotation, and the integrity of packaging can result in problems of unfit or spoiled food but will at the very least, result in a considerable reduction in shelf life.

8.1 Product Date Codes

To ensure good stock rotation and compliance with the Food Labeling Regulations, all foods with the exception of unprepared and uncut fruit and vegetables, sugar, wine, salt, fresh bread must be date coded. Produce delivered by nominated suppliers will be date coded as part of the purchase specification. Date codes are classified under two headings:

'USE BY' - applied to highly perishable, 'high risk' products such as cooked meats, dairy products.

'BEST BEFORE' - applied to perishable and non-perishable foods, e.g. cereals and packed products, cans, bottles, usually with a shelf life of over three months.

All products must be used before the expiry of these dates but care must be taken when using products to also check additional instructions, for example: *refrigerate after opening, use within three days of opening*. It is a direct offence to have food in possession beyond its *use by* date.

Opened packs of food should be: decanted into clean containers with close fitting lids, labelled and date coded. The rule *FIRST IN ~ FIRST OUT* should always be applied.

8.2 Refrigeration

Refrigeration is a method of storage by which spoilage is delayed but not prevented.

8.2.1. The following rules should be applied when storing food in a refrigerator:

- High risk foods* should be stored between 0 - 4°C.
- Fresh meat, poultry and fish should be stored between 0 - 1°C.
- Frozen foods to be stored at or below -18°C.
- Cook-chill products to be stored at 3°C or below.

* *High risk foods are usually those which contain protein and are intended for consumption without treatment which would destroy such organisms, e.g.:*

- all cooked meat and poultry;*
- cooked meat products including gravy and stock;*
- milk, cream, artificial cream, custards and dairy produce;*
- cooked eggs and products made with eggs, for example mayonnaise, but excluding pastry, bread and similar baked goods;*
- shellfish and other seafood, for example, oysters;*
- cooked rice.*

8.2.2 Siting refrigerators

Refrigerators should be easily accessible and not be positioned near to any heat source. Ideally they should be in well ventilated areas away from direct sunlight.

8.2.3 Loading refrigerators

Refrigerators should be packed in a manner which allows good air circulation. All food should be covered to prevent drying out, cross contamination and odor absorption. However food packaging should not be stored as this may introduce contamination into the refrigerator. Highest risk foods should be given priority if space is limited and should be stored at the rear of the refrigerator and always above raw foods.

8.2.4 Cleaning

This should take place on at least a weekly basis using food safe chemicals. Spillages should be cleaned as soon as they occur. After cleansing, the surfaces need to be completely dried. If the refrigerator does not defrost automatically defrosting should take place at least once a week to ensure that there is no buildup of ice. A cleaning record should be kept.

8.2.5 Maintenance

Refrigerators should be serviced in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.

8.2.6 Selecting Refrigeration

The following factors should be considered:

Operating Temperatures

Units must be capable of maintaining satisfactory storage temperatures in busy kitchens. Fan-assisted cooling is essential to circulate cold air throughout the storage compartment and maintain uniform temperatures.

Construction

Should be constructed to facilitate easy cleaning. Large motors are best positioned outside as they generate heat and collect dust. Ideally doors and floors should be stainless steel to provide the greatest resistance to impact change.

Automatic Defrost

Ensures that the coil remains free of insulating ice, and keeps down the running cost. It is also useful if there is a light which indicates when the unit is on automatic defrost.

Thermometers

Should be located externally and be easily readable with the door(s) closed. Regular temperature checks using an independent thermometer should also be made.

8.3 Frozen food

8.3.1 Operating Temperatures

Use the star rate system to identify the required operating temperature and hence the storage period for food.

RATING	OPERATING TEMP. °C	STORAGE
1 STAR	-6	1 week
2 STAR	-12	1 month
3 STAR	-18	3 months
4 STAR	-24	6 months

Food produced, prepared and frozen by SANCTUARY TRUST has a shelf life of thirty days. Frozen food from contract and outside suppliers should be stock rotated and used before the expiry date.

