

Mad Hatters Allergen Policy

Policy

Mad Hatters Catering is committed to reducing the risk to our customers with regard to the provision of food and consumption of allergens in food, which could lead to an allergic reaction.

This policy is available on Mad Hatters Website www.madhatters-catering.com

Statement

Mad Hatters Catering is unable to guarantee a completely allergen free environment. However we will aim to minimize the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Objectives of this policy

To promote food allergen awareness to staff, customers of Mad Hatters. To provide clear guidance to all staff on their responsibilities for the provision of food to anyone consuming food from us. To ensure that relevant food allergen training and food hygiene training are provided for all staff members. To ensure appropriate information and support is available for customers and staff.

What is a food allergy?

Food allergies affect the body's immune system. The body reacts to certain allergens in food by producing antibodies which can cause immediate and sometimes severe symptoms, such as: itching or strange metallic taste in the mouth, swelling of the throat and tongue; difficulty in swallowing or speaking; abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting; skin hives (nettle rash) anywhere on the body. In most extreme cases, difficulties

What is a food intolerance?

This does not involve the immune system in the same way and is not usually as severe as a food allergy. Symptoms usually take longer to appear and may include headaches, fatigue and digestive problems. Food intolerance is harder to diagnose than a food allergy. The person with a known allergen trigger may know what food ingredient will provoke a reaction. However, they may well have eaten this food or a specific dish previously and had no adverse reaction.

Who is at risk?

Anybody can develop a food allergen or intolerance at any time in their life, irrespective of whether they have consumed the food previously. A person with an allergy is at risk even if they consume a small amount of the food allergen. Food allergies and intolerances are life-changing. In the UK they affect around 8% of children and 2% of adults. Anyone with food allergy's or intolerances are at risk, Mad Hatters will provide as much information as possible

to any customers with food allergens or intolerance, to allow them to make an informed choice

Common Food Allergens

There are currently 14 allergens which must be clearly stated if they are present in the food on offer. People may report allergies to other foods not on the below list. Most common in the UK are kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans etc.), other seeds and other fruits and vegetables.

The 14 allergens required by law to state are : Cereals containing Gluten, Celery, Crustaceans, Molluscs, Lupin, Sulphites, Milk, Egg, Peanuts, Nuts, Soya, Fish, Mustard, Sesame

Responsibilities

The management team and staff members are responsible ensuring all catering is delivered according to our most up to date allergen information (found in our allergen pack) Any changes will be made via the website which is monitored regularly. All staff members in production are responsible for following exact recipes and are to inform the management team of any substitutions or changes to products. All Staff Members are responsible for double checking labels are correct, and checking information they are providing to customers regarding allergens is correct.

Staff Training

All staff must complete the following mandatory courses:

Food Hygiene Level 2

Food Allergy Awareness

All training records will be maintained by the management team and stored in a file to be regularly updated

Good preparation and service practices

KITCHEN

All dishes which are produced in house will be from standard ingredients from approved suppliers. Any product/ingredient changes/supplier changes affecting standard ingredients will be detailed in HACCP and changed updated in allergen pack All allergenic ingredients are packaged separately to reduce the risk of contamination Equipment/utensils used in the preparation of food for people with a food allergy are cleaned according to standard procedures (see HACCP manual) which under normal circumstances should be sufficient. All foods which are prepared for special diets must be prepared in an area which is sanitised before starting. Separate colour coded chopping boards will be used for this purpose. When cooking food for customers with a food allergy or intolerance where possible will be prepared before any other food to help avoid cross contamination. The area must be thoroughly cleaned before preparation of food before and after use. The food once prepared must be stored covered and separated from other catering. Where dishes contain any of the 14 allergens this is clearly identified on our allergen information pack which all customers have received and

been advised to placed out in full with each catering delivered. We also have an allergen information card detailing where to find further allergen information on our website and also contact numbers also.

COMMUNICATION

Managers communicate fully with customers concerning have specific dietary requirements and to help them find a suitable product which is safe for them to eat. We will endeavour to provide as much information as possible on the website, verbally and by email. If customers need further information, they are encouraged to meet/discuss with managers to identify any specific requests and what will be possible.

January 2024

This policy will be reviewed annually