

Stockvale Catering Ltd. Allergen Policy

This policy demonstrates our commitment to reducing the risk to staff, visitors and customers concerning food provision and production, which could cause allergic reactions.

Through this policy, we will aim to minimise the risk of allergens causing harm through safe procedures, staff training and planning for effective responses to allergenic emergencies.

The 14 Food Allergens

There are 14 allergens as contained within the law:



All food businesses must identify and declare if any of these ingredients are used in any of the products being made within the business. As a business producing items to eat on site, Stockvale Catering Ltd is committed to ensuring all ingredients in every menu item are accurately listed, with any of the 14 food allergens shown above, being highlighted.

Remember, people can be allergic to any ingredient, so it is best practice to know all the ingredients in any food item, but the ones shown **MUST** be declared.

Background Information

Food hypersensitivity is a blanket term for an adverse reaction to food. This could be due to food allergy, food intolerance or an autoimmune disease such as coeliac disease.

What is a food allergy?

A food allergy occurs when the body's immune system mistakenly identifies a food protein as a threat, triggering an overreaction. This reaction can range from mild symptoms like hives or itching to severe and potentially life-threatening reactions, including anaphylaxis.

Symptoms of a food allergy are often mild but can be very serious. The most common symptoms are an itchy mouth and throat, a red rash and swelling of the face. These are most likely to occur soon after eating the allergenic food but in some cases, can develop hours later.

What is a food intolerance?

Food intolerance involves an adverse reaction by the body to a specific food ingredient, but it is not related to the immune system and therefore is not life threatening. Instead, the body has difficulty digesting certain foods, usually when consumed in large amounts.

Symptoms of food intolerance include bloating, stomach cramps and diarrhoea, which usually come on gradually within a few hours of eating.

What is coeliac disease?

Coeliac disease is an autoimmune condition where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the small intestine when gluten is consumed. This damage hinders nutrient absorption, leading to a range of symptoms. It's not a food allergy or intolerance, but rather a reaction to gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley, and rye. The only way to prevent symptoms of coeliac disease is to avoid altogether consuming even trace amounts of gluten.

Who does it affect?

Anyone can develop food hypersensitivity at any point in their life. Food hyper-sensitivities are life changing, and often the only way to manage them is by careful control of what the person consumes.

Allergic reactions can be life threatening, known as anaphylaxis or anaphylactic shock, it occurs because the body's immune system has overacted to an allergen. It can cause swelling of the airways, and the person will need immediate medical attention. Severe allergies can be triggered by even trace amounts of the allergen in the food consumed.

If you work with food, you must take allergens seriously, as you are legally responsible for providing correct allergen information about the ingredients in the food you serve.

Who is responsible?

The business owner and the catering director of Stockvale Catering Ltd are jointly responsible for creating this Allergen Policy and ensuring all documentation regarding ingredients and allergens are accurate and updated.

The person of responsibility is responsible for ensuring all procedures are adhered to on shift and that all staff receive training, including regular refresher training on safe food handling, including allergen awareness.

All staff, regardless of their position are responsible for keeping the food hypersensitive customer safe. Everyone must understand the procedures in place to protect them and follow all the guidelines carefully.

Gathering allergen information

You need to know what is in each food item, product and dish served. This information will then need to be recorded in allergy information documents and the location of these will be shared with all staff. Leaders will also receive training on accessing and reading the allergy information documents and feel confident sharing them with customers who request them.

Any allergens in the ingredients list will need highlighting on the allergen information documents. Each food product prepared should have accompanying information about the ingredients it contains. These sheets must be updated, especially if a menu item changes.

Ingredients lists on the packaging must be checked and a record of this information must be kept. If ingredients are decanted into storage containers, then these must be labelled with the same ingredient list.

Which allergens are present?