8.3.2 Protection of Food During Storage

A common fault found in most food premises is that food is poorly wrapped thus allowing contamination, oxidation and dehydration. All food should be stored in air tight packaging which is date coded.

8.3.3 Thawing of Frozen Food

The following steps should be taken to avoid cross contamination during thawing:

- Remove external packaging and place in container.
- Defrost food away from other high risk foods ideally in a thawing cabinet (12-15°C).
- Clean contaminated work surfaces e.g. chopping boards.
- Leave for sufficient time.
- Dispose of any raw juice carefully.
- Cover defrosted food and put in refrigerator

8.4 Dry Goods Storage

Dry goods require protection from: low temperatures, damp, excessive heat, direct sunlight, pests. This requires:

- Steady temperatures of 10 - 15°C
- Ventilation (relative humidity 50- 60%)
- Pest proof structure
- Shelving and structure which can be cleaned easily
- Products stored off the ground
- Routine cleaning
- Stock rotation

9. Food preparation

9.1 Thawing of Frozen Food

It is important that frozen foods are allowed to defrost under controlled conditions, i.e. in a refrigerator. This is to ensure that the bacterial loading is kept to a minimum whilst defrosting is thorough. If frozen foods, particularly poultry, are not thawed properly prior to cooking, then cooking may be inadequate and bacteria could survive.

To ensure the safe defrosting of food and avoid cross contamination the following steps should be taken:

- i* Remove external packaging and place in container.
- ii* Defrost food away from other high risk foods ideally in a thawing cabinet (12-15°C).
- iii* Clean contaminated work surfaces e.g. chopping boards.
- iv* Leave for sufficient time.
- v* Dispose of any raw juice carefully.
- vi* Cover defrosted food and put in refrigerator

9.2 Preparation Surfaces and Equipment

After each use, food preparation surfaces must be cleaned to remove all loose food debris, washed down with an appropriate hot water and detergent solution, rinsed off and left to air dry. Food preparation equipment must also be cleaned after each use.

Cleaning schedules must be in place to ensure that all equipment in a food preparation area is cleaned regularly, and a cleaning record kept.

9.3 Contamination

To avoid cross contamination it is important that the same equipment is not used for handling raw and high risk products without being disinfected. To prevent this from occurring it is recommended that different colours are used. Colour coding may be extended to include washing facilities, trolleys, protective clothing and packaging material.

9.4 Equipment Maintenance

All items of equipment used in connection with the transportation, storage, production and service of food must be in good repair and condition. Maintenance of such equipment is an integral component of the organisations *Due Diligence* management obligations. Sanctuary Trust, is, therefore committed to a proactive and systematic assessment of equipment needs. In general the maintenance of equipment in kitchens is carried out by Sanctuary Trust's Management. All electrical equipment will be PAT tested on a regular basis.

Equipment that has deteriorated with age becomes incapable of being cleaned thoroughly. Cracked, chipped, broken and badly pitted equipment allows the harborage of dirt and bacteria and should be replaced. String or tape should not be used to repair defective handles of knives or other equipment.

10. Cooking of food

10.1 Temperatures

Cooking is a form of preservation but is generally used to make food more palatable. Internal temperatures of around 75°C should be achieved to ensure bacteriological safety; however, some bacteria do survive these temperatures. The centre of cooked meat should be checked regularly with an accurate temperature probe which is always disinfected before use. The external surface of a joint of meat, for example, may give the appearance of being thoroughly cooked but the centre temperature may be quite low.

All foods should be temperature probed before service.

10.2 Cook-Freeze Foods

Cook - freeze foods should be regenerated to a temperature of at least 70°C. Meals regenerated for consumption must be probed to ensure that the correct temperature has been achieved.

11. Food Service

11.1 Hot Foods

All hot food should be served at or above 70°C. It should not be left on the counter for a period of longer than 30 minutes. If food does not maintain the required temperature it should be discarded, under no circumstances should it be re-heated. All food intended for service on a particular day should be discarded if not served, it should not be re-served the following day.

11.2 Cold Foods

All cold food should be served from a chilled display unit at a temperature of or below 5°C. All food intended for service on a particular day should be discarded if not served, it should not be re-served the following day.

