

## **The Types of Theft That Occur In a Restaurant Business**

Dealing honestly with employees and managing your business well, usually keeps losses to a minimum. Remember to take swift action when you find someone stealing from your business. Not dealing with the problem can cause you to go out of business and the rest of your employees, who are depending on you for their livelihood to be out of a job.

(1) Under-ringing of sales and the tearing up order tickets are two longtime scams in the food and beverage industry. An employee serves a customer in the restaurant, and the customer pays the check at the meal's end, but instead of putting the money and ticket in the register, the employee tears up the order ticket and pockets the cash. The restaurant owner has no record of that order or money tendered. Or an employee sold something for \$17.50," and rang in \$7.50 The employee put the \$17.50 in the register and at the end of the night, would pocket the extra \$10.00. Since the cash in the register drawer would match the transactions listed on the register tape, the theft would not be known.

(2) Voided sales - the cashier voids the check or some of the items on the check and keeps the proceeds.

(3) Over-rings - the cashier records an "over-ring" to reverse an actual sale.

(4) Cashier records sales on the training key which does not feed into the cash register's daily or cumulative sales total.

(5) Cashing hot check for friends.

(6) Run the credit card through twice.

(7) Returned drinks - bartender claims that a drink was returned when in fact it was sold and pocketed the money.

(8) Servers padding their checks with small amounts or using the same check over and over using a common order. They may even give a verbal check and pocket the money.

(9) Produce surplus food so that it can be taken home.

(10) Employee steals and uses gift certificates (for example, they might take a two-for-one coupon and attach it to a guest check for which the customer paid cash and take the cash).

(11) Food theft or taking home supplies and employees giving food to their friends.

(12) Bartenders may bringing their own bottles and pocket the sales from them. Since they are using their on inventory, food costs and sales will match up.

(13) Phony paid-outs - (paid outs are amounts taken from the till to pay for food deliveries and other miscellaneous charges.

(15) Staff leaving early and coming in at a later time to clock out.

(16) Use the phone for long-distance calls.

(17) Customers will sometimes steal silverware, condiment bottles, salt & pepper shakers and tips that are allowed to sit in plain sight at empty tables.

(18) Employee steals cash and records it as "cash short."

(19) Revisit the restaurant during closed hours and steal whatever is available.

(20) Steal supplies , detergent, linens, paper towels, toilet paper, etc.

(21) Borrow the manager's keys and duplicate the void key, then void out entire or partial sales and pocket the money.

These are just some of the ways a food business can lose money and supplies due to theft.

We had some employees who changed the time on the register, ran the final total transaction tape so that it had the right closing time on it and then changed the time back again. They then left early each night at our expense. We found him out when they got careless and forgot to change it back. We also had some complaints from customers that told us they came at a certain time and we were already closed. So, we not only paid the employees for time not worked but lost revenues from sales.

I also heard that someone owned a hot dog cart, had an employee who brought their own hot dogs and buns, sold them and kept the profit.