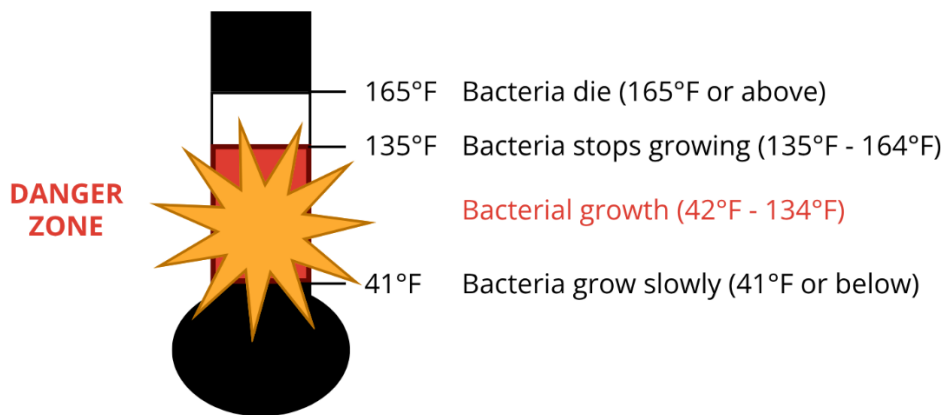


INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN No. 2021-19-8

Temperature Controls

Foods that can support the growth of bacteria and/or the formation of toxins are called "potentially hazardous foods" or TCS Foods (Time/Temperature Control for Safety). These foods are usually high in protein and moisture. Some examples include meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs, cooked vegetables, and grains, such as rice and beans. Consuming potentially hazardous foods which are not held at the proper temperature could cause a foodborne illness.



Potentially hazardous food should be kept **Cold** at or below 41°F or **Hot** at or above 135°F.

Potentially hazardous food should not be kept at the temperature range between 41° F and 135°F. This is called the Danger Zone because harmful bacteria can multiply rapidly at these temperatures. If potentially hazardous foods are in the Danger Zone for more than 4 hours, food must be discarded.

Holding Temperatures

Hot Holding

All potentially hazardous foods in hot holding units must be held at or above 135°F. Although most bacteria are destroyed when reheating at 165°F, bacteria in the spore form may survive at this temperature. Maintaining food temperature at 135°F or above will keep the spore forming bacteria from multiplying and from producing a toxin which could cause a foodborne illness.

Steps when holding hot food:

- Pre-heat hot holding equipment prior to placing food in the unit. Set the temperature high enough to maintain food at 135°F or above.



- Pre-heat food before placing it on the steam table. **NEVER** heat food on the steam table! Steam tables are designed for hot holding food only.
- Do not overfill hot holding trays or units.
- Stir frequently to avoid cold spots.
- Keep food covered.
- Take temperature of food once every 2 hours and log in a data sheet.

Cold Holding

- **All potentially hazardous foods held under refrigeration must be monitored and maintained at or below 41°F.**
- Each refrigerator must have a thermometer located at the warmest section of the unit, which is usually by the door.
- Food must be arranged in the cooler to allow cold air to circulate around the containers.
- Do not overfill cold holding trays or units.
- Take temperature of food once every 2 hours and log in a data sheet.
- Keep food covered.