Foods displayed without a temperature control display must be consumed immediately all foods displayed as such should be destroyed if not consumed. This rule applies for food served at functions regardless of whether they have been prepared by the Catering Department or other parties.

12. Staff

12.1 Pre-Employment Checks

All Sanctuary Trust, Agency, Temporary and Contract staff must have a health check prior to appointment. If they are food handlers they should have training at a level commensurate with the post. At minimum this should include Basic Food Hygiene Training and Infection Control training.

All staff should also be informed that should they suffer from diarrhea, vomiting, throat infections, skin rash, boils or other skin lesions they should report to their manager, nominated Medical Officer and the Occupational Nurse prior to coming to work so that recognised procedures may be followed.

Food handlers suffering from infectious conditions not during working hours, must bring to the attention of their manager Occupational Health and Infection Control:

1. If any member of the household is suffering from diarrhea or vomiting.
2. If they are returning to work after a holiday during which an attack of diarrhea or vomiting.
3. If they are returning to work after an illness involving diarrhea or vomiting.

Any staff member suffering from diarrhea and/or vomiting, must report to Occupational Health and should not come to work until asymptomatic for 48 hours, or longer depending on the infecting organisms and the risk

group category (refer to the Diarrhea & Vomiting Policy).

13. Personal Hygiene

It is vital that all food handlers maintain a high standard of personal and general hygiene, to avoid the possibility of spreading infections, or causing food poisoning. Certain groups pose an increased risk of spreading food related illness e.g.

- Group A: Any person of doubtful personal hygiene, unsatisfactory toilet, hand washing and drying facilities at home
- Group B: Children
- Group C: People whose work involves preparing or serving unwrapped food not subject to further heating
- Group D: Staff who have direct contact with susceptible service users

Exclusion from work will be required for enteric infected cases until asymptomatic for 48 hours. Microbiology clearance is required for Hepatitis A, E.coli 0157 and Typhoid cases, excretors, carriers and contacts in the risk groups A-D before returning to work.

E. coli and Shigellosis infected cases in groups A-D should not return to work until they have 2 negative stool specimens.

Hepatitis A cases in groups A-D should not return until 7 days after the onset of jaundice and/or other symptoms

Typhoid cases in group C should not return to work until they have **6 negative stool** specimens, groups A, B and D should have 3 negative specimens each obtained one week apart after completion of treatment.

13.1 Food Handlers

- Food handlers must observe high standards of personal cleanliness and have a legal obligation to do so.
- Food handlers must wash their hands regularly (in a nominated wash hand basin) during their shift and in particular:
 - On entering the kitchen
 - Before handling any food or equipment
 - After handling any wrapped or unwrapped food, especially raw items
 - Before and after any cleaning procedure
 - Between different tasks
 - After touching ears, nose, mouth or hair
 - After any contact with service users or their immediate surroundings
 - After visiting the toilet facilities
 - After handling waste food or refuse
 - After eating or smoking (smoking is only allowed in designated areas)

Refer to the Hand Hygiene Policy for further guidance

- Hands must always be washed in a nominated wash hand basin only, with liquid soap and running water and dried using disposable towels.
- Cuts and abrasions must be covered by waterproof dressings.
- Food and drink must not be consumed in any food preparation or ancillary area, including Ward Kitchens.
- Food handlers must not wear jewelry other than wedding rings and un-jeweled stud or sleeper earrings.
- Nail varnish must not be worn. Nails are to be kept short and scrupulously clean.
- Smoking is strictly FORBIDDEN in ANY kitchen area (this is an ILLEGAL practice.)

13.2 Wash Hand Basins

Food handlers must wash their hands regularly during their shift in accordance with section 12.1 above. Hands must be dried using the disposable paper towels supplied. Hand wash basins must be used for hand washing purposes only. Hand wash basins must be cleaned regularly.

