

Cooling and Reheating Food/Leftovers

Proper cooling and reheating of foods and leftovers is vital to preventing an incident of foodborne illness within your establishment and among your staff, customers, and beyond. Follow the guidelines below when cooling and reheating foods in order to minimize this risk.



Method for Cooling Food:

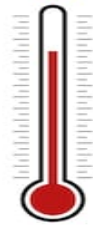
Food should be cooled from 135°F to 70°F within two hours, and then from 70°F to 41°F or lower in the next four hours. Foods particularly important to meet this cooling requirement include soups, sauces, gravies, stews, rice, chili, whole turkeys, turkey breasts, and whole roast beef.

Foods can be cold in any of the following ways:

- Place food in ice-water baths and stir regularly
- Stir the food with an ice paddle
- Place food in a blast chiller or a tumble chiller

Method for Reheating Food:

Reheat previously cooked food to an internal temperature of 165°F or above within two hours and hold above 135°F until served. This procedure destroys bacteria that can cause food poisoning and prevents bacteria from growing in the food. If food has not reached 165°F within two hours, throw it out.



Keep food out of the DANGER ZONE!

Bacteria grow rapidly between 41°F and 135°F. After being safely cooked, hot food must be kept at 135°F or hotter to prevent bacterial growth. Within 2 hours of cooking food or holding it hot, leftovers must be refrigerated. Throw away all perishable foods that have been left at room temperature for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is over 90°F). Cold perishable food, such as chicken salad or deli meats, should be kept at 41°F or below.

Store Leftovers Safely:

Leftovers can be kept in the refrigerator for 7 days or frozen (0°F or below) for 1 month. However, frozen leftovers can lose moisture and flavor when stored for longer times.

Additional Resources:

<https://web-dfsr.s3-fips-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/iowa/assets/File/20%20Proper%20Cooling%20Time%20and%20Temperature.pdf>

<https://web-dfsr.s3-fips-us-gov-west-1.amazonaws.com/iowa/assets/File/19%20Proper%20Reheat%20for%20Hot%20Holding%20Poster.pdf>