

# Enrolling in the Cutting Edge Program



## 1. Establish Policy

To begin participating in the Cutting Edge Program, you must first develop written Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) related to the foodborne illness risk factors listed below. Please note that only the risk factors applicable to your operation require an SOP. These should be general SOP's outlining what you do, or plan to do, to control the foodborne illness risk factors in your food service operation.

Once your SOPs are complete, please submit your SOPs and a Cutting Edge Program application to the Department. Simply fill out the Online Cutting Edge Application, which allows you to submit the document directly to our Department via email. Please ensure that you include your SOPs as attachments to this email.

The Department will review your SOP's to ensure they meet basic Code requirements (i.e., hot food held at 135 degrees or higher). Review methods include an independent review by Department staff or an in-person joint review between you and Department staff at our office or your establishment during an inspection.

Corporations and/or chain establishments can submit a single application package and SOPs for multiple locations. After the Department approves your SOP's, we will notify you that you are enrolled in the Cutting Edge Program and your next inspection will be scheduled with an inspector so we can review together how your policies work at your business.

### Foodborne Illness Risk Factors

Approved source  
Cold holding  
Cooking temperatures  
Cooling  
Cross contamination

Employee health policy  
Food contact surfaces  
Hand washing/bare hand contact  
Hot holding  
Reheating

## 2. Train Staff

In order to put the procedures into action, food service workers must be trained on the SOP's. Training methods and frequency will be determined by each establishment. Effective training will emphasize the food safety aspects of their respective duties, including monitoring and steps for taking corrective action when needed. We have provided numerous resources & tools to assist you in this endeavor. They can all be found on our website in the [AMC Toolbox](#).

## 3. Verify Results

Verification is to ensure the activities described in the food safety SOP's are being performed. Methods for verifying activities are done properly, and at the required frequency, should be outlined in your SOP's. You decide what type of verification activities are most effective for your operation. Verification activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Record keeping, such as maintaining log sheets.
- Periodic self-inspections to assess effectiveness of food safety management systems.
- Observing that employees are carrying out the critical procedures correctly
- Observing the person doing the monitoring and determining whether monitoring is being done as planned
- Reviewing the monitoring records to determine if they are completed accurately and consistently
- Determining whether the records show that the frequency of monitoring stated in the plan is being followed
- Ensuring that corrective action was taken when the person monitoring found and recorded that the critical limit was not met
- Confirming that all equipment, including equipment used for monitoring, was operated, maintained and calibrated properly

Verification should occur at a frequency that can ensure the food safety management system is being followed continuously.

## Additional Requirements

The establishment must have a Certified Foodservice Manager (CFM) on staff and either the CFM and/or a designated Person in Charge (PIC) must be present during all operational hours.

Establishments cannot have any unresolved legal action from the Department when applying for enrollment in the program.

## What happens after the application is turned in for Cutting Edge status?

Once the Department reviews your procedures to ensure they meet basic Code requirements (i.e., hot food held at 135 degrees or higher), we will work directly with you during the review process to help you develop effective policy documents that fit your business. After the Department approves your SOPs, we will notify you that you are enrolled in the Cutting Edge Program. Once enrolled, ensure all of your staff is well trained on these policies prior to your first inspection, which will be scheduled with you by your inspector.