Remember to take account of all ingredients used in a food item, including hidden allergens. For example:

- **Celery** refers to the stalks, leaves and seeds of both celery and celeriac, including celery salt.
- **Cereals** containing gluten include bread, pasta, pastry, cakes, royal icing, sauces, soups and butter
- **Crustaceans** include lobster, prawns, crab, scampi and pastes made with these
- **Eggs** can be found in pasta, quiche, sauces, cakes, mousses and mayonnaise, or items may be brushed with an egg glaze
- **Fish** can be found in salad dressings, on pizza and in Worcestershire sauce
- **Lupin flour and seeds** are used in some pastries and bread and often in products labelled as gluten free
- **Molluscs** include squid, snails, mussels and oysters, including oyster sauce
- **Milk** can be found in cheese, butter, cream and yoghurt. Items may also be brushed with a milk glaze or contain milk powder
- **Mustard** refers to seeds, powder and liquid mustard and is often found in dressings and marinades, sauces, curries and soups. Cress also contains the substance which causes a reaction to mustard
- **Nuts**, such as almonds, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios and cashews, macadamia and walnuts, are commonly used in deserts, bread, ice cream and sauces, weather whole, ground or as an oil
- **Peanuts**, including peanut flour (groundnuts) and groundnut oil, can be found in desserts, cakes and sauces.
- **Sesame seeds and sesame oil** are often found in bread, hummus, and tahini and stir-fried dishes.
- **Soya** refers to soya protein, flour and beans and can be found in tofu, sauces, edamame beans, desserts and many vegetarian and vegan products.
- **Sulphur dioxide and sulphites** are preservatives commonly found in dried fruit, fruit juice, meat products, wine and beer. (Concentrations of more than 10mg/kg or 10mg/litre)

Any changes to suppliers or to the product or ingredient that is delivered to the business MUST be checked and updated with the latest information. Similarly, any recipe changes must be checked and updated in the information documents and the allergen matrix. Any new products must receive the same checks and sharing of information

Giving information to customers

At Stockvale Catering Ltd we encourage best practise, so all staff are trained to ask customers if they have any food hypersensitivities. We also use signposting to remind customers to tell a staff member or the duty manager, about any food hypersensitivities they have.

Any customers who require further information are welcome to speak directly to the outlet leader, and they are to be shown the allergen information documents.

Good kitchen procedures

The following lists the procedure we have in place to minimise the risk of allergenic cross-contamination in the outlets and how we reduce risk to staff, visitors and customers of Stockvale Catering Ltd. These procedures are based on the outcomes of a through HACCP plan and allergen risk assessment.

- All ingredients will come from reputable suppliers. Any changes in suppliers will be detailed and full traceability records shall be kept.
- When allergenic ingredients are kept in house, they shall be stored separately in sealed containers on lower shelves
- Carefully clean up any spillages of allergenic ingredients as soon as they occur. Using a single use cloth and not a reusable one
- Ensure that food handling equipment, such as mixers, blenders and weighing scaled are cleaned thoroughly before using it for an allergen-free product
- When cleaning food handling equipment, dismantle it carefully to ensure all parts are cleaned and no allergenic residue, such as powders and seeds, is left in hard to reach places
- Only use the same utensils for allergenic and allergen-free foods after thoroughly cleaning them in between uses
- Staff must wash their hands properly using the correct technique before and after handling allergenic ingredients and food products

What to do in an emergency situation

All staff have received training on what to do in an emergency situation, this is refreshed regularly.

We will endeavour to have a qualified first aider on site who will be able to assist in the event of an emergency situation. The qualified first aider will know how to administer an auto injector if their assistance is required

If a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:

- Ensure the casualty is comfortable, ideally lying down or sitting in a chair. If breathing is difficult, assist them in lying down with their legs raised
- If the person has an auto-injector, such as an EpiPen, Jext Pen or Emerade Pen, ask them to locate and use it. The casualty might be able to inject themselves, otherwise, you can assist them if you know how. The company policy on administering auto-injectors is that the qualified first aider can administer it as they have received adequate training.
- Call 999 for an ambulance as soon as possible and explain that the person is having a severe allergic reaction, mentioning anaphylaxis specifically.
- If there's no improvement after five to 10 minutes, use the second auto-injector if a second dose is available. Ensure this is in the opposite leg this time.
- Notify the qualified, on-site first-aider of what's happened.
- Reassure the person and do your best to keep them calm

Signed:

Name:

Outlet:

Date:

