

A close-up photograph showing a person's hand wearing a white disposable glove handing a white bowl with an orange stripe to another person's hand. The background is blurred, showing a kitchen or food service area with other people in yellow shirts.

# Quick Food Safety Guide *for Food Service Workers*

**T**his document describes food safety best practices for food service workers. Follow these guidelines to ensure that food is stored, prepared and served safely.

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# Storing Food Safely

## NOTES

### General Tips:

- Write the date on food products when you receive them and use the oldest products first to reduce food waste. This practice is called First-in, First-out (FIFO).
- Make sure all food storage and preparation areas are located away from overhead waste or condensation pipes.
- Store all food at least 6 inches above the floor so that the floor can be cleaned regularly.
- Store all food away from the walls or ceiling so that air can circulate.

### For Dry Storage:

- Maintain humidity of 50 percent and a temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Look out for pest activity signs, such as rat or mouse droppings, insect eggs or odors.
- Store food in vermin-proof containers (e.g., metal or glass containers with tightly fitted lids).
- Remove dented, leaking, rusted, swollen or unlabeled canned goods.

### For Cold Storage:

- Store all PHFs at proper temperatures:
  - 41 degrees Fahrenheit for cold food
  - 38 degrees Fahrenheit for smoked fish
  - 45 degrees Fahrenheit for raw shell eggs
  - 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for frozen foods
- Maintain proper temperatures. Place a refrigeration thermometer in the warmest spot in the cold storage unit to measure ambient air temperature.
- Store cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) food away from or above raw food.
- Watch for condensation that may contaminate food.
- Do not exceed the storage unit's capacity.

# Preparing Food Safely

## How to Cook Food Safely:

- Properly maintain cooking equipment (e.g., ovens, stoves, grills, salamanders, etc.) by cleaning and sanitizing them regularly and repairing when necessary.
- Cook food to the following **minimum internal temperatures**:
  - 165 degrees Fahrenheit for poultry, stuffed meats and stuffing
  - 158 degrees Fahrenheit for ground meats
  - 150 degrees Fahrenheit for pork and pork products
  - 145 degrees Fahrenheit for shell eggs
  - 140 degrees Fahrenheit for all other meats (e.g., lamb, fish, shellfish, etc.)
- Check the internal temperature by inserting the thermometer in various parts of the food, including the thickest part.
  - Always use clean thermometers to check temperatures.

## How to Hot-Hold Foods:

- Preheat equipment before adding food.
- Maintain a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit or higher for all foods.
- Check food temperatures with an accurate food thermometer and record them.
- Stir food frequently to make sure the entire dish is heated.

## How to Cold-Hold Foods:

- Make sure the equipment is cold before adding food.
- Maintain a temperature of 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower for all foods.
- Check food temperatures with an accurate food thermometer and record them.

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

It was 15 minutes past lunch time and the food had not been served. Instead of making the guests wait any longer, the food service workers served the hamburgers when they had reached an internal temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

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## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

James filled the cold holding table with macaroni salad just before lunch began at 11:00 a.m. At 2:00 p.m., he found that the cold holding table was not working and that the macaroni salad was warm.

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# Preventing Cross-Contamination of Food *continued*

## NOTES

### When Storing Food:

- Store raw meat, fish and poultry below RTE food.
- Store raw meats in the following order from bottom to top:
  1. Poultry
  2. Ground meats
  3. Pork
  4. All other meats
- Keep seafood separate from other meats.
- Keep food that does not require further washing or cooking separate from food that does.







