

USCG 109 - FOOD SAFETY

Last Update: 09/12/02

PURPOSE

To prevent illness likely to result from the improper management and preparation of food.

SCOPE

The Department of Environmental Health & Safety advocates that all event planners apply these guidelines in the storage and preparation of food. These are minimum requirements only.

GUIDELINES

1. Buying and Transporting

- a. Inspect all food and look for problems such as damaged packages, expiration dates, damaged fruit and vegetables, and meat that may have been refrigerated improperly.
- b. Do not buy meats that have 'freezer burns' i.e. if it looks "dried out" in any portion of the meat.
- c. Do not buy perishable foods too far in advance of the date to be used. Always check for the expiration date and make sure it is indicated at least 3 days after date to be served.
- d. Do not keep foods that are meant to be kept cold or frozen at room temperature.
- e. When buying cold or frozen foods, be sure to refrigerate within 2 hours:
 - i. **DO NOT LEAVE IN VEHICLES IN THE HOT FLORIDA SUN.** If other items are required purchase perishables last.
 - ii. Organize deliveries or bring food to the area when you are about to use it, not before.

2. Food Storage

- a. Store food at the appropriate temperatures. Keep cold foods at or below 5 degrees C and hot foods at or above 60 degrees C.
- b. Do not over stock the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe.
- c. Protect food at all times from contamination, and use suitable containers that are leak-proof.
- d. Always stack cooked food and ready to eat food above raw food in order to avoid any liquids from raw foods draining onto other foods.
- e. Foods with strong odors should be properly and securely wrapped. Avoid storing such foods for long periods near foods such as milks and creams, which are susceptible to tainting.
- f. Throw out food that shows signs of spoilage (e.g. offensive odor, growth of fungus.)

RECOMMENDED REFRIGERATION STORAGE TEMPERATURES		
FOOD	STORAGE TEMPERATURE (DEGREES C)	SHELF LIFE
Seafood	0-3	3 days
Meat	0-3	3-5 days
Minced meat	0-3	2-3 days
Poultry	0-3	3 days
Cured meat	0-3	2-3 weeks
Fruit juices	0-7	7-14 days
Milk	1-7	5-7 days
Cream	1-7	5 days
Butter	0-7	8 weeks
Cheese	0-7	Variable (1-3 months)
Margarine	2-7	Variable (6 months)
Oil & Fat	2-7	Variable (6 months)

3. Food Preparation

- a. Keep all food preparation areas, appliances and utensils clean, i.e. wash and wipe with warm soap water before and after use.
- b. Use separate cutting boards for raw meats. Wash the board with warm and soap water after use with raw meats, poultry and seafood.
- c. Always keep in mind the quantity of food to be prepared. DO NOT prepare so much that there will be a lot left out/over for long periods of time, which would invite the temptation to reuse, or that it will be wasted.
- d. Ensure that all foods that are served raw are washed thoroughly.
- e. Never defrost food at room temperature, defrost in the refrigerator, under cold running water, or in the microwave. NEVER REFREEZE THAWED FOOD.
- f. Keep cooked foods separate from raw meats
- g. Cook and reheat food evenly at temperatures above 60 degrees C.

4. Food Handling

- a. The practice of good personal hygiene is essential in ensuring that food is not contaminated with food poisoning or food spoilage bacteria. Some food poisoning bacteria/germs are commonly found on the skin of healthy individuals, therefore scratching the head and face or any body part can result in bacteria being transferred by the hands onto the food. Harmful bacteria can also be transferred from one food type to another.
- b. To prevent contamination, every person in the food handling area, even if not actively handling food, should be careful of their own personal hygiene and cleanliness.
- c. Hand washing is vital in helping to promote wellness and good hygiene, as well as to prevent the spread of disease.
- d. Hands should be kept as germ free as possible, and should be washed:

❑ **Before:**

- Preparing food, handling food, eating food.

❑ **After:**

- Handling money.
- Handling raw food.
- Using the bathroom.
- Handling soiled or contaminated material e.g. garbage, garbage containers etc.
- Using a handkerchief or nasal tissue.
- Touching ears, nose, mouth, hair, or other parts of the body.
- Smoking.
- Every break or,
- Simply whenever doubt exists regarding the need for hand washing.

e. Hand Washing Technique

Step 1: Use warm running water.

Step 2: Use enough soap.

Step 3: Use enough friction.

Step 4: Do not rush the process.

Step 5: Rinse well.

Step 6: Dry hands thoroughly with disposable paper towel or under air dryer.

Step 7: Turn off faucet with paper towel.

f. Injuries and Diseases

- i. Food handlers should not work if they are suffering from gastroenteritis or other related health conditions that are likely to be spread through handling food.
- ii. If food handlers have open cuts or wounds on their hands they must not handle food or food preparation equipment, unless the injury is completely protected by a waterproof bandage. Disposable gloves should be worn over bandages on hands. Colored bandages should be used so that they are easily seen if they fall off. Disposable gloves and bandages should be changed regularly.

g. Hair and Jewelry

- i. Long hair should be tied back or covered so that it cannot contaminate the food.
- ii. Jewelry should be limited to avoid stones and small pieces of metal falling into food and contaminating the food.
- iii. Fingernails should be kept short, clean and nail polish free. Gloves should be worn, whenever dealing with unpackaged foods.

h. Protective Clothing

- i. Protective clothing is worn to protect food from the risk of contamination, and to keep clothes clean. Therefore suitable, clean protective clothing should be worn when handling unwrapped food, or when cooking. This includes the use of disposable aprons and gloves.

Note: At no time is money and food to be handled by the same person, when foods are being sold.

i. Serving and Disposing

- i. Keep ALL garnishes such as mayonnaise, salad dressing, mustard and relish on ice, unless they are in individual packets intended for use in this manner.
- ii. DO NOT re-sell any food that has been transferred or previously handled by a customer unless the food is packaged in a properly enclosed and secure wrapper or bag.
- iii. Always make sure that there are enough serving utensils available; DO NOT interchange the utensils used to serve cold and hot foods or any food containing mayonnaise and or salad dressing.
- iv. Ensure that there are enough utensils and paper napkins available for customers' use.
- v. Consider using paper towels to clean up surfaces. If you do use cloth towels, wash them often in hot, soapy water.
- vi. Be sure to have garbage disposals available to properly discard used containers and any other garbage.
- vii. All garbage containers MUST be kept covered in a service area.

5. **Buffet Services, Picnics, & Other Occasions**

- a. Hot foods should be kept at 140 degrees (F) or warmer. On the buffet table you can keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, slow cookers, and warming trays.
- b. Cold foods should be held at 40 degrees (F) or colder. Keep foods cold by nesting dishes in bowls of ice. Otherwise, use small serving trays and replace them often.
- c. When meals are being purchased to eat at a later time, such as at a picnic, sporting event, or outdoor buffet, a cooler with ice is the practical alternative to a refrigerator. The cooler should be well insulated and packed with ice or freezer packs. Remember the 2-hour rule when food is removed from the cooler.

For more information regarding this guideline, contact the Department of Environmental Health and Safety at (305) 348-2621.