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Food Shopping and Handling Policy

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1st Homecare Solutions Ltd.
5a Ridgeway Court
Grovebury Road
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 4SF

Tel: 01525 376677

1st Homecare (Oxford) Ltd
Ground Floor,
8 Isis Business Centre
Pony Road
Oxford
OX4 2RD

Tel: 01865 744174

1st Homecare Kings Langley
Unit 15 Sunderland Estate
Church Lane
Kings Langley
WD4 8JU

Tel: 01923 269877

1 SHOPPING FOR FOOD

When undertaking a client's shopping for them, carers must be aware of the following:

1.1 Always be careful to check the "Use By" dates on packaged foods

Perishable foodstuffs are labelled with a "Use By" date to give a definite date to eat food by. Some items, such as eggs, may also carry a packing date and a "Sell By" date. Carers should ensure that the dates on the products they are purchasing give the client sufficient time to consume them.

1.2 Beware of poor shop hygiene

Carers should especially avoid chilled or frozen food cabinets that look over-loaded or where the food does not feel cold. Carers should not purchase tins or foodstuffs where the packaging appears to be damaged and should avoid shops where cooked and raw meat is not separated. A shop assistant should not handle raw food, then touch cooked food, without washing his or her hands thoroughly in between.

1.3 Purchasing loose pieces of meat or poultry from a delicatessen counter

Carers should ensure that each piece of raw meat and poultry is wrapped thoroughly and separately so that it cannot touch other foods. Raw foods should be packed separately from ready-to-eat foods.

1.4 Frozen or chilled foods

These should be purchased last and packed together, preferably in a cool bag, and should be placed in the client's fridge or freezer as soon as possible after purchasing them. If shopping by car, wrapping a clean blanket round shopping bags will help to insulate them.

1.5 Obtaining money to do the shopping

Money should be obtained from the client or else shopping may be purchased for the client and then the client invoiced for the bill, in accordance with the Handling of Client's Money and Property, Gifts and Gratuities Policy.

2 GENERAL FOOD HYGIENE IN THE CLIENT'S HOME

Before preparing any food, carers must ensure that they:

- Wash their hands thoroughly in hot soapy water, and wipe hands on a separate kitchen towel – not the tea towel
- Are wearing a clean uniform
- Have securely covered any cuts or sores with a waterproof dressing and/or blue plaster
- Have tied back hair or otherwise secured hair

- Are wearing a fresh pair of gloves
- Ensure that any pet or pets the client may have do not have access to the kitchen while food is being prepared, and wash hands after any contact with pets
- Wash and dry utensils between the preparation stages
- Take care not to cough or sneeze over the food being prepared, use tissues and bin them immediately
- Handle raw ingredients as little as possible
- Wipe tops of all cans before opening them
- Wash all surfaces with hot water and detergent after use to ensure a high standard of hygiene
- Use a dishwasher to wash all crockery, cutlery and utensils, or if not possible, wash all with hot water and detergent, rinse, and leave to drip dry if possible or else use a clean tea towel to wipe dry

The most important precaution is to wash hands in warm water with soap before touching food, after going to the lavatory or after touching pets, dirty washing or the dustbin. Cuts and grazes should be covered as outlined above.

Kitchen cloths or sponges should be changed or disinfected often, and worktops should also be disinfected often, especially when raw meat or poultry has been prepared.

If the client has food which has either not been eaten by the use by date, or frozen if appropriate, carers should inform the client that the food is out of date and ask for permission to throw it away.

Carers should not prepare any dish for a client containing raw eggs. All food prepared by carers should be cooked thoroughly before serving. A dish should not be reheated more than once.

Any storage instructions which may be written on labels should be followed. Any food that has been opened and has not been used up e.g. soup in a can, should be stored in an appropriate container, eg. Tupperware, in the fridge, with a label placed on the container stating the date when the food was opened. Any food placed in the freezer must have a label placed on it stating the date on which it has been frozen.

Carers should ensure that any waste food is disposed of properly in a dustbin and should wash hands after disposing of the food.

Smoking is strictly not permitted in clients' homes.

3 AMENDMENTS

This Policy may be amended at any time. Staff shall be informed of the issue of any amended Policy.

CHANGE HISTORY

Issue	Date	Description of Change and Reason
1	2012	First Issue
2	November 2014	Second issue – insertion of review date and formatting changes
3	June 2016	Third issue – minor amendments to formatting, insertion of sentence regarding labelling of foods placed in the freezer.
4	November 2016	Fourth Issue – inclusion of logo and Oxford office address, reference to invoicing clients for shopping
5	December 2018	Fifth Issue – change of address, no other changes required.
6	January 2020	Sixth Issue – inclusion of KL address
7	December 2021	Seventh Issue – checking for necessary changes, none required.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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