Focusing on Retail Food Safety

Guidance for Industry

Georgia Department of Agriculture
Food Safety Division

Updated 2021

GEORGIA grown

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Introduction

The landscape of the U.S. food industry continues to change, and correspondingly, there have been significant changes in the retail food industry in the past several years. Today's consumer shops at retail stores multiple times each week and spends more money dining outside the home than ever before. With this emphasis on convenience and efficiency, the food service industry is under greater pressure to meet public demand for a greater variety of high-quality foods that have been prepared and cooked safely.

Preparing high-quality, safe food begins with well-trained and knowledgeable staff that is involved in a company-wide culture of food safety. This handbook is designed to help you focus on the items critical to safely preparing, cooking, holding and storing food. It identifies and discusses the basics to help prevent foodborne illnesses.

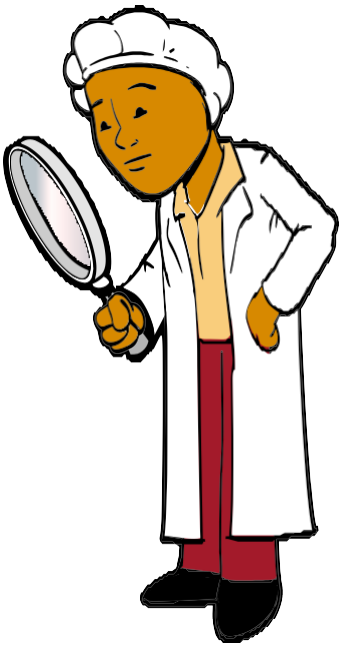
Food safety and sanitation is not a part-time job. It is the daily responsibility of those who prepare, handle and cook food. It is imperative that a cooperative partnership between industry and regulatory officials be maintained to support the common goal of preventing foodborne illnesses.

For additional information, visit the Georgia Department of Agriculture website at www.agr.georgia.gov and review the information found on the Food Safety Division webpages.

Follow the Food Safety Division on Twitter @GDAFoodSafety for recall alerts and other food safety updates and tips.

Be on the Lookout for Foodborne Illness

"Looking clean" is not enough to prevent foodborne illness. Foodborne illness is real and affects thousands of people every day. Each year, there are an estimated 48 million cases of foodborne illnesses in the U.S., resulting in 128,000 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths. Foodborne illness costs Americans $77 billion each year due to costs such as hospital bills, lost wages, lost productivity, recalls, business bankruptcy, regulatory investigations and more. Be on the lookout for foodborne illnesses in your facility and how you can prevent them from occurring!



Foodborne Illness Agents:

- Biological hazards: bacteria, viruses, parasites, yeast and molds
- Physical hazards: glass, toothpicks, fingernails and jewelry
- Chemical hazards: cleaners, sanitizers, pesticides and medications
- Naturally occurring chemical hazards: fish toxins and plant toxins

Foodborne Illness Sources:

- Humans/food workers: contaminated hands, illness
- Foods: contaminated food, time and temperature abuse

Foodborne Illness Symptoms:

- Common symptoms usually start within 12 - 36 hours and include diarrhea, cramping, nausea, vomiting, low-grade fever and body aches.
- Rare symptoms can include bodily system shutdowns, kidney failure, coma and death.

Microorganisms Need Favorable Conditions to Grow. The conditions that help microorganisms to multiply include:

- Food Source
- Time
- Temperature
- Moisture
- Oxygen
- Acidity

Time and Temperature Principal:

- **The temperature DANGER ZONE is 41° F to 135° F, the range in which rapid microbial growth occurs.**
- Foods requiring time and temperature control for safety (TCS) should not be exposed to the danger zone for more than four hours total, including time spent preparing, cooling and reheating the food item(s).

Food Safety Risk Factors

Risk factors are defines as practices or procedures that pose the greatest potential for foodborne illness. These specific factors are determined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and regulated in part by the Georgia Department of Agriculture during inspections at retail facilities.

Food Sources:

- Food from an unapproved or uninspected source
- Unsound condition of food or adulterated food
- Shellfish products with records that have not been maintained properly

Inadequate Cooking:

- Improper cooking temperatures
- Improper reheating temperatures

Improper Holding:

- Unsafe cooking
- Improper cooling
- Lack of date marking
- Improper cold/hot holding temperatures

Contamination:

- Raw meats, poultry or seafood not separated from ready-to-eat foods
- Species not separated (such as beef from fish, etc.)
- Equipment not properly cleaned and sanitized

Poor Personal Hygiene:

- Lack of appropriate hand washing
- Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods
- Ill food workers
- Employees eating, drinking or using tobacco outside of designated areas
- Inadequate hand sinks and lack of soap or paper towels

Environmental Contamination:

- Improperly storing and/or labeling foods or chemicals and cleaning products
- Environmental microbes contaminating food equipment or preparation areas
- Presence of pests, including insects or rodents
- Lack of potable (drinking) water
- Improper sewage disposal

Practice Good Hygiene

Good hygiene is the responsibility of the food worker and management, to create a companywide culture of food safety practices.

- Wash hands only in the hand sink - not in the dishwashing, food preparation or mop sinks.

- Ill employees can cause foodborne illness. Norovirus and other highly pathogenic organisms can be easily spread by ill food handlers person-to-person (via the fecal-oral route) or through contaminated airborne droplets, food, water and environmental surfaces. Enforce a strict sick leave policy or reassign duties.

