WHAT ARE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT FOR MY PROGRAM?

Penny Garrett, Director of Food Services, Yorktown Community Schools

Wikipedia states: A standard operating procedure is a set of step-by-step instructions compiled by an organization to help workers carry out complex routine operations. SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply with industry regulations.

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) help to make assessments of individual performance. Employees who work in compliance with SOPs know exactly what is expected of them, and SOPs can assist them in meeting set goals with efficiency.

When all employees follow the same processes, it's an easy matter to measure them against the same standards. Performance can be fairly appraised and, when necessary, discipline action will be consistent. Consistency in enforcing SOPs is key. Consistency supports that the operation continues to run smoothly and can aid in maintaining employee morale.

If the SOP enables employees to clearly follow them as written, then the procedure is sound. If any steps are unclear, confusing, or no longer in use, the SOP should be updated. We must ensure that all staff read and understand the SOPs as written. Having well-written SOPs doesn't mean much if staff are not adequately trained, or if management is not leading by example.

The header of each SOP could include the title, document number and the publication or revision date.

An index page with each SOP clearly titled with the as signed document number should be located in the front of the binder. This will assist in quick access for a specific SOP. Consult with your cafeteria manager(s). They are monitoring the operation of the kitchen and their staff on a daily basis. Several of our SOPs were put in place due to the request of the cafeteria manager(s).

Before the start of each school year, I hold a meeting for all food service staff. One of the topics emphasized and reviewed is SOPs. At that time, all staff are made aware/reminded that a binder of all SOPs is located in each kitchen and is accessible to them at any time.

Here are just a few of the SOPs in place for our team at Yorktown Community Schools:

• Work Hours
• Reporting Illness
• Procedure for Calling In
• Dress Code
• Hair Restraints & Jewelry
• Time Clock Instructions
• Scheduled Lunch Breaks
• Leaving the Building During Work Hours
• Eating & Drinking in the Workplace
• Personal Hygiene
• Bereavement Leave
• Special Function Employment
• Jury Duty
• Cuts, Abrasions & Burns
• Accident Reports
• Discipline Action, Chain of Command
• Building Safety & Security
• Workplace Health & Safety
• Contact with Blood & Bodily Fluid
• Personal Calls/Cell Phone

Not sure where to start? There are a variety of templates available online to assist in writing SOP's for your department.

Standard Operating Procedure Checklist

- STEP 1: PLAN
- STEP 2: FIRST DRAFT
- STEP 3: READ, REVISE, REPEAT
- STEP 4: TEST
- STEP 5: SPREAD THE WORD
- STEP 6: TRAIN
- STEP 7: REVIEW

Resource: Big Sky Associates

Note: Before implementing newly written SOP's for your department, you may want to consult with your superintendent. SOPs may require board approval.

NAME: _____

MEMBER ID#: _____

EMAIL: _____

1) The header of each SOP could include this title, document number and the name of the person who created the SOP.

TRUE OR FALSE

2) Consistency in enforcing SOPs is key. TRUE OR FALSE

3) SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output, and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply with industry regulations. TRUE OR FALSE

4) To assist with quick access to a specific SOP, and index page should be located in the front of the binder. TRUE OR FALSE

5) If any steps are unclear, confusing or no longer in use, the SOP should be updated. TRUE OR FALSE

6) SOPs can assist staff to meet set goals with efficiency. TRUE OR FALSE

7) Cafeteria Managers are a great resource in identifying the need for a specific SOP. TRUE OR FALSE

8) A SOP binder should only be located in the food service director's office. TRUE OR FALSE

9) Standard operating procedures help to make assessments of individuals performance. TRUE OR FALSE

10) We must ensure that all staff understand the SOPs as written. TRUE OR FALSE