



Facility Name: _____

Department: _____

Policy No: _____

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Holding Food

Policy: To avoid temperature abuse and maintain quality of menu items, all hot food will be held above 135°F and cold food will be kept 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 customers. 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 food amounts as is needed. Batch cooking is ideal for controlling production amounts as well as maintaining food temperature and quality.
2. Use hot-holding equipment that keeps 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 protect food from air borne contaminants.
5. We recommend measuring internal food temperatures during holding once an hour using a calibrated thermometer. Record temperatures in the **Holding Temperature Log**. If temperatures are below 135°F, then reheat to 165°F.
6. If Time as a Public Health Control (TPHC) is allowed by local regulatory authority:
 - Temperatures must read 135° F or higher.
 - Time and temperature of hot foods must be recorded at the beginning of holding without temperature controls. Label time food is to be discarded.
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 - Discard hot Temperature Controlled for Safety (TCS) foods after four hours if they have not been served or sold.
7. Do not mix freshly prepared food with prepared foods being held for service.

Holding Cold Food:

1. Use cold-holding equipment that can keep cold foods below 41°F. Some beverages are considered a TCS food, such as dairy products.
2. We recommend measuring internal food temperatures once an hour using a calibrated thermometer. Record temperatures in the **Holding Temperature Log**. If temperatures are above 41°F, then refrigerate.
3. Protect cold food from contaminants with covers or food shields.
4. Discard cold time/temperature-controlled foods after four hours if they have not been properly held below 41°F.
5. If TPHC is used:
 - Take temperature of food when pulled from cold holding. Record time and temperature on log. Identify time product must be discarded.
 - Monitor temperatures and discard any TCS foods that exceed 70° F.
 - All cold TCS foods must be served or sold within six hours or discarded. We recommend discarding after four hours.

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6. 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.
7. Ice used on a display should be self-draining. Wash and sanitize drip pans after each use.

The restaurant manager 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.

Policy last revised on: _____