- Eat, drink or use any form of tobacco only in designated areas away from food preparation and production.

- Do not repeatedly use the same cloth towels or aprons for hand wiping.

- Do not touch ready-to-eat food with bare-hands.

- Wear nails short, clean and unpolished.

- Eliminate jewelry in food preparation and processing areas (or restrict to plain band rings only).

- Cover open cuts and burns with finger cots, bandages or single-use gloves.

- Follow single-use glove guidelines (see page 6 for tips).

Food Safety is in Your Hands

Hand washing is important in preventing foodborne illness; improper hand washing and/or a lack of hand washing causes one-third of all foodborne illness outbreaks.

Food workers and management:

- Wash hands FREQUENTLY and EFFECTIVELY.
- Rinse hands with warm water; wash with soap for at least 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing the Happy Birthday song twice).
- Use clean, single use paper towels to dry hands.
- Keep hand sinks accessible with hand soap and paper towels AT ALL TIMES.
- Wash hands at APPROPRIATE TIMES.
- Reminder: Hand sanitizer, if used, can be in addition to hand washing but cannot ever be used to replace hand washing at appropriate times.

Wash hands every time after:

- Smoking, eating or drinking
- Handling raw food
- Going to the restroom or changing a diaper
- Coughing, sneezing, or using a tissue
- Cleaning or handling garbage
- Also, always wash hands BEFORE putting on gloves

No Bare-Hand Contact

What is a ready-to-eat (RTE) food? It is any food that can be consumed without further preparation. Bare-hand contact with RTE food is prohibited.

When handling ready-to-eat foods, food service workers may use:

- Deli tissue
- Utensils such as spatulas, tongs or forks
- Dispensing equipment
- Single-use gloves

Single-Use Glove Guidelines:

- Gloves do not replace the need for good hand washing practices
- Wash hands before putting gloves on and always dispose of gloves as soon as you remove them
- Put gloves on only when you are ready to handle ready-to-eat foods, then discard the gloves after the task has been completed
- If you are interrupted during food preparation, remove the gloves. After the interruption, wash hands and then replace with new, clean gloves before resuming food preparation. Reminder: Hand sanitizer, if used, can be in addition to hand washing but cannot ever be used to replace hand washing at appropriate times.
- When beginning new tasks, always wash hands first and then put on new, clean gloves
- Single-use gloves should not be used around heat or hot fats
- Gloves are susceptible to contamination; discard anytime they are soiled or damaged
- Fabric or reusable gloves may NOT be used with ready-to-eat food
- If using natural rubber latex, be aware of allergies

Correct Glove Usage:

- Plastic gloves are to be worn when touching anything that is going to be eaten

- Be sure there is never any bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods; use gloves, deli tissue, utensils and/or dispensing equipment

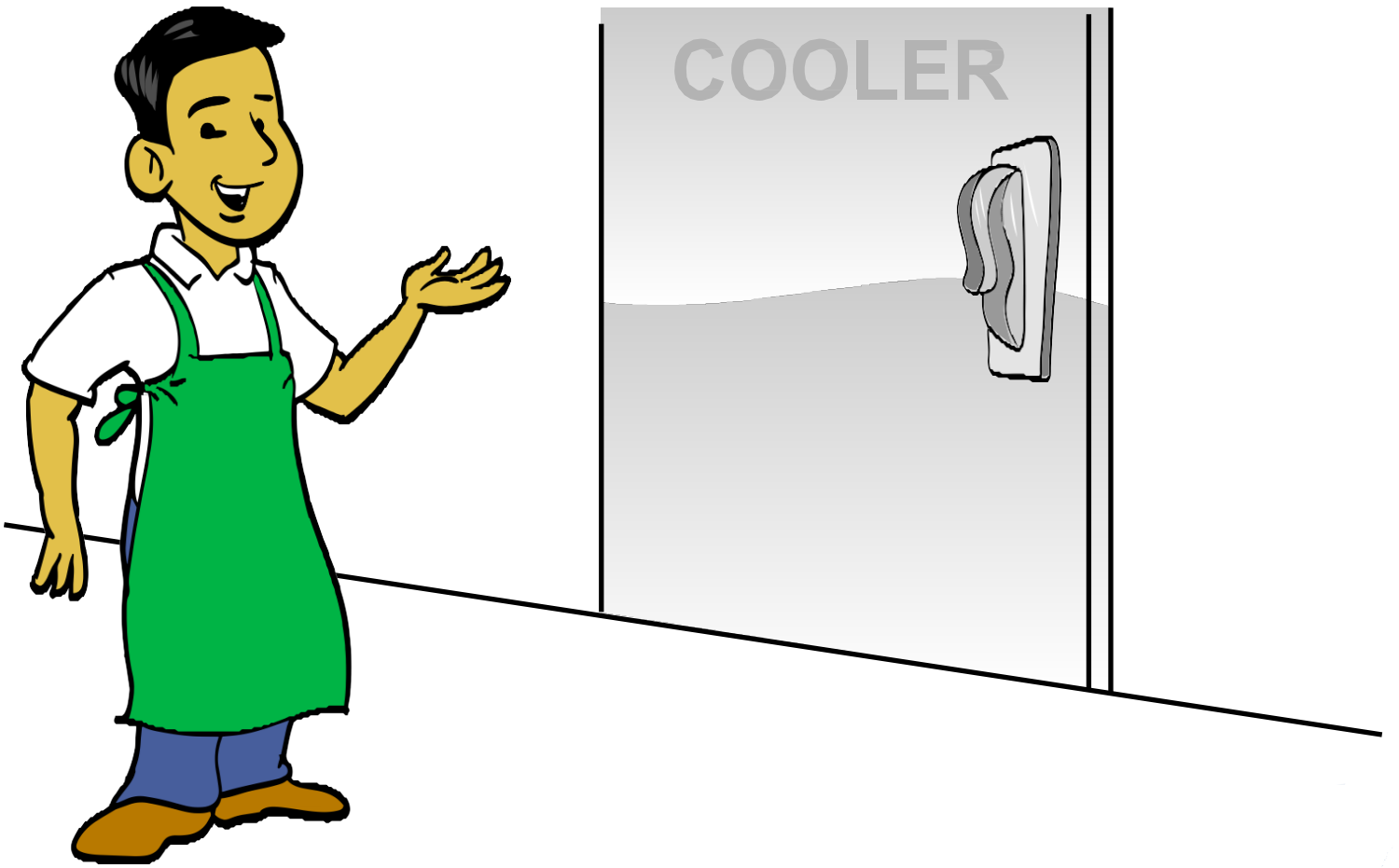
- When slicing meat, if meat cutting gloves are used, the plastic glove must be worn OVER the meat cutting gloves

