

Physical Contamination Control & Food Defense

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“Food Safety Starts With What We Don’t Allow Into Our Food”

Why Physical Contamination Control Matters

Physical contamination (foreign objects) is one of the most serious food safety risks in the catering industry.

Even a single lapse can result in:

- Consumer injury
- Regulatory non-compliance
- Service disruption
- Loss of trust

Strong physical hazard control protects people, operations, and reputation.



Common Sources of Physical Contamination

Understanding where risks come from helps prevent them. Common sources include:

- Equipment wear and damaged utensils
- Inadequate inspection of raw materials
- Packaging debris and loose components
- Poor housekeeping practices
- Personal items entering food areas
- Unauthorized access to food production zones

Most foreign object risks are preventable through routine checks and discipline

Key Control Measures

In Food Production Areas

- Inspect raw materials during receiving and preparation
- Verify equipment condition before use
- Remove damaged tools and utensils immediately
- Keep personal belongings out of food areas

During Dispatch & Handling

- Conduct final visual inspection before dispatch
- Ensure food containers are sealed and secured
- Maintain controlled & documented handover

What Physical Contamination Looks Like

- Metal, glass, plastic, or bone fragments in food
 - Packaging material mixed with ingredients
 - Loose equipment parts or broken utensils
 - Personal items found in production areas
- Any of the above must be treated as a food safety deviation.

Food Defense Awareness

Food safety also includes protection against intentional contamination.

Food Defense controls include:

- Restricted access to kitchens and storage areas
- Visitor supervision and logging
- Secured dry stores, chillers, and freezers
- Immediate reporting of suspicious behavior

Food Defense applies to everyone, at all levels.

If a Foreign Object Is Suspected or Found

1. Stop service immediately
2. Isolate the affected food batch
3. Preserve samples and materials
4. Inform Supervisor and HSE
5. Complete required reporting documentation

Early reporting prevents escalation.

Final Message

- Food safety is not only procedures and checklists — it is awareness, discipline, and timely action.
- Every inspection matters.
- Every report matters.
- Every individual plays a role.