13.3 Clothing

- Food handlers must always wear appropriate clean clothing. Catering staff will be issued with uniforms and protective clothing on starting their employment with the organisation. Staff must wear aprons when working with food.
- Catering staff are required to wear protective head gear to ensure that hair or dandruff do not contaminate food or surfaces. All food handlers should at least ensure that hair is clean and long hair is tied back when handling food.
- Outdoor and work wear clothing are to be kept separate. Protective clothing should not be worn travelling to and from work.
- Footwear must be of a sensible, sturdy, low heeled and enclosed type and must be kept clean.

14. Sink use

It is imperative that sinks have hot and cold running water. The lack of hot water should be reported to the management immediately. Sinks must be cleaned thoroughly after each use. Food goods and food preparation equipment must NOT be stored under the sink. Sinks in kitchens are for the washing of food preparation equipment only. Separate sluice sinks are provided for filling mop buckets and other cleaning equipment. Equipment and crockery must be washed in dishwashers that reach thermal disinfection temperatures.

15. Waste

Refuse must not be allowed to accumulate in kitchens and must not be left overnight. Waste generated may be stored in black polythene bags which are removed when full and at the end of each day. The bags must not be overfilled and must be tied to prevent problems from insects. The containers for such bags should be maintained in a clean condition and be foot operated and staff should be trained to wash their hands after using the receptacles. Receptacles used for the storage of food should not be used for refuse. Suitable facilities should be provided for the storage of waste prior to its removal from the establishment, refuse collectors should not have to enter food or dining areas.

16. Pest control

16.1 Contract Details

All sites are covered by a pest control contract. The contractor should visit all sites on a monthly basis to ensure that no infestation has taken place. The contract covers the following the control of rodents (rats and mice) and cockroaches. If there is any evidence of infestation from these or other pests the Pest Control Contractor should be contacted immediately. An Incident Form must be completed.

16.2 Prevention

With all forms of pest control prevention is better than cure. Good housekeeping is essential. All spillages should be removed as soon as possible. Waste receptacles should be provided with food pedals and tight-fitting lids and not overfilled.

17. Ensuring safe food handling in training and therapy services

Training and therapy enables people to achieve health, wellbeing and life satisfaction through participation. Preparing food and beverages is an occupation that the majority of us regularly carry out, either as a self-care, work or leisure activity. As such it is something that service users often need and want to do as part of their recovery. It may form part of the assessment process to determine a service user's occupational performance, i.e. their level of functional ability, motivation,

Training interventions that involve food and beverage preparation can range from making a cup of tea to a full meal, and can be carried out on a one-to-one basis or as a participant volunteer. All staff should receive appropriate Food Handling training and Infection Control training and annual updates, (DH 2006). They are then responsible for ensuring that service users adopt safe and hygienic practices during their interventions.

The procedures outlined throughout the policy document in relation to the storage of food (dry, chilled, frozen), temperature control at all stages of the food chain, use and cleaning of equipment and kitchens should be adhered to in all kitchen areas. In addition:

- Training staff will assess the service user's ability to maintain his/her personal hygiene as part of the overall risk assessment prior to entry into any food preparation area.
- Assess the service user's current health status and check for skin lesions.
- Establish if the service user has had any current infectious condition or enteric symptoms within the past 48 hours.
- Ensure that the service user has been given hand hygiene technique training.
- Staff will supervise service users at all times within kitchen areas.
- Dedicated cleaning equipment and materials need to be available and stored safely. Cleaning chemicals need to comply with COSHH regulations and be stored in a locked cupboard.
- In the event of a service user being incontinent, vomiting or any other accidental contamination of the floor or preparation surfaces, the kitchen must be closed immediately and food prepared should not be consumed.
- If food has already been consumed, the food records e.g. purchase details, ingredients and cooking methodology should be retained for inspection by the Environmental Health Officer in case it is part of an outbreak.
- The spill should be managed by the person leading the activity using a chlorine-based disinfectant, followed by the domestic environmental deep clean, in line with the Environmental Cleaning & Spills Management Policy.
- The kitchen should remain closed until the entire area has been decontaminated.
- An incident report must be forwarded to the Governance and Assurance department.

