



OPERATIONS MANUAL

GLUTEN-FREE FOOD HANDLING AND PREPARATION

Hugo's Tacos is committed to providing safe dining options for guests who request gluten-free meals. This procedure is designed to minimize the risk of cross-contact during storage, preparation, cooking, and service.

Staff Responsibilities

All team members are responsible for following gluten-free procedures whenever a guest requests a gluten-free meal.

Employees must:

- Understand which menu items are gluten-free.
- Know which ingredients contain gluten.
- Prevent cross-contact throughout the entire preparation process.
- Notify a manager if there are any questions regarding ingredients or procedures.
- Never guess whether an item is gluten-free.

Identifying a Gluten-Free Order

Whenever a guest orders gluten-free:

- Repeat the order back to the guest.
- Clearly identify the order as **GLUTEN FREE**.
- Inform all team members involved in preparing the order.
- In the Toast POS system, ensure the Gluten-Allergy modifier is selected.

Handwashing & Gloves

Before preparing a gluten-free order:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.
- Dry hands with a disposable paper towel.
- Put on a fresh pair of gloves.
- If gloves touch any gluten-containing product, discard them immediately and repeat the process.

Ingredient Verification

Only use ingredients that have been verified as gluten-free.



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Always verify:

- Seasonings contain no wheat or gluten.
- Marinades are gluten-free.
- Salsas are gluten-free.
- Garnishes are free from cross-contact.

Never substitute ingredients unless they have been verified as gluten-free.

Storage Procedures

Store gluten-free ingredients separately whenever possible.

- Keep gluten-free tortillas in sealed packaging or covered containers.
- Store above gluten-containing products whenever possible.
- Use dedicated containers.
- Keep serving utensils with their designated products.
- Clearly label gluten-free ingredients.

Preventing Cross-Contact

Cross-contact occurs when gluten-free food comes into contact with gluten-containing food or surfaces.

To prevent cross-contact:

- Change gloves.
- Wash hands.
- Use clean utensils.
- Use sanitized prep surfaces.
- Keep flour tortillas away from gluten-free preparation.
- Never stack gluten-free tortillas on top of flour tortillas.
- Never use shared parchment paper or foil.

Cooking Procedures

Whenever possible:

- Prepare gluten-free orders before standard orders.
- Use a dedicated cooking area.

If using a shared grill:

- Thoroughly scrape and clean the cooking surface.
- Wipe with a clean towel.
- Cook gluten-free items in the cleanest available area.



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- Never place gluten-free tortillas where flour tortillas have been heated without cleaning first.

Utensils & Equipment

Use clean utensils reserved for gluten-free preparation whenever possible.

- Tongs
- Spatulas
- Serving spoons
- Ladles
- Cutting boards
- Knives

Never reuse utensils that have touched gluten-containing foods.

Fryers

- Hugo's Tacos has a dedicated gluten-free fryer.

Assembly Procedures

Assemble gluten-free meals on a clean, sanitized surface.

Use:

- Fresh deli paper
- Fresh parchment paper
- Clean trays
- Clean plates

Avoid contact with:

- Flour tortillas
- Bread products
- Shared prep areas
- Crumbs

Service Procedures

When delivering a gluten-free meal:

- Confirm it is the gluten-free order.
- Keep it separate from other meals.



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- Avoid placing it on surfaces contaminated with gluten.

Cleaning & Sanitizing

Before preparing gluten-free food:

- Sanitize prep tables.
- Sanitize cutting boards.
- Sanitize utensils.
- Replace wiping cloths if contaminated.

Cleaning alone does not remove gluten if crumbs remain.

Always remove visible food debris before sanitizing.

Guest Communication

If a guest asks whether an item is gluten-free:

- Answer only if you know.
- If unsure, ask a manager.
- Never make assumptions.

If necessary, explain:

“We follow procedures to reduce cross-contact during preparation. However, because our kitchen prepares foods containing wheat, we cannot guarantee a completely gluten-free environment.”

Common Sources of Gluten

Staff should be aware that gluten may be present in:

- Flour tortillas
- Bread
- Bread crumbs
- Malt vinegar
- Some spice blends
- Thickened sauces
- Some marinades
- Certain packaged products

Always verify ingredients before use.



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Employee Checklist

Before starting:

- ☐ Wash hands
- ☐ Put on new gloves
- ☐ Verify gluten-free ingredients
- ☐ Gather clean utensils
- ☐ Sanitize work surface

During preparation:

- ☐ Keep away from flour tortillas
- ☐ Prevent cross-contact
- ☐ Use dedicated utensils
- ☐ Cook on cleaned or dedicated surface
- ☐ Assemble on clean paper or plate

Before serving:

- ☐ Confirm gluten-free order
- ☐ Deliver separately
- ☐ Inform the guest if any requested modification cannot be prepared safely

Management Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- Maintaining current ingredient information.
- Training all employees on gluten-free procedures.
- Auditing compliance regularly.
- Updating procedures whenever menu items or ingredients change.
- Responding to guest allergy concerns promptly.

Policy Statement

Providing gluten-free options requires the attention of every employee. Following these procedures helps reduce the risk of cross-contact and demonstrates our commitment to serving guests safely. Every gluten-free order should be treated with care, consistency, and clear communication from the moment it is ordered until it is served.