- When using hot gloves, the gloves are ONLY to be used to touch the hot pans and cannot come into direct contact with food; hot gloves should be washed and/or replaced if they come into direct contact with food. The food should now be considered contaminated and a corrective action must be taken (e.g.; put the food in the oven to cook it, or dispose of the food, etc.)

Avoid the Risk

Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and cooked or ready-to-eat foods

- Practice good hand washing and hygiene
- No bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat foods or ice
- Use proper utensils or single-use gloves
- Store raw meat, raw poultry and raw shell eggs BELOW cooked or ready-to-eat foods in the cooler
- Clean and sanitize all utensils and surfaces that touch food:
    - After each use
    - When changing/switching products
    - Between meat species (e.g., beef and seafood; or fish and shellfish)
    - Frequently when preparing large amounts
    - Between raw and cooked meats or ready-to-eat foods



Monitoring Temperatures

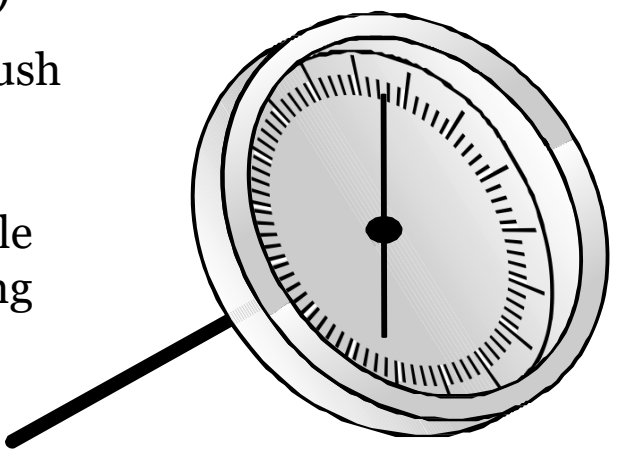
Use and Care of Temperature-Taking Devices

To prevent foodborne illness, monitor time and temperature controls for safe food (TCS)

Calibrating:

Calibrate thermometers frequently (any time after they are dropped, and at least once a year)

- Insert sensing area into a cup of ice slush
- Allow indicator to stabilize
- Adjust calibration nut to 32˚ F
- Digital thermometer and thermocouple units can be checked for accuracy using this method



Cleaning:

- Use a clean, sanitized thermometer
- Single-use alcohol wipe or other approved sanitizer may be used

Taking Temperatures:

- Use a metal stem thermometer, digital thermometer, or thermocouple unit
- Place the thermometer probe in the center or thickest part of the food
- For packaged foods, place the probe in the fold of the flexible packaged food product or between packages of food; do not puncture the packaging
- Allow time for the thermometer to register and record the temperature
- Use a thin tip thermometer for thinner foods

Food Preparation Critical Temperatures

Food	145°F or Above (Held for 15 Seconds)	155°F or Above (Held for 15 Seconds)	165°F or Above (Held for 15 Seconds)
Baluts			For immediate service, or hot holding
Eggs	Broken and prepared for immediate service	Broken and prepared for hot holding	
Fish (Alligator, Aquatic Turtles, Crustaceans, Finfish, Frogs, Jellyfish, Sea Cucumber, Urchin; the roe of these animals)	Whole, intact filets or cuts	Comminuted (ground)	Stuffed fish or stuffing containing fish
Game Animals* (Antelope, Bison, Deer, Elk, Land Snakes, Muskrat, Nutria, Opossum, Rabbit, Raccoon, Reindeer, Squirrel, Water Buffalo)	Whole, intact filets or cuts	Comminuted (ground), mechanically tenderized, or injected	● Stuffed game animals, or stuffing containing game animals ● Wild game animals (all preparations: filets, cuts, comminuted, injected, mechanically tenderized, stuffed, etc.)
Meat (Beef, Veal, Pork, Lamb, Goat)	Whole, intact filets or cuts	Comminuted (ground), mechanically tenderized, or injected	Stuffed meat, or stuffing containing meat
Poultry* (Chicken, Duck, Geese, Guineas, Ratites, Squab, Turkeys, and Waterfowl and Game Birds†)		Ratites: whole, intact filets, or cuts	● For immediate service, or hot holding ● Stuffed poultry, or stuffing containing poultry
Special Cooking Instructions			
Microwave Ovens	• Rotated and stirred midway, or throughout cooking, to easily distribute heat • Covered to retain surface moisture • Heated to 165°F in all parts of the food • Allowed to stand covered for 2 minutes for temperature equilibrium		
Raw or Undercooked	• Whole-muscle, intact beef steaks may be cooked to a top and bottom surface temperature of 145°F, as long as there is a cooked color change achieved on both surfaces • Raw or undercooked foods of animal origin (including raw or soft-cooked eggs; raw and marinated-raw fish, raw mulluscan shellfish; or partially cooked, rare meats) may be served or offered for sale under the following stipulations: A HACCP Plan is filed with the Department, and a variance is granted; and Consumer Advisory reminders/disclosures are conspicuously posted		
Roasts (Beef, Corned Beef, Cured Pork/Ham, Lamb, Pork)	There are varying oven temperatures and holding times for roasts. It is recommended that you contact the Department and discuss available options to produce a roast that meets your quality standards and ensures the safety of the food that is produced.		
Vegetables	Fruits and vegetables cooked for hot holding must be cooked to 135°F.		

*Game animals commercially raised for food, or game animals under a voluntary inspection program
†Migratory Waterfowl and Game Birds may include grouse, partridge, pheasant, pigeon, or quail

Reheat Foods Quickly and Safely

Do not mix new/fresh food with leftover items
(first in, first out method recommended)

What is the difference between reheating and cooking?

Cooking is defined as the "practice or skill of preparing food by combining, mixing, and heating ingredients", while reheating is defined as "to heat food or for food to be heated again". The main difference between the two is that cooking normally includes the use of raw foods, while when one reheats food, the food is already cooked.

Key elements:

- Reheat previously cooled foods to an internal temperature of 165° F or above
- Rapid reheating is required (2 hours or less from 41° F to 165° F)
- Stir foods frequently to distribute the heat
- Measure the internal temperature with a thermometer
- After reaching 165° F, the food must then be held at 135° F or above
- Reheating commercially prepared products that have already been heat treated/cooked at the processing facility can be cooked to 135° F (examples include canned green beans, most frozen vegetables, premade casseroles that were frozen, etc.)

Reheating methods:

- Direct heat (stove top) is best; one may also use steam cookers, ovens and microwaves if reheating achieves 165° F within two (2) hours
- Reheating using steam tables or crock pots is unsafe and not recommended (these methods often cannot heat food quickly enough)
- All other food products need to be cooked to 165° F (including something made on-site, or bought and cooked that is now being\ reheated, etc.)

Hint: Monitor, verify and keep logs of temperatures.

Safely Holding Hot and Cold Foods

Proper holding temperatures must be maintained during display, storage and transportation of foods.

Cold foods must be maintained at an internal temperature of 41˚F or below:

- Date mark foods appropriately
- Cover foods to maintain cold holding temperature
- Foods labeled as "Keep Refrigerated" must be refrigerated
- Any foods labeled "Keep Frozen" must be maintained frozen (hard to the touch)

Hot foods must be maintained at an internal temperature of 135˚F or higher:

- Use proper equipment for hot holding
- Stir frequently to distribute the temperature
- Covered foods maintain temperature longer

Hint: Monitor, verify and keep logs of these temperatures.

Cool Foods Quickly and Safely

Improper cooling is a leading cause of foodborne illness

Cooked foods that require time/temperature control for safety (TCS) need to move quickly through the temperature danger zone to limit microbial growth:

- The product must be cooled from 135^{0}F down to 70^{0}F within the first two (2) hours of cooling
- The product must be cooled from 135° F down to 41° F within six (6) hours total
- Food prepared using ingredients normally stored at room temperature must cool to 41° F in four (4) hours or less
- Anything prepared from ambient or refrigerated foods must be cooled to 41° F in four (4) hours or less
- These temperatures must be MONITORED to verify the appropriate temperatures are reached within these required timeframes

Cooling Methods

Shallow metal pans - 2" to 4" deep:

- Leave pan loosely covered or uncovered
- Refrigerate or freeze immediately (for larger amounts of product, use the freezer to achieve rapid chill and then move it to the refrigerator)
- DO NOT stack hot pans; allow for air flow

Ice bath - must use ice and water:

- Fill a clean sink or large pan with ice and fill spaces with cold water
- Divide product into 1 gallon, or smaller, containers
- Immerse product pan, in ice bath until product is level with ice
- Agitate/stir every 10 minutes using an ice paddle, spoon or similar mixing device
- Drain water and replenish ice as it melts
- Use a clean, sanitized thermometer to monitor the temperature of food
- After the food has cooled to 41° F, refrigerate it immediately

Small portions - reduce the quantity/volume:

- Divide food into smaller pans
- Separate food into smaller or thinner portions (2” depth for thick foods; 4” for thick liquids)
- Cut or slice portions of meat no larger than 4” or 4 pounds

Additional tips/hints:

- Add ice directly to the product as an ingredient, if possible
- Use rapid chill refrigeration equipment that encourages quick cooling
- Never try to cool foods in plastic containers (plastic is an insulator)
- Never allow foods to cool at room temperature (bacteria grow faster at ambient room temperatures)
- Spread shallow pans out in coolers
- Check the temperature often to ensure food is cooling within the required time frames; monitor, verify and keep logs of temperatures.

