



7

The Flow of Food: Service



The Flow of Food: Service

Objectives:

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to identify the following:

- Guidelines for holding cold food and hot food
- When and how food can be held without temperature control
- How to prevent contamination when serving food and in self-serve areas
- How to prevent contamination and time-temperature abuse when serving food off-site or through vending machines



Guidelines for Holding Food

Policies:

- Create policies about how long the operation will hold food and when it will be thrown out

Food covers and sneeze guards:

- Cover food and install sneeze guards to protect food from contaminants
- Covers protect food from contamination and help maintain food temperatures



Guidelines for Holding Food

Temperature:

- Hold TCS food at the correct temperature:
 - Hot food: 135°F (57°C) or higher
 - Cold food: 41°F (5°C) or lower

Thermometer:

- Use a thermometer to check a food's internal temperature:
 - **NEVER** use the temperature gauge on a holding unit to check the food's temperature.



Guidelines for Holding Food

Time:

- Make sure staff are monitoring holding temperatures regularly.
- Check temperatures at least every four hours:
 - Throw out food not at 41°F (5°C) or lower or 135°F (57°C) or higher.
 - Optional: Check temperatures every two hours to leave time for corrective action.



Guidelines for Holding Food

Reheating food:

- **NEVER** use hot-holding equipment to reheat food unless it's built to do so.
- Reheat food correctly, and then move it into a holding unit.





Holding Food without Temperature Control

Cold food can be held without temperature control for up to six hours if:

- It was held at 41°F (5°C) or lower before removing it from refrigeration.
- It has a label specifying:
 - Time it was removed from refrigeration.
 - Time it must be thrown out.
- It does not exceed 70°F (21°C) during service.
 - Throw out food that exceeds this temperature.
- It is sold, served, or thrown out within six hours.





Holding Food without Temperature Control

Hot food can be held without temperature control for up to four hours if:

- It was held at 135°F (57°C) or higher before removing it from temperature control.
- It has a label specifying when the item must be thrown out.
- It is sold, served, or thrown out within four hours.





Holding Food without Temperature Control

To get regulatory approval:

- Prepare written procedures.
- Get written approval in advance.
- Maintain procedures.
- Make procedures available.



Kitchen Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

Prevent contamination when serving food:

- Avoid bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food:
 - Wear single-use gloves.
 - Use spatulas, tongs, deli sheets, or other utensils.
- Use clean and sanitized utensils for serving:
 - Use separate utensils for each food.
 - Clean and sanitize utensils after each task.
 - If using them continuously, clean and sanitize them at least every four hours.





Kitchen Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

Prevent contamination when serving food:

- Store serving utensils correctly between uses:
 - Leave them in the food with the handle extended above the container rim.
 - Place them on a clean and sanitized food-contact surface.
 - Optional: Store spoons or scoops under running water or in a container of water at least 135°F (57°C).





Kitchen Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

Prevent contamination when serving food:

- Take-home containers can be refilled only when the containers are:
 - Designed for reuse
 - Provided to guest by the operation
 - Cleaned and sanitized correctly



Kitchen Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

Prevent contamination when serving food:

- Take-home beverage containers can be refilled if the:
 - Beverage is not a TCS food.
 - Container is refilled for the same guest.
 - Container can be effectively cleaned.
 - Container is rinsed with fresh, hot water under pressure before refilling.
 - Container is refilled by staff in the operation or by the guest using a process that prevents contamination.



Service Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

Handling dishes and glassware

Correct



Incorrect





Service Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

If you preset tableware:

- Wrap or cover the items to prevent contamination.

Table settings do not need to be wrapped or covered if extra settings are either:

- Removed when guests are seated.
- If left on the table, cleaned and sanitized after guests have left.



Service Staff Guidelines for Serving Food

NEVER re-serve:

- Food returned by a guest
- Uncovered condiments
- Uneaten bread
- Plate garnishes

Generally, only unopened, prepackaged food in good condition can be re-served:

- Condiment packets
- Wrapped crackers or breadsticks



Self-Service Areas

Prevent time-temperature abuse and contamination:

- Use sneeze guards, display cases, or packaging.
- Use labels to identify food items.
- Hold food at the correct temperature:
 - Hot food: 135°F (57°C) or higher
 - Cold food: 41°F (5°C) or lower





Self-Service Areas

Prevent time-temperature abuse and contamination:

- Keep raw meat, fish, and poultry separate from ready-to-eat food.
- Do **NOT** let customers refill dirty plates or use dirty utensils at self-service areas.
- Stock displays with the correct utensils.
- **NEVER** use ice as an ingredient if it was used to keep food or beverages cold.



Labeling Bulk Food in Self-Service Areas

Label bulk food in self-service areas:

- Make sure the label is in plain view of the customer.
- Include the manufacturer or processor label provided with the food.
 - As an alternative, provide the information using a card, sign, or other labeling method.



Labeling Bulk Food in Self-Service Areas

A label is not needed for bulk unpackaged food, such as bakery products, if:

- The product makes no claim regarding health or nutrient content.
- No laws require the item to be labeled.
- The food is manufactured or prepared on the premises.
- The food is manufactured or prepared at another operation or processing plant owned by the same person.
 - The operation must also be regulated.



Off-Site Service

When transporting food off-site:

- Use insulated, food-grade containers designed to keep food from mixing, leaking, and spilling.
- Label food with a use-by date and time, and reheating and service instructions.
- Clean the inside of delivery vehicles regularly.
- Check internal food temperatures.



Off-Site Service

When transporting food off-site:

- Make sure the service site has the correct utilities:
 - Safe water for cooking, dishwashing, and handwashing
 - Garbage containers stored away from food-prep, storage, and serving areas
- Store raw meat, poultry, and seafood separate from ready-to-eat items.



Vending Machines

To keep vended food safe:

- Check product shelf life daily:
 - Throw away food past its expiration or use-by date.
 - Throw away refrigerated food prepped on-site and not sold in seven days.
- Keep TCS food at the correct temperature.
- Dispense TCS food in its original container.
- Wash and wrap fresh fruit with edible peels before putting it in the machine.

