

# **Auditor Training Manual: Conduct and Hygiene Protocols for Audits in Food Manufacturing Facilities**

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## 1. Introduction

Auditors play a critical role in evaluating compliance with food safety and hygiene standards. Their conduct and adherence to hygiene protocols directly influence the integrity and credibility of the audit process. This training manual establishes the expected behavior and hygiene measures auditors must follow when conducting assessments at food manufacturing facilities.

## 2. Professional Conduct at Client Sites

- **Compliance with Client Policies:** Auditors must strictly adhere to all client-specific hygiene, safety, and operational guidelines.
- **Confidentiality and Discretion:** Unauthorized photography, video recording, or information disclosure is strictly prohibited.
- **Professionalism and Respect:** Maintain a professional demeanor and engage respectfully with client personnel at all times.
- **Minimize Disruptions:** Avoid unnecessary conversations, distractions, or interference with production operations.
- **Limited Physical Contact:** Auditors must refrain from touching raw materials, finished products, or production equipment unless explicitly authorized by the client.

## 3. Hygiene Protocols for Auditors

### **Before Entering the Facility:**

- **Hand Hygiene:** Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before entering any production area.
- **Personal Cleanliness:** Maintain high standards of personal hygiene, including well-groomed nails, absence of strong fragrances, and clean professional attire.
- **Health Self-Assessment:** If experiencing any illness symptoms (e.g., cough, cold, fever), auditors must inform the client and refrain from entering high-risk zones.

### **Dress Code & Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- **Compliance with Facility Requirements:** Auditors must wear designated protective clothing, such as lab coats, gloves, hairnets, beard covers, and safety footwear as mandated by the client.
- **Jewelry and Accessories Prohibition:** Remove all rings, bracelets, watches, earrings, and any other loose items before entering hygiene-controlled areas.
- **Restricted Personal Belongings:** Personal items such as mobile phones, pens, and notebooks must not be carried into production areas unless specifically authorized.

### Inside the Production Area:

- **No Food or Drink:** Consumption of food, chewing gum, or drinking is strictly prohibited in all production zones.
- **Restricted Movement:** Auditors must remain within designated pathways and avoid leaning on or touching surfaces.
- **Use of Client Equipment:** Adhere to all instructions before handling any client-provided inspection tools.
- **Frequent Hand Washing:** Hands must be washed and sanitized frequently, particularly after touching surfaces or moving between controlled areas.

### Photography and Mobile Phone Usage:

- **Strictly Prohibited Without Authorization:** The use of mobile phones for photography or communication within the production area is forbidden unless expressly permitted by the client.
- **No Personal Use:** Auditors must not use mobile devices for personal activities during the audit.
- **If Exceptionally Approved:** Any image or video capture must be pre-approved in writing and must comply with client confidentiality policies.

## 4. Handling Non-Conformities Observed on Site

- **Maintain Composure:** Address non-conformities professionally without causing alarm among client staff.

- **Accurate Documentation:** Observations should be recorded comprehensively in audit notes rather than relying on photographs unless explicitly permitted.
- **Adherence to Reporting Protocols:** All identified non-compliance issues must be reported through the prescribed audit reporting process.

## 5. Exit Protocols

- **Proper PPE Disposal:** Single-use protective clothing and gear must be discarded in designated disposal bins before exiting the facility.
- **Hand Hygiene Upon Exit:** Auditors must wash or sanitize their hands before leaving the premises.
- **Professional Client Debriefing:** Audit findings should be communicated to the client in a structured and professional manner.

## 6. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to adhere to this hygiene and guidelines may result in:

- Immediate disqualification from the audit process.
- Formal reporting of the incident to the certification body or employer for disciplinary action.
- Legal or reputational consequences are due to breaches of client hygiene and confidentiality policies.

## 7. Conclusion

Strict adherence to these professional conduct and hygiene protocols ensures the integrity and effectiveness of food safety audits. By following these guidelines, auditors uphold the highest standards of credibility while respecting client operations and regulatory compliance requirements.