Infection Control and Hand Hygiene technique training for all staff is a legal requirement (DH 2008). Staff involved in the supervision of clients involving food preparation must have received this training, and will also need to assess the service user's ability to perform hand hygiene prior to handling food. If following such risk assessments service users are unable to clean their hands prior to food preparation then it will be safer to carry out the food preparation in the individual's own home.

Service users would also need to have food hygiene training if they are involved in preparing food for consumption by any person other than themselves.

Service users who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting (D&V) or have been in contact with someone with D&V in the last 48 hours must be notified to Infection Control and must not be allowed into the kitchen until cleared by Infection Control.

18. Provision of catering for functions

All catering for organizational functions should be provided by either the internal catering provider or from a caterer who has provided the satisfactory documentary evidence to management to verify they abide by the minimum statutory requirements.

19. Process for Implementation

All managers with responsibility for services that handle food must ensure that all relevant staff are aware of, and adhere to, this Policy. A food handler is anyone who is involved in the handling or preparation of food goods and beverages. This Policy will be regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with developments in legislation, with particular reference to identifying points that are critical to food safety.

20. Monitoring Arrangements

The monitoring of this policy will be done via the Strategic and Operational Coordinators.

PART 2

Procedure for dealing with a suspected outbreak (diarrhea and vomiting)

21. Definition

Diarrhea and vomiting (D&V) can have many causes. Organisms causing diarrhea and vomiting are spread by the fecal oral route. To become infected, one must ingest the organism. Most commonly this will result from unwashed hands being in contact with the mouth. It is often assumed that when outbreaks of diarrhea and/or vomiting occur that food poisoning is the cause. This is quite often not the case, but this policy refers to outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting where food has been implicated. Food poisoning may be defined as "an acute illness", usually of sudden onset brought about by eating contaminated or poisonous food." The symptoms normally include one or more of the following: abdominal pain, with or without diarrhea, vomiting and nausea. The incubation period is normally short (between one and 48 hours). The number of bacteria required to cause illness in the healthy adult is usually large and multiplication of bacteria normally occurs within the food. Sufferers usually recover in a few days depending on the organisms; but where body defenses are low, more serious consequences may arise. Any person suffering from D&V must be isolated immediately and Infection Control informed.

(Refer to the Infection Control, Isolation, Diarrhea & Vomiting and Outbreak Management Policies).

22. Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to ensure prompt action in the event of a suspected outbreak of food poisoning. An outbreak may be defined as an incident affecting two or more people.

- 22.1 Recognising an outbreak of diarrhea and vomiting.
- 22.2 Identifying its defining aspects and characteristics.
- 22.3 Preventing recurrence
- 22.4 Identification of communication with external agencies with responsibilities in relation to the outbreak.

23. Guiding principles

For effective and efficient management of an outbreak, this policy is based on the following principles:

- 23.1 Personal responsibility of named individual members for managing defined aspects of the outbreak.
- 23.2 Maintaining clear lines of communication within the organisation and related areas, and satisfactory managing communication with external agencies.
- 23.3 Keeping the operational details of this policy up to date.

24. Overall responsibility

It is the responsibility of Sanctuary Trust's Board of Directors, in conjunction with Managers and Operational Coordinators to instigate the Outbreak Policy and notify the Environmental Health Agency (EHA). The EHA will help direct the management of the outbreak in the organisation and/or related areas.

The Policy should be instituted when:

- a member of staff/volunteer reports that they are suffering from diarrhea and/ or vomiting
- persons purchasing food from, or eating at the premises complain that they have subsequently been ill
- staff, volunteer, customer or visitors begin to report vomiting and/or diarrhea whilst on the premises

It is usual for the local Environmental Health department to be contacted in such cases. The Infection Control Team will be responsible for making this decision.

25. Immediate Action

25.1 At any time any member of staff discovering a volunteer, service user or other member of staff with diarrhea and/or vomiting, will report this to the coordinator on duty. The individual must be isolated immediately on enteric precautions regardless of what might have caused the symptoms. It is the fact that someone has diarrhea that denotes the level of infectiousness. If food or meals that have been prepared at Sanctuary Trust premises are implicated, this should be highlighted at this stage.

