

# Safe Food Handling

## Notes to Remember

From the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

Preparing quality safe food requires care from the time food is received until we place that food in front of our guest. Following these procedures will help keep food safe. Studying the following information will prepare food workers for the examination at food handlers classes.

### **Food Borne Illness**

Food borne illness happens when food becomes contaminated or bacteria multiply in food. Follow these rules to prevent contamination and bacterial growth.

### **Potentially Hazardous Food**

Milk or milk products, beef, poultry, fish, shell eggs and egg products, pork, lamb, shellfish, cooked vegetables, soy protein foods, sprouts, cut melons, cooked rice, and garlic in oil.

These foods support rapid growth of microorganisms if not kept out of the (41°F - 135°F)

### **Delivery Phase**

1. Handle food quickly during delivery.
2. Check temperatures.

### **Storage Phase**

1. Maintain consistent proper temperatures in coolers (41°F or below).
2. Rotate stock - use FIFO. (First in - first out)
3. Use proper containers for storage.
4. Label all containers with contents and date.
5. Store foods and food containers 6 inches above floor.

### **Pre-Prep Phase**

1. Wash hands and all food utensils before and after handling food.
2. Do not re-use utensils that have come into contact with high-risk foods without rewashing and sanitizing them.
3. Use proper thawing practices: refrigerator, microwave, under cool running water, thaw during the cooking process.
4. Limit the time food is in the temperature danger zone, between 41° F and 135° F. Work only with the amount you can prepare in a short period of time.

### **Cooking Temperatures** for 15 seconds or longer

1. 165°F (73.9°C) Poultry, stuffed fish, stuffed meat, stuffed pasta or stuffing containing meat.
2. 155°F (68°C) Ground beef or pork, comminuted fish or meats, injected meats, sausage, eggs that are not immediately served.
3. 145°F (63°C) Eggs cooked to order, fish, steak surface temperature.

Whole beef roasts, corned beef roasts, pork roasts and cured pork roasts such as ham. See Food Code.

*Note: When cooking in a microwave bring all the above food to 165°F for 15 seconds. Cover container, rotate and stir midway through the cooking cycle. When finished verify temperatures and allow the food to stand 2 minutes before serving.*

### **Cooling Phase**

1. Cool foods from 135° F to a temperature of 70° F or lower in under two hours. Then cool to 41° F in additional 4 hours or less. Use one or more of the following cooling methods.
2. Cut large pieces of meat into smaller pieces.

### **Cooling Phase** (continued)

3. Use an ice water bath or a blast chiller to cool food rapidly.
4. Shallow pans speed up the cooling process. Pour thick food, such as chili, to no more than two inches deep. Pour thin food, such as chicken broth, to no more than three inches deep.

### **Cold Food Storage**

1. Cover, date, and label.
2. Place all cooked food above raw food in the refrigerator.
3. Refrigerated, ready to eat, potentially hazardous food prepared and held for 24 hours or more, shall be marked with the date of preparation and consumed within 7 days if stored at 41° F or less, or within 4 days if stored at 41° F to 45° F.
4. Commercially processed food shall be marked to indicate the date on which the container was opened.
5. Use or discard within 4 days if stored at 41° F to 45° F or within 7 days if stored at 41° F or below. Such foods shall be consumed by the manufacturers use-by date.

### **Reheating foods that were previously prepared and cooled**

1. Reheat food to 165° F (73.9° C) or higher within two hours
2. Never use holding equipment to reheat food.
3. Do not mix raw food into cooked food, or new into old.
4. Do not re-use leftovers more than once.

### **Food Handler's Challenge**

1. Keep cold foods below 41° F.
2. Keep hot foods above 135° F.
3. Use the 20 second rule when washing hands.
4. Wash hands after eating, drinking, smoking, using the restroom, handling dirty utensils, garbage, raw foods, touching yourself, and sneezing or coughing.
5. Take temperatures frequently to prevent extended time in the danger zone.
6. If you are sick, stay home.
7. Cuts and sores should be bandaged and covered with a disposable glove.

### **Sanitation**

1. Follow label directions for use of all chemicals.
2. All chemical containers shall be labeled.
3. Store wiping cloths in sanitizing solution between uses.
4. Automatic dishmachine: washes, rinses, final rinse that sanitizes by chemical or hot water 180° F.
5. Manually sanitizing dishware by hot detergent water, hot clear rinse water and warm sanitizing solution at the proper concentration for 30 seconds or hot water - 171° F for 30 seconds.
6. After sanitizing manually or automatically, all items must air dry prior to storage.
7. The three most common chemicals used for sanitizing are Chlorine, Iodine, and Quaternary Ammonium. Appropriate minimum concentration levels for each chemical include: Chlorine 50 parts per million, Iodine 12.5 parts per million, and Quaternary Ammonium 200 parts per million.
8. Use test paper to test concentration of chemical sanitizer.
9. Check water temperature and chemical strength often.
10. Follow label directions for use of all chemicals.