Harbor Street Kitchen — Standard Operating Procedure	
SOP: K-03 Receiving Deliveries	**Revision:** 3 | **Effective:** 2026-11-16
Applies to: anyone who signs for a delivery (cooks, prep, shift leads)	**Owner:** Kitchen Manager

PURPOSE

Receiving is the first step in our food safety flow. Never assume that all the food you receive is good enough to eat. The most important part of receiving is accuracy — a careless or half-hearted check makes the whole process useless.

BEFORE THE DELIVERY

1. Keep the receiving door and area well lit and very tidy. It is on the daily cleaning schedule.
2. Schedule deliveries so there is enough time to inspect and receive every product properly.
3. Have the equipment and containers within easy reach: scale, disposable gloves, clean containers, and a probe thermometer.
4. Have a copy of the purchase order for the delivery at the receiving area.

WHEN THE TRUCK ARRIVES

1. Record the temperature of the truck's refrigerated and freezer compartments on the receiving log.
2. Acceptable (house standard): refrigerated compartment at 41°F (5°C) or below; freezer compartment keeping product frozen solid.
3. Spot-check refrigerated food with the probe thermometer: it must be 41°F (5°C) or below. Frozen food must arrive frozen.

STOP: If the truck temperature is not within the acceptable range, do not accept the shipment. We cannot tell how long the food has been at the wrong temperature.

CHECK EACH PRODUCT GROUP

Each group of food needs a slightly different check.

Dry goods (cartons, bags, cases, pails)

- Count the pieces and check the number against the invoice.
- If a carton is damaged, check the contents carefully. Look for leaks from jars or bottles — it is very hard to get credit later for broken glass.
- Check bags and pails for damage or leakage.
- If a sealed carton looks like it has been opened, or a carton is unsealed or repacked, check what is inside.

Canned goods

- Count the cans and check their quality.
- Reject swollen or bulging cans — the food has spoiled.

- Reject cans with large dents — the seams may have split and the food may be contaminated. Send them back to the supplier.
- If a whole case of canned goods is unacceptable, tell the Kitchen Manager so the local health authority can be notified.

Dairy

- Check the best-before date on each container. It should be at least 10 days after today.
- Count items against the invoice and check for damage and leakage.

Produce (bags, cases, cartons)

- Count and weigh the items.
- Open closed cases and cartons and check ripeness, freshness and quality.

Meat, poultry and seafood

- Count and weigh fresh items.
- Check for leaking vacuum-packed packages.
- Check the grade of the meat against the grade on the invoice, and confirm the cuts meet the specs on the order.
- Count, weigh and check the quality of fresh poultry and seafood.

Frozen products

- Open the cases to count the items.
- Check for freezer burn, torn wrappings, partial thawing or other problems.

IF SOMETHING IS WRONG

Do not sign the invoice if there is any doubt about quantity, quality or damage. Get the shift lead or Kitchen Manager, who will clear it up with the supplier before you sign.

- For wrong items or unacceptable quality, the supplier must pick up the item and issue a credit.

FINAL CHECK BEFORE SIGNING

1. **Quantity:** what you received matches the invoice and the purchase order.
2. **Quality:** products meet the specs on the invoice or the specs agreed with the supplier, including the exact brand when we asked for one.
3. **Price:** prices on the invoice match the purchase order.

Adapted from "Receiving Practices" in *Food Safety, Sanitation, and Personal Hygiene* by the BC Cook Articulation Committee (BCcampus, 2015), licensed under CC BY 4.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0). Changes: rewritten from textbook prose into SOP format for the fictional restaurant "Harbor Street Kitchen"; added the purchase-order copy and receiving log; added food temperature criteria from the U.S. FDA Food Code §3-202.11 (refrigerated food 41°F/5°C or below; food shipped frozen received frozen) and a house standard applying the same limits to the truck compartments; the health-authority notice routed through the Kitchen Manager; Rev. 3 changes the dairy best-before window from one week to 10 days (house rule). Harbor Street Kitchen is fictional.