

# CULINARY STANDARDS

World Central Kitchen is first to the frontlines, providing meals in response to humanitarian, climate, and community crises. WCK recognizes that our strength and global reach lie in the understanding that food is a universal human right.

This document states the WCK Culinary Team's **seven core culinary commitments** to the communities we serve. These commitments, which compose our standards, are meant to be used as a reference and reminder of the fundamental importance of human dignity, delicious and nourishing food served in a comforting manner, and the right of people to participate fully in decisions that affect their culture and community.

These standards are informed by evidence and experience. They present best practices based on broad consensus and should be applied universally.

While it's ideal for these standards to be evenly applied, WCK recognizes the circumstances of each response are different. If changes to these standards are absolutely necessary, WCK Practitioners and Partners must consult one of our culinary experts on how best to adapt them.

#### **The goals of this document are as follows:**

1. Establish internally agreed upon standards, known as commitments, to guide Practitioners and Partners on the creation of nutritious meals.
2. Outline the seven commitments to WCK Culinary Standards.
3. Provide performance indicators for each commitment so WCK Practitioners and Partners have the best opportunity to meet the WCK Culinary Standards.
4. Engage a WCK culinary expert to interpret and apply these standards externally in the field for every modality.



## 1

**FIRST COMMITMENT**

**Communities affected by disaster or crisis (Recipients) receive foodstuffs<sup>1</sup> which are culturally appropriate or widely appealing.**

**Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:**

- Do Recipients deem the food takes into account their specific needs, culture, and preferences?
- Does the food provided correspond with assessed risks, vulnerabilities, and needs.

## 2

**SECOND COMMITMENT**

**Recipients receive free prepared and unprepared food that is of equal or greater value as food purchased from a for-profit entity in every modality, context, and capacity.**

**Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:**

- Would you pay market value for a similar prepared (meal, sandwich, snack) or unprepared (meal kit, produce box, pantry box, fruit) food item in this location?
- Does the Practitioner/Partner prioritize regionally grown/procured ingredients?
- Does the Practitioner/Partner prioritize regional food preparation methods and practices?
- Is the food balanced in flavor and texture?
- Is the production of the prepared food overseen by someone with culinary experiential knowledge and expertise?
- Is the food presented in an aesthetically pleasing way that takes into account garnishing, multiple colors, and textures, as relevant?
- Is the food presented in appropriate and relevant packaging that meets local regulations, maintaining freshness, and integrity?

<sup>1</sup> WCK defines food and foodstuffs as a prepared or unprepared edible substance for humans provided in any of the following manners: hot meal, cold meal, salad, sandwich, snack, meal kit, pantry box, food box.



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## 3

### THIRD COMMITMENT

#### Recipients receive comforting food served with dignity.

##### Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:

- Does the Practitioner/Partner go beyond merely providing sustenance to serve all foodstuffs in a thoughtful, comforting, and dignified manner?
- Is every food service scenario orchestrated to be as safe and welcoming for Recipients as possible?
- Are all preparation and distribution spaces maintained in a clean and orderly fashion?
- Does the Practitioner/Partner hire a legal and appropriate staffing model to best engage and serve Recipients?
- If serving meals to be eaten on site, does the Practitioner/Partner provide appealing, organized, and situation-appropriate dining accommodations?

## 4

### FOURTH COMMITMENT

#### Recipients receive prepared and unprepared food that is considered balanced, nutritious, and meets the requirements of the chosen modality.

##### Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:

- A “prepared meal” is defined as being 10-16oz in weight and containing a cereal or potato, vegetable, and protein and is served with the intention to provide comfort and complete nutritional benefits.
- A “snack” is defined as any prepared food that does not meet the meal weight requirements and is served with the intention of providing comfort and partial nutritional benefits.
- A “sandwich” is defined as an item of food that meets the meal requirement when it consists of two pieces of bread (or equal cereal substitute) with meat, cheese, or other filling, served with a side of fruit.
- “Unprepared foods” are any provided ingredients that make up a meal kit, produce box, or pantry box.



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## 5

### FIFTH COMMITMENT

**Recipients receive prepared and unprepared foods, which have been appropriately handled and stored safely, and therefore do not carry foodborne illness or any contaminants that could make a person sick.**

**Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:**

- No Recipient becomes sick due to foodborne illness or contaminants after eating a WCK provided meal from either incorrect preparation or delivery.
- Practitioner/Partner does not prepare and serve food outside of WCK maintained or approved chain of possession (e.g. unknown “second kitchens” or subcontracting without prior approval).
- No unknown or unapproved vendor’s food will be served with WCK labeling or at a WCK designated distribution site.
- Practitioner/Partner provides proof of valid/in-good-standing certificates or permits from the regional or national health departments.
- Practitioner/Partner uses time/date/temperature labeling and tracking as appropriate in the various supply modalities.
- Practitioner/Partner does not donate leftover food that is past time/temperature control regulations and is unsafe to eat to any groups including homeless populations, shelters, etc.



**6****SIXTH COMMITMENT**

**Recipients can expect environmentally sustainable practices and choices to be considered and made when possible at every step of the food sourcing, preparation, and distribution process.**

**Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:**

- Practitioner/Partner is aware of WCK's commitment to sustainability.
- Practitioner/Partner advises WCK operational teams on regional practices, local sourcing, and waste management.
- Practitioner/Partner prioritizes and uses sustainable packaging when available.

**7****SEVENTH COMMITMENT**

**Recipients can expect continual improvement as WCK learns from experience, implemented feedback loops, and reflection.**

**Performance indicators for WCK Practitioners and Partners to pursue:**

- Are Recipients noticing improvements to operations and food quality over time as a result of the learning generated during the response?
- Is the Practitioner/Partner open to positive and constructive feedback to improve operations?
- Is the Practitioner/Partner willing to innovate, adapt, and implement changes based on feedback, complaints, monitoring, and evaluation?
- Is the Practitioner/Partner using WCK culinary expertise, documentation, resources, and checklists as provided?