Corrective Actions

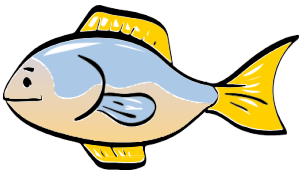
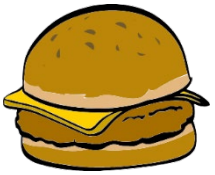
Food Safety is YOUR Responsibility

Risk Factors	Corrective Action
Avoid source/sound condition:	
• Food from unapproved source/unsound condition	→ Discard/reject; return product to original source
Hand washing:	
• Food handling employee not washing hands at appropriate time	→ Provide training and instruct employee when, where and how to effectively wash hands; post signage reminders
Cold holding:	
• Potentially hazardous food held above 41˚F MORE than 4 hrs	→ Discard
• Potentially hazardous food held above 41˚F LESS than 4 hrs	→ Use immediately or cool rapidly Post signage reminders
Cooking:	
• Potentially hazardous food is undercooked	→ Continue cooking to proper temperatures (See pages 9-10 for additional information)
Hot holding:	
• Potentially hazardous food held below 135˚F MORE than 4 hrs	→ Discard
• Potentially hazardous food held below 135˚F LESS than 4 hrs	→ Rapidly reheat to 165˚ F in LESS than 2 hrs or discard
Two-stage cooling process	
• Potentially hazardous food cooled from 135˚F to 70˚F in MORE than 2 hrs	→ Discard (Foods must be cooled to 41° or less in no more than 6 hours total, provide 135-70° is reached within 2 hours)
• Potentially hazardous food cooled from 135˚F to 41˚ F in MORE than 6 hrs total	→ Discard (Examples of these types of foods include sandwiches and salads, e.g. chicken salad, potato salad, etc.)
Reheating:	
• Potentially hazardous food is not reheated to 165˚ F in 2 hrs	→ Discard

Consumer Advisory

Consuming raw or undercooked foods may increase risk of foodborne illness. Each establishment serving raw or undercooked foods needs an advisory to inform consumers of the significantly increased health risks associated with consuming raw or undercooked foods, which includes:

- Hamburgers
- Fish
- Pork
- Egg
- Lamb
- Poultry
- Shellfish
- Milk (raw or unpasteurized)


The advisory must include a DISCLOSURE and a REMINDER

DISCLOSURE must include:

1. A description of the animal-derived foods, such as "oysters on the half shell (raw oysters)," "raw-egg Caesar salad," and "hamburgers (can be cooked to order)"; or
2. Identification of the animal-derived foods by asterisking them to a footnote that states that the items are served raw or undercooked, or contain/may contain raw or undercooked ingredients.

REMINDER must include asterisking the animal-derived foods requiring disclosure to a footnote that states:

1. Regarding the safety of these items, written information is available upon request;
2. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness; or
3. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.

Date Marking

"When in doubt, throw it out!"

Must be date marked if it is:

- Prepared on-site and held under refrigeration to keep more than 24 hours
- Commercially processed, after the original container is opened
- Potentially hazardous, requiring time and temperature control for safety (TCS)
- A ready-to-eat product, requiring time and temperature control for safety (TCS)

Clearly mark the date by which food is to be consumed or discarded:

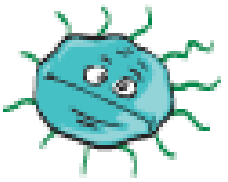
- Food can be held for a MAXIMUM of seven days in adequate refrigeration (41° F or less)
- The day of preparation or the day a commercially processed food is opened counts as "day one;" from this date add six days to get the accurate maximum of seven days
- If a finished product includes multiple ingredients with various dates for consumption/discarding, the final day of consumption will be the earliest expiration date for any of the various ingredients
- If potentially hazardous, ready-to-eat food is refrigerated before being frozen, when food is removed from the freezer, mark with a "consume by" date that is seven days minus the length of time food was refrigerated before being frozen

Using Time for Food Safety without Temperature Control:

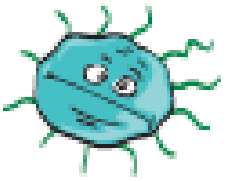
- **4 hours**: The food must have an initial temperature of 41° F or less when removed from cold holding, or 135° F or more when removed from hot holding and must be marked for use, and then used within, four (4) hours.
- **6 hours**: The food must have an initial temperature of 41° F or less when removed from cold holding and may not exceed 70° F within a maximum time of six (6) hours. The food must be marked for use, and then used and/or cooked within, six (6) hours or before the product's temperature reaches 70° F.

Reminder: Any food in containers unmarked with time or past the marked 4- or 6-hour time shall be discarded.

Hint: Monitor, verify and keep logs of these temperatures.

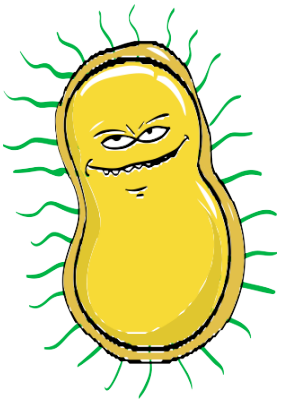


Sick Food Workers



Reportable Symptoms

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Jaundice (yellowish pigmentation of the skin and eyes)
- Sore throat with fever



- Uncovered infected wound (i.e. cut, lesion, or boil)
- Contact with any ill persons who have had illnesses listed below

Restriction

Restricted employees cannot work with food or equipment. They can perform tasks such as taking out the trash or taking inventory, but they should not come into contact with ready-to-eat-foods and/or equipment.

Exclusion

Excluded employees are not allowed to be present in the facility at all. If an employee becomes ill with any of the following or comes into contact with people who have any of these illnesses, the information must be reported immediately to management and the local health department.

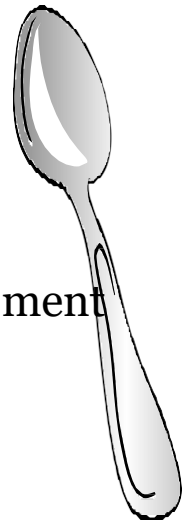
Reportable Diagnosis

Management shall notify the regulatory authority when a food employee is jaundiced or diagnosed with any of the following:

- Salmonella typhi
- Shigella
- Shiga toxin-producing E. coli
- Hepatitis A
- Norovirus
- Nontyphoidal Salmonella

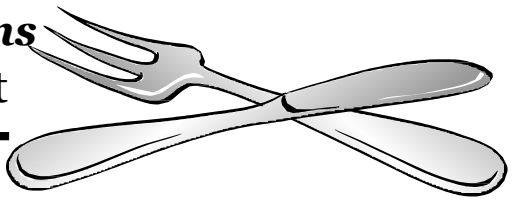
Cleaning and Sanitizing

Making 100 ppm Chlorine Solution is as easy as 1-2-3!
1 ounce of bleach to 3 gallons of water



Manual Ware Washing:

1. ***Wash:***
   - Clean and sanitize sinks and drain boards
   - Pre-soak/pre-rinse all eating utensils and equipment
   - Use hot (at least 110˚ F), soapy water
2. ***Rinse:***
   - Use clean, hot (at least 110˚ F) water
3. ***Sanitize:***
   - Use appropriate test strips to check concentration
   - Use 50 - 200 ppm chlorine; or 200 ppm quaternary ammonia (mix with 75˚ F water)
   - Use appropriate immersion time
   - 10 seconds chlorine; 30 seconds quaternary ammonia
   - Always follow manufacturers-use directions
4. ***Air Dry - Do not stack wet items***
   - Air dry utensils and equipment



Mechanical Dish-Machines: Pre-rinse before loading any machine for washing.

<u>High Temperature:</u>

1. ***Wash temperature:***
   - 150˚ F for single-tank, stationary rack, dual temperature machine
   - 160˚ F for single-tank, conveyor machine
2. ***Hot water sanitization:***
   - 180˚ F at manifold
   - 160˚ F at plate level

<u>Low Temperature:</u>

1. Chemical sanitization required
2. Water temperatures according to manufacturer
3. Chemicals must be auto dispensed into final rinse water; check at least daily
4. Must have a visual or audible low sanitizer indicator

Hint: Monitor, verify and keep logs of these temperatures.

What You Need to Know about Foodborne Illness-Causing Organisms

Organism	Common Name of Illness	Onset Time After Ingesting	Signs & Symptoms	Duration	Food Sources
Bacillus cereus	*B. cereus* food poisoning	10-16 hrs	Abdominal cramps, watery diarrhea, nausea	24-48 hours	Meats, stews, gravies, vanilla sauce
Campylobacter jejuni	Campylobacteriosis	2-5 days	Diarrhea, cramps, fever, and vomiting; diarrhea may be bloody	2-10 days	Raw and undercooked poultry, unpasteurized milk, contaminated water
Clostridium botulinum	Botulism	12-72 hours	Vomiting, diarrhea, blurred vision, double vision, difficulty in swallowing, muscle weakness. Can result in respiratory failure and death	Variable	Improperly canned foods, especially home-canned vegetables, fermented fish, baked potatoes in aluminum foil
Clostridium perfringens	Perfringens food poisoning	8–16 hours	Intense abdominal cramps, watery diarrhea	Usually 24 hours	Meats, poultry, gravy, dried or precooked foods, time and/or temperature-abused foods
Cryptosporidium	Intestinal cryptosporidiosis	2-10 days	Diarrhea (usually watery), stomach cramps, upset stomach, slight fever	May be remitting and relapsing over weeks to months	Uncooked food or food contaminated by an ill food handler after cooking, contaminated drinking water
Cyclospora cayetanensis	Cyclosporiasis	1-14 days, usually at least 1 week	Diarrhea (usually watery), loss of appetite, substantial loss of weight, stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, fatigue	May be remitting and relapsing over weeks to months	Various types of fresh produce (imported berries, lettuce, basil)
***E. coli (Escherichia coli)* producing toxin**	*E. coli* infection (common cause of "travelers' diarrhea")	1-3 days	Watery diarrhea, abdominal cramps, some vomiting	3-7 or more days	Water or food contaminated with human feces
***E. coli* O157:H7**	Hemorrhagic colitis or *E. coli* O157:H7 infection	1-8 days	Severe (often bloody) diarrhea, abdominal pain and vomiting. Usually, little or no fever is present. More common in children 4 years or younger. Can lead to kidney failure.	5-10 days	Undercooked beef (especially hamburger), unpasteurized milk and juice, raw fruits and vegetables (e.g. sprouts), and contaminated water
Hepatitis A	Hepatitis	28 days average (15-50 days)	Diarrhea, dark urine, jaundice, and flu-like symptoms, i.e., fever, headache, nausea, and abdominal pain	Variable, 2 weeks-3 months	Raw produce, contaminated drinking water, uncooked foods and cooked foods that are not reheated after contact with an infected food handler; shellfish from contaminated waters

