

Standard Operating Procedure

Holding Food

Policy: All hot food will be held hot (above 135°F) and cold food will be held cold (below 41°F). Temperatures of food will be taken routinely to ensure that proper temperatures are maintained through holding to ensure the safety of the food served to children. Any conflict between food quality and food safety must always be decided in favor of food safety. When in doubt about the safety of food, throw it out.

Procedure: Employees involved in the production or service of food must:

Holding Hot Food:

1. Prepare and cook only as much food as is needed (i.e. Use batch cooking).
2. Use hot-holding equipment that can keep hot food at 135°F or higher.
3. Follow manufacturer's instructions in using hot-holding equipment. [NOTE: Customize your SOP by including instructions. For example, you may need to indicate that the steam table wells need to be filled with hot water and at what level.]
4. Keep foods covered to retain heat and to keep contaminants from falling into food.
5. Measure internal food temperatures at least every two hours using a probe thermometer. Record temperatures in a food temperature log. If temperatures are below 135 °F then reheat to 165 °F.
6. Discard hot food after four hours if they have not been properly held at or above 135°F.
7. Do not mix freshly prepared food with food being held for service.

Holding Cold Food:

1. Use cold-holding equipment that can keep cold foods below 41°F.
2. Measure internal food temperatures at least every two hours using a probe thermometer. Record temperatures in a food temperature log. If temperatures are above 41°F, then refrigerate.
3. Protect cold food from contaminants with covers or food shields.
4. Discard cold potentially hazard foods after four hours if they have not been properly held below 41°F.
5. Place cold food in pans or on plates first, never directly on ice. The only exceptions are whole fruits and vegetables that will be washed after holding.
6. Ice used on a display should be self-draining. Wash and sanitize drip pans after each use.



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Holding Food, continued

The foodservice supervisor will:

1. Review logs daily to ensure the temperatures and corrective actions are being met.
2. Follow-up as necessary.
3. File temperature logs with HACCP records.



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