Food safety and hygiene means taking the necessary precautions in order to ensure that food is fit for human consumption and does not create an environmental health hazard. There are significant legal, ethical and business reasons why it should be part of any restaurant or food service establishment's overall approach to management and meeting quality standards.

It's obvious, that to ensure food safety and hygiene it is essential for a hotel, since from that fact depends its smooth operation and its reputation.

Food Safety Management:

The most important issues to address are often referred to as 'The Four C's':

1. Cleaning

2. Cross-contamination

3. Cooking

4. Chilling (including freezing and thawing)

1. Cleaning:

- Your kitchen should be designed with cleanliness and hygiene in mind. Floors, walls, ceilings and worktops should be smooth (to prevent dirt accumulating), easy to clean and in good repair. Light levels should be as close to good natural light as possible.
- Toilets must be sited away from areas where food is handled and there should be adequate hand basins and hygiene facilities for drying toilets.
- Ensure that ventilation is sufficient and that air does not flow from a contaminated into a clean area. Air filters should be easily accessible to enable regular cleaning and maintenance.

- All equipment, implements, utensils and chopping boards should be corrosion-resistant and should be cleaned carefully, particularly after working with raw meat, poultry and fish.

- Wash fruit and vegetables carefully to ensure there are no pesticide or other chemical residues.

2. Avoid cross-contamination:

- Organize the layout of the kitchen to enable a work-flow which will avoid cross-contamination between foods.
- Regularly disinfect the items people touch frequently such as work surfaces, sinks, taps, door handles, switches and can openers.
- Where possible use separate storage and chilling facilities for vegetables, dairy products, raw and cooked foods.
- If possible designate certain areas, equipment and sinks for raw food only
- Keep eggs separate from other foods, both when in their shells and once they have been cracked open. Never use eggs that are cracked or damaged. Avoid splashing raw egg on other foods, surfaces or dishes.
- Wrapping materials such as aluminum foil, plastic bags and cling film must be kept in

clean storage to avoid contamination. Hands should be washed and dried before reaching for wrapping materials.

- Always use potable water for ice. Similarly, steam used in direct contact with food must not contain any substance that could be a hazard to health.
- It is crucial to remove as quickly as possible any food waste and other refuse from areas where food is present, so as to avoid any form of bacteria in the kitchen.

3. Cooking

- Cook thoroughly until food is piping hot throughout and keep it hot until is served to the consumer.
- Never reheat food more than once.
- Cook eggs and recipes containing eggs thoroughly
- When using microwave cookers, ensure that food is heated properly throughout, following the manufacturers instructions regarding standing times and stirring during cooking.
- Barbecues must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected both after and before use. Do not let raw food touch or drip onto cooked food when adding food to the barbecue.

4. Chilling, freezing and thawing

- Refrigerators should operate at a temperature of between 1˚C and 4˚C . Freezers should be kept at -18˚C or below. Make sure you have a reliable thermometer (ideally an automatic

monitoring system) and make regular checks to ensure it is functioning correctly.

- Set maximum temperatures for each item of refrigeration equipment and ensure that these are never exceeded.
- All cooked food that is being prepared in advance must be cooled as quickly as possible so that it spends as little time as possible in the "danger zone" between 5˚C and 68˚C , where bacteria multiply most quickly. Divide food into smaller batches to enable it to cool more quickly and put it in a cooler place. Stirring at intervals will also help speed up the cooling process.

- You should chill food from 70˚C to 3˚C or below within a period of 90 minutes. If you are preparing the food for freezing, it should be chilled from 70˚C to -18˚C in no more than 240 minutes.
- Do not overload refrigeration equipment or pack food in too tightly. If the cool air cannot circulate it will impair chilling performance (and energy efficiency).
- Check the temperature of refrigerated food as it is delivered and do not accept it if it is above food safe levels as it could be already be contaminated. Put frozen food into the freezer as soon as it is delivered.
- Keep cold food cold. If it is not to be served immediately, put it back in the refrigerator.
- Clean and defrost refrigeration equipment regularly and according to the manufacturer's instructions.