25.2 The coordinator in charge will promptly inform management providing details of the suspected outbreak. If food is implicated or there is any suspicion of breaches in food hygiene regulations management will notify the local Environmental Health Officer to carry out joint investigations. Management will provide advice on the isolation of those individuals affected. To prevent cross-contamination, hand-washing techniques should be strictly adhered to, (refer to the Hand Hygiene Policy).

The incident must be reported to the Sanctuary Trust Board of Directors, identifying the location of the alleged incident, the name of the person reporting the incident, and information regarding the food or meals that have been implicated. If the suspected outbreak occurs during a weekend or Bank Holiday, the coordinator in charge should contact the Director on call and in turn they should contact Environmental Health immediately. The coordinator on duty should ensure, that further meals or suspected food are not served from the premises concerned, until the Environmental Health Officer has carried out a full investigation.

See Appendix 1

25.3 Management will contact the local Environmental Health Officer who will carry out an immediate investigation of the premises where the suspected source of the food poisoning was. The coordinator on duty should accompany the Environmental Health Officer during their inspection of the premises. The first priority of the Environmental Health Officer will be to establish whether or not the illness is food-borne and if so, prevent the spread. In all cases of reported food poisoning the Environmental Health Officer has the responsibility to

determine whether there has been a breach of hygiene regulations or the Food Safety Act. If the Environmental Health Officer believes that there has been a breach of legislation they will lead the investigation, with the assistance of the coordinator. In some cases the officer may recommend that the premises be closed pending a thorough investigation. If the Environmental Health Officer is satisfied with the methods of food preparation and production, and believes there is no case for legal liability Sanctuary Trust Management will continue with an internal investigation. This will be performed in collaboration with the Environmental Health Officer. All food outlets within the organisation will be investigated. Activity kitchens, snack bars and beverage outlets will be closed and will remain closed until the source has been identified and until Sanctuary Trust are satisfied that no other breaches have contributed to the outbreak and any recommendations have been implemented.

See Appendix 2

26. Investigation

26.1 The objectives of the investigation of an outbreak are to:

- Determine which organism, or chemical, was responsible;
- Trace all cases and carriers, especially those involved in food handling;
- Determine which stage of the food preparation allowed bacterial multiplication;
- Recommend how food should be prepared in the future to prevent recurrences and further spread.

26.2 Coordinators will compile lists of all people (staff, volunteers, participants, customers and visitors) who have reported as suffering from the symptoms of food poisoning. Details of the symptoms and the names of the people will then be presented to Sanctuary Trust management.

Sanctuary Trust Management will agree the mechanism, the collection of specimens and the nature of specimens to be collected. All people involved in the preparation of the suspect food will also be required to produce fecal specimens. If any people involved in the preparation of the suspect food have reported symptoms Sanctuary Trust Management should ensure that they are suspended from duty pending advice from Board of Directors.

27. At the end of the outbreak

It is the responsibility of Sanctuary Trust's Management and Board of Directors to analyse the results of the investigation, initiate necessary action and to declare the outbreak over.

A critical review of the cause, identification and management of any outbreak should be held soon after the event so as to identify positive aspects and those areas which require improvement. Findings should be reported to the Board of Directors.

The role of the Environmental Health Officer with regard to food hygiene

The Environmental Health Officer (EHO) is a local authority official responsible for the enforcement of legislation relating to food hygiene and food safety. The functions of an EHO in the field of food hygiene can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure product safety and fitness for consumption;
- To reduce possible sources of contamination entering the food environment;
- To monitor conditions and hygienic operation within the food environment;
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation;
- To establish the integrity of management and effectiveness of control procedures
- To offer professional advice

Hygiene offences can be the subject of a prosecution or the issue of an improvement notice allowing not less than 14 days to comply. Where there is an imminent risk of injury to health an emergency prohibition notice can be served requiring the immediate cessation of a process or use of equipment, or the closure of the premises; food which is regarded as unfit for consumption or is contaminated can be seized. However, most EHO's prefer, in the first instance, to act by means of a letter specifying items to be remedied within a stated time, provided they are confident the work will be carried out.