What You Need to Know about Foodborne Illness-Causing Organisms

Organism	Common Name of Illness	Onset Time After Ingesting	Signs & Symptoms	Duration	Food Sources
Listeria monocytogenes	Listeriosis	9-48 hrs for gastro-intestinal symptoms, 2-6 weeks for invasive disease	Fever, muscle aches, and nausea or diarrhea. Pregnant women may have mild flu-like illness, and infection can lead to premature delivery or stillbirth. The elderly or immunocompromised patients may develop bacteremia or meningitis.	Variable	Unpasteurized milk, soft cheeses made with unpasteurized milk, ready-to-eat deli meats
Noroviruses	Variously called viral gastroenteritis, winter diarrhea, acute non-bacterial gastroenteritis, food poisoning, and food infection	12-48 hrs	Nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, diarrhea, fever, headache. Diarrhea is more prevalent in adults, vomiting more common in children.	12-60 hrs	Raw produce, contaminated drinking water, uncooked foods and cooked foods that are not reheated after contact with an infected food handler; shellfish from contaminated waters
Salmonella	Salmonellosis	6-48 hours	Diarrhea, fever, abdominal cramps, vomiting	4-7 days	Eggs, poultry, meat, unpasteurized milk or juice, cheese, contaminated raw fruits and vegetables
Shigella	Shigellosis or Bacillary dysentery	4-7 days	Abdominal cramps, fever, and diarrhea. Stools may contain blood and mucus.	24-48 hrs	Raw produce, contaminated drinking water, uncooked foods and cooked foods that are not reheated after contact with an infected food handler
Staphylococcus aureus	Staphylococcal food poisoning	1-6 hours	Sudden onset of severe nausea and vomiting. Abdominal cramps. Diarrhea and fever may be present.	24-48 hours	Unrefrigerated or improperly refrigerated meats, potato and egg salads, cream pastries
Vibrio parahaemolyticus	*V. parahaemolyticus* infection	4-96 hours	Watery (occasionally bloody) diarrhea, abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever	2-5 days	Undercooked or raw seafood, such as shellfish
Vibrio vulnificus	*V. vulnificus* infection	1-7 days	Vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, bloodborne infection. Fever, bleeding within the skin, ulcers requiring surgical removal. Can be fatal to persons with liver disease or weakened immune systems.	2-8 days	Undercooked or raw seafood, such as shellfish (especially oysters)

A Safe and Clean Facility

Insect and Rodent Control

Insects and rodents carry disease and can contaminate food and food-contact surfaces. Take steps to minimize their presence:

- Protect outer openings by keeping outer doors closed, repair screens, maintain tightfitting doors and openings, and use air curtains
- Eliminate clutter and garbage within and around the facility, including unused storage, refrigerator space, garbage cans, boxes, old newspapers, etc.
- Keep grass and landscape trimmed and away from walls/roof
- Use only approved pest control methods

Toxic Materials

Certain items can be poisonous or toxic if they come into contact with food. These items include:

- Detergents
- Sanitizers
- Polishes and cleaners
- Insecticides
- Rodenticides
- First aid supplies and personal medications

Proper storage, labeling and approved use of the above listed products following their specific instructions can help prevent contamination issues. Always be sure to:

- Store separately from foods and food-contact surfaces
- Always store BELOW foods or food-contact surfaces
- Keep chemicals in original containers when possible; if mixing into new containers be sure to properly label containers
- Use only approved chemicals in food areas

Responsibilities of the Retail License Holder

Rules of the Georgia Department of Agriculture
Chapter 40-7-1-40(10) Retail Food Sales

Upon acceptance of the LICENSE issued by the DEPARTMENT, the LICENSE HOLDER, in order to retain the LICENSE, shall:

