REGULATORY COMPLIANCE: DOCUMENTATION & COMMUNICATION

TOPIC:	Regulatory Compliance: Documentation & Communication (Temperature Logs, Cleaning Schedules, and Food Safety Records)
AUDIENCE:	All Foodservice Staff
DATE:	[Enter the training date]

Purpose / Why Does it Matter

Accurate documentation and clear communication are required to maintain food safety and regulatory compliance. Temperature logs, cleaning schedules, and other food safety records provide proof that safe practices are being followed every day. These records help prevent foodborne illness, identify problems early, and demonstrate compliance during inspections and surveys. Incomplete or missing documentation can lead to unsafe food conditions, survey deficiencies, or corrective actions — even when food handling practices are otherwise safe.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this in-service, participants will be able to:

1. Explain why food safety documentation is required.
2. Correctly complete temperature logs and cleaning schedules.
3. Identify when and how to report out-of-range temperatures or missed cleaning tasks.
4. Apply documentation and communication practices that support food safety and regulatory compliance.

KEY INFORMATION

Food Safety Documentation Requirements

- Food safety documentation must be completed **accurately, consistently, and on time**, including (but not limited to):
  - Temperature logs
  - Refrigerator, freezer, dry storage logs
  - Dishwashing temperatures/PPM logs
  - Sanitizer bucket/3 compartment sinks logs
  - Cleaning schedules, and any required corrective action records.
- Staff must follow facility procedures and posted guidelines when completing all food safety documentation.
- Documentation must be completed promptly — at the required/scheduled time, or as soon as the related task is finished.
- Documentation must be legible and accurate.
- Documentation must be corrected immediately if a problem is identified.
- Documentation must be reported to a supervisor when standards are not met.

Temperature Logs

- Temperature monitoring is a critical control point for food safety.
- Check temperatures at the required time, as scheduled.
- Use a **calibrated thermometer**.
- Record the **actual temperature** — do not guess or estimate.
- Initial or sign the log as required.
- Safe temperature guidelines: refrigeration **41°F or below**, freezers **0°F or below**, hot holding **135°F or above**.
- If temperatures are out of range, take corrective action immediately, following facility procedures.
- Document the corrective action taken and notify a supervisor right away.
- **Do not ignore, delay, or leave blanks on temperature logs.**
- Temperature logs must be retained for at least one year, or longer if required by state or local regulations.

Cleaning Schedules & Sanitation Logs

- Cleaning schedules and sanitation logs verify that equipment and work areas are cleaned and sanitized as required.
- Complete assigned cleaning tasks as scheduled.
- Follow approved cleaning and sanitizing procedures.
- Record completion at the time the task is done.
- Use the correct chemicals and concentrations as directed.
- Never sign off on cleaning tasks that were not completed.
- If a task cannot be completed, report the issue to a supervisor and document according to facility procedure.

Communication & Reporting

- Clear communication supports food safety and prevents small issues from becoming major problems.
- Report out-of-range temperatures immediately.
- Report missed or incomplete cleaning tasks immediately.
- Report equipment concerns and sanitation issues immediately.
- Report documentation errors that cannot be corrected.
- Report concerns to a supervisor and follow facility escalation procedures.

Key Reminders

- Documentation proves food safety practices are being followed.
- Complete logs honestly and on time.
- Report problems immediately — do not wait until the next shift.
- Accurate records protect patients, residents, staff, and the facility.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

NAME: **DATE:**

1. Why is food safety documentation required?

☐ **A.** For employee performance reviews

☐ **B.** To prove safe practices are being followed

☐ **C.** Only for inspections

☐ **D.** To reduce paperwork

2. Food safety documentation must be completed:

☐ **A.** Whenever staff have time

☐ **B.** Accurately, consistently, and on time

☐ **C.** Only when a supervisor asks

☐ **D.** Once per week

3. What should you do if a refrigerator temperature is above 41°F?

☐ **A.** Ignore it if food feels cold

☐ **B.** Write down a safe temperature

☐ **C.** Take corrective action and notify a supervisor

☐ **D.** Check again tomorrow

4. When checking temperatures, staff should:

☐ **A.** Estimate based on experience

☐ **B.** Use a calibrated thermometer and record the actual reading

☐ **C.** Use any thermometer available

☐ **D.** Round to the nearest 10 degrees

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5. What is the safe temperature guideline for freezers?

☐ **A.** 32°F or below

☐ **B.** 10°F or below

☐ **C.** 0°F or below

☐ **D.** 20°F or below

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6. When should cleaning tasks be documented?

☐ **A.** At the end of the week

☐ **B.** When convenient

☐ **C.** When the task is completed

☐ **D.** Only during inspections

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7. When completing cleaning tasks, staff must:

☐ **A.** Use any chemical available

☐ **B.** Use the correct chemicals and concentrations as directed

☐ **C.** Skip steps if short on time

☐ **D.** Use more chemical than directed for extra cleaning power

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8. What must you do before signing off on a cleaning task?

☐ **A.** Ask your supervisor to verify it

☐ **B.** Complete the task yourself

☐ **C.** Wait until end of shift to record it

☐ **D.** Sign it off and complete it later

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9. Which of the following should be reported immediately?

☐ **A.** Out-of-range temperatures and missed cleaning tasks

☐ **B.** Only issues found during inspections

☐ **C.** Problems that happen more than once

☐ **D.** Nothing needs immediate reporting

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10. How long must temperature logs be retained?

☐ **A.** 30 days

☐ **B.** 6 months

☐ **C.** At least one year, or longer if required by state or local regulations

☐ **D.** Until the next inspection

Knowledge Check Answer Key

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. C

DATE: [Enter date]

TRAINER NAME: [Enter trainer name]

In-Service Attendee Sign-in

DATE:

ATTENDEE NAMES: