

STEP 1: PURCHASING

Obtain wholesome, safe foods to meet menu requirements when you purchase foods. Choose vendors wisely.

- Establish a food delivery schedule.
- Tell the vendor what is expected, such as clean delivery trucks with adequate refrigeration and foods delivered at the correct temperatures.
- Request a copy of the vendor's most recent health inspection report.
- Conduct unannounced sanitation inspections of trucks.
- Visit the warehouse periodically to see that it is clean and organized.
- Reject all products that do not meet requirements.

STEP 2: RECEIVING

When receiving deliveries, ensure that all food is received fresh and safe when it enters the foodservice operation and transfer food to proper storage as quickly as possible.

- Establish a rejection policy to ensure accurate and effective refusal and return of rejected goods.
- Organize and clean freezer and refrigeration space, loading docks, and store rooms.
- Gather product specification lists, purchase orders, temperature logs, calibrated thermometers, pens, flashlights, and clean carts.
- Compare delivery invoice against products ordered and products delivered.
- Inspect the delivery truck. Ensure it is clean, free of odors, and organized to prevent cross-contamination.
- Check the interior temperature of refrigerated trucks.
- Check the cleanliness of shipping containers before accepting products.
- Check frozen foods to ensure they show no signs of thawing and refreezing.
- Handle ready-to-eat foods with gloved hands.
- Check the temperature of refrigerated foods.
 - For fresh meat, fish, and poultry products, insert a clean and sanitized thermometer into the center of the product to ensure a temperature of 41 °F or below.
 - Milk should be at or below 45 °F.
 - For packaged products, insert a food thermometer between two packages. If the temperature exceeds 41 °F, take the internal temperature before accepting the product.
 - For eggs, the interior temperature of the truck should be at or below 45 °F.
- Mark all items with the date of arrival or the “use by” date.
- Transfer foods to their appropriate locations as quickly as possible.
- Remove empty containers and packing material immediately to a separate trash or recycling area.

STEP 3: STORING

Store food properly to maintain food quality and safety. Food stored improperly will lose its quality, spoil more rapidly, and can cause a foodborne illness when harmful microorganisms are allowed to grow.

- Keep storage areas clean and at the appropriate temperature.
 - Dry storage should be kept between 50-70 °F.
 - Refrigerated storage areas should be kept at or below 41 °F.
 - Frozen storage areas should be kept between 0 °F- -10 °F.
- Store all food and supplies at least 6 inches off the floor.
- Keep food in original containers or labeled containers approved for food storage. Lids should be tight-fitting.
- Label all food with name and delivery or “use by” date.
- Discard foods that are past the “use by” date.
- Use the First In, First Out (FIFO) method of inventory rotation.
- Arrange food in refrigerators to allow for air circulation.
- Store ready-to-eat foods away from raw foods. Cooked and ready-to-eat foods should be on the highest shelf, away from raw or uncooked foods.
- Use routine pest control.
- Store chemicals away from food and other food-related supplies.
- Check storage areas frequently. Discard damaged or spoiled foods, broken or torn packages, and bulging or leaking cans.
- Check temperatures of storage areas regularly. Record the temperatures and time they were taken.

STEP 4: PREPARING

During the preparation step, be on alert to prevent contamination of food, avoid time in the temperature danger zone, and use safe handling practices.

- Wash hands and arms up to the elbow with soap and water of at least 100 °F for at least 20 seconds.
- Use single-use gloves properly when preparing ready-to-eat foods.
- Thaw foods properly. Never thaw food at room temperature.
- Prepare foods as close to serving time as possible.
- Prepare food in small batches and place in cold storage immediately.
- Hold prepared cold foods at or below 41 °F.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables with cold, running water.
- Use a brush to scrub thick-skinned produce.
- Cool cooked or canned meats and other ingredients before using in a recipe that will not be cooked.
- Avoid cross-contamination.
- Separate raw products from ready-to-eat foods.
- Wash hands after each contact with a food.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize cutting boards, knives, equipment, and other food contact surfaces after contact with a food.
- Document the internal temperature of food during preparation.

STEP 5: COOKING

Cook food to the proper temperature to ensure that it is safe to eat. Know the proper temperatures for cooking food, monitor end-point cooking temperatures, and record cooking temperatures.

- Wash hands and arms up to the elbow with soap and water of at least 100 °F for at least 20 seconds.
- Follow equipment directions and standardized recipes to avoid overloading baking pans.
- Stir foods cooked in deep pots frequently to ensure even heat distribution and thorough cooking.
- Keep the size and thickness of each portion to make cooking time predictable and uniform.
- Never interrupt the cooking process.
- Use a calibrated food thermometer to monitor the accuracy of heating equipment.
- Use a clean, sanitized, and calibrated food thermometer to check the internal temperature of food. Check food temperature in several places, especially in the thickest parts, to make sure the food is thoroughly cooked.
- Avoid touching the pan, bone, or pockets of fat with the food thermometer.
- Record the temperature and the time it was taken.
- Cook food to the required safe internal temperature for the appropriate time.
- Use a serving utensil or single-use glove to avoid cross-contamination.
- Taste foods correctly to avoid cross-contamination.
 - Place a small amount of food from the food container into a small bowl.
 - Step away from the food container and taste the food with a teaspoon.
 - Remove the used bowl and teaspoon to the dish room.
 - Never reuse a bowl or spoon already used for tasting.
 - Wash hands before and after tasting.

STEP 6: HOLDING AND SERVING

To handle food safely after cooking, hold and serve foods at safe temperatures, either above or below the temperature danger zone. In short, this means keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

- Follow rules for good personal hygiene.
- Wash hands and arms up to the elbow with soap and water of at least 100 °F for at least 20 seconds.
- Cook hot foods to the required temperature and place in preheated holding cabinets or on a steam table to be held at or above 135 °F.
- Keep cold foods at or below 41 °F in a refrigeration unit or surrounded by ice.
- Check internal food temperatures with a clean, sanitized, and calibrated food thermometer every 30 minutes. Sanitize the food thermometer after each use.
- Use lids and sneeze guards to retain heat and to guard against contamination.
- Monitor the temperature of hot holding equipment with each use.
- Use clean and sanitized long-handled ladles and spoons so bare hands do not touch food.
- Avoid touching the parts of plates, food trays, or flatware that will come into contact with food or the customer's mouth.
- Use tongs to serve rolls and bread or wear single-use gloves when serving food by hand.
- Clean and sanitize equipment and utensils thoroughly after each use.
- Throw away garnishes used on pans on the service line.
- Observe customer behavior at the service line and remove any foods that may have been contaminated.
- Transport food in proper food containers and monitor temperatures, as needed.

STEP 7: COOLING

Cool food to the appropriate temperature within the appropriate time. During the cooling process, food goes through the temperature danger zone. Bacteria grow rapidly in the temperature danger zone so the amount of time that food can be at that temperature has to be minimized.

- Wash hands and arms up to the elbow with soap and water of at least 100 °F for at least 20 seconds.
- Reduce food mass so food cools faster. Cut large items into pieces or divide food among several containers or shallow pans.
- Use shallow, pre-chilled pans (no more than 4 inches deep).
- Cool rapidly. Use cooling bath or ice paddle whenever possible.
- Stir frequently to accelerate cooling and ensure that cold air reaches all parts of the food.
- Food that is being cooled in the refrigerator should be loosely covered.
- Store cooked foods on the upper shelves of the refrigerator, never beneath raw foods.
- Use a clean and calibrated food thermometer to check temperatures.
- Document temperature during the cooling process.
 - Hot food must be cooled from 135 °F -70 °F within 2 hours and from 70 °F to 41 °F in an additional 4 hours for no more than a total cooling time of 6 hours.
 - Foods at room temperature (70 °F) must be cooled to 41 °F within 4 hours.
 - If the food has not reached 70 °F within 2 hours it must be reheated immediately to 165 °F for 15 seconds.
- Cover cooled food tightly and label with product name, date, and time of preparation.

STEP 8: REHEATING

Reheating is used for previously cooked food, either pre-prepared or leftover. While reheating, use precautions to prevent contamination and to keep food out of the temperature danger zone. Failure to reheat a previously cooked food to the required temperature within the time limit can result in a foodborne outbreak.

- Heat the food to above 135 °F as quickly as possible.
- Reheat all previously cooked food to an internal temperature of 165 °F for 15 seconds.
- Reheat and foods that have a pre-cooked food as an ingredient to 165 °F for 15 seconds.
- Heat sauces, soups, and gravies to a minimum of 165 °F within 2 hours after taking out of the refrigerator.
- Never reheat food in hot-holding equipment.
- Never mix a leftover batch of food with a fresh batch of food.
- Keep food held at 41 °F or less no longer than 7 days.
- Reheat food only one time.
- Serve reheated food immediately or place in appropriate hot holding unit.