(a) Post the LICENSE in a location in the FOOD ESTABLISHMENT that is conspicuous to CONSUMERS;
(b) Comply with the provisions of these Regulations including the conditions of a granted VARIANCE as specified under 40-7-1-.38(5) and APPROVED plans as specified under 40-7-1-.39(2);
(c) If a FOOD ESTABLISHMENT is required under 40-7-1-.39(3) to operate under a HACCP PLAN, comply with the plan as specified under 40-7-1-.38(5);
(d) Immediately contact the DEPARTMENT to report an illness of a FOOD EMPLOYEE or CONDITIONAL EMPLOYEE as specified under 40-7-1-.04(1)(b);
(e) Immediately discontinue operations and notify the DEPARTMENT if an IMMINENT HEALTH HAZARD may exist as specified under 40-7-1-.41(12);
(f) Allow representatives of the DEPARTMENT access to the FOOD ESTABLISHMENT as specified under 40-7-1-.41(13);
(g) Replace existing facilities and EQUIPMENT specified in 40-7-1-.38(1) with facilities and EQUIPMENT that comply with these Regulations if:
    1. The DEPARTMENT directs the replacement because the facilities and EQUIPMENT constitute a public health HAZARD or nuisance or no longer comply with the criteria upon which the facilities and EQUIPMENT were accepted,
    2. The DEPARTMENT directs the replacement of the facilities and EQUIPMENT because of a change of ownership, or
    3. The facilities and EQUIPMENT are replaced in the normal course of operation;
(h) Comply with directives of the DEPARTMENT including time frames for corrective actions specified in inspection reports, notices, orders, warnings, and other directives issued by the DEPARTMENT in regard to the LICENSE HOLDER'S FOOD ESTABLISHMENT or in response to community emergencies;
(i) Accept notices issued and served by the DEPARTMENT according to LAW; and
(j) Be subject to the remedies authorized in LAW for failure to comply with these Regulations or a directive of the DEPARTMENT, including time frames for corrective actions specified in inspection reports, notices, orders, warnings, and other directives.

Certified Food Protection Manager

New updates to Georgia's retail regulations include a key provision that requires at least one employee with supervisory responsibilities to be a "Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM)." The CFPM is required in 40-7-1-.03(3) of Georgia's Retail Food Sales Regulations, which states:

(a) At least one EMPLOYEE that has supervisory and management responsibility and the authority to direct and control FOOD preparation and service shall be a certified FOOD protection manager who has shown proficiency of required information through passing a test that is part of an ACCREDITED PROGRAM.
(b) The section does not apply to certain types of FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS deemed by the DEPARTMENT to pose minimal risk of causing, or contributing to, foodborne illness based on the nature of the operation and extent of FOOD preparation.

What is a CFPM?

In order to be considered a CFPM, the employee with supervisory duties must pass a test accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Currently, there are four accredited programs that will satisfy the CFPM requirement in Georgia:

(1) 360training.com, Inc – Learn2Serve® Food Protection Manager Certification Program
(2) National Registry of Food Safety Professionals – Food Protection Manager Certification Program
(3) National Restaurant Association – ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification Program
(4) Prometric Inc. – Food Protection Manger Certification Program

Who needs a CFPM?

Firms with minimal risk will not be required to have a CFPM; however, they will still have to demonstrate knowledge of regulation requirements to our inspectors when violative conditions have been found. Firms with Time/Temperature Control for Safe Food who perform specific handling activities will have to comply with the CFPM requirement. The CFPM does NOT need to be present at all times, but a Person in Charge shall be present during all hours of operation, as required by 40-7-1-.03(1). The Person in Charge shall be the license holder, or his/her designee; and does NOT have to be a CFPM.

No CFPM Necessary	CFPM Required
• Pre-packaged dry goods • Pre-packaged refrigerated/frozen foods (prepared in a licensed/inspected processing plant) • Coffee urns • Cappuccino machines • Soda fountains • Slushee/Icee type machines • Bulk, self-service pastries • Bagging ice on-site	• Hot holding food • Time as a public health control • Cold holding (foods prepared on-site) • Cooking food • Cooling food • Reheating food • Thawing food • Repacking food

Contact Information

Georgia Department of Agriculture
19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., S.W. Atlanta,
Georgia 30334
(404) 656-3600
Toll Free: (800) 282-5852

Food Safety Division
Direct: (404) 656-3627
Fax: (404) 463-6428
Online: http://agr.georgia.gov/food-safety
Twitter: @GDAFoodSafety

Get to know your GDA Food Safety inspector, learn what GDA district you are located within, and know when to contact us! Examples of when to reach out are:

- For licensing or inspection inquiries
- For plan review prior to construction or remodeling
- For changes or additions to the type of operation, processing equipment or product line(s)
- To report a food business change of ownership or change of location
- To report a natural disaster involving food
- To report a food establishment or product complaint
- To report a foodborne illness or other circumstances that may endanger public health
- To request educational materials or a GDA Food Safety Division speaker/presenter for a conference, training or other industry or consumer event

Helpful Resources:

GDA Food Safety Division
http://agr.georgia.gov/food-safety

Georgia Grown Program
https://www.georgiagrown.com/

Georgia Department of Public Health
http://dph.georgia.gov/

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
http://www.fda.gov/

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
http://www.usda.gov/

Association of Food & Drug Officials (AFDO)
http://www.afdo.org/

Association of Food and Drug Officials
of the Southern States (AFDOSS)
http://www.afdoss.org/

Georgia Food Safety & Defense Task Force
https://ga.foodprotectiontaskforce.com/

Georgia Association for Food Protection
https://www.gafoodprotection.org/

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Georgia Department of Agriculture
19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
(404) 656-3600
Toll Free: (800) 282-5852