Basic Food Safety Tips for Exempt Groups
Wisconsin Food Code Fact Sheet # 27

Exempt Group is an organization /person who, by their affiliation or type of food sales/service
has an exception from licensing and inspection from their regulatory food authority.

Temperatures
- Cold hold temperature: The internal temperature of food in cold storage must be at 41°F or below (when using ice to cool foods make sure ice surrounds entire product to assure proper cooling temperature).

Cook Temperatures
- poultry - 165°F for 15 seconds
- ground meat & brats - 155°F for 15 seconds
- beef & pork - 145°F for 15 seconds
- eggs - 145°F for 15 seconds
- hotdogs - 140°F for 15 seconds

Cook Temperatures
- Turkey - 165°F for 15 seconds
- stews - 165°F for 15 seconds
- egg custards - 155°F for 15 seconds
- sandwiches - 145°F for 15 seconds
- sandwiches - 140°F for 15 seconds

Hot holding temperature: The internal temperature of hot foods must be at 135°F or above. Do not rely on temperature gauges of equipment.

Re-heated foods for hot holding: Food to be re-heated must reach an internal minimum temperature of 165 °F for 15 seconds. Reheat foods quickly and store hot at a temperature of 135 °F or above.

Metal Stem Thermometer
- A metal stem thermometer must be available to monitor temperatures of perishable foods. The thermometer must have a range of 0°F to 220°F.
- Check thermometer to assure accuracy to +/- 2°F; and calibrate as needed (refer to fact sheet # 7)

Food Protection
- Keep cooked foods from coming in contact with raw foods, or with utensils contaminated by raw foods such as cutting board, knives, etc.
- Food must be kept covered to prevent contamination from insects, dust, etc.
- Store food and equipment at least 6 inches off the floor.
- Customers are not allowed in the food preparation area.
- Have spare clean utensils available.
- Condiments should be served from individual packages, plastic squeeze bottles, pump dispensers, etc. or served by food service employees.
- Avoid using insecticides on site, if needed use non-chemical control means. If chemical insecticides or pesticides are used, read and follow the labeling instructions carefully.

Thawing Frozen Foods
- Frozen food should be maintained frozen or below 41°F.
- Thaw foods prior to cooking in a refrigerator, or cook them from a frozen state. In an “emergency” situation thaw under cool running water. Never thaw foods at room temperature.

Hand Washing Station
- Supply hand soap and single service towels.
- Provide means of running water by use of a campers jug, cooler or similar container.
- Wash hands under warm running water, and catch waste in a bucket.
- Do not use hand sanitizer gel as a substitute for handwashing.

Bare Hand Contact
- Do not touch ready to eat foods with bare hands.
- To eliminate bare hand contact use utensils, deli papers, gloves, etc.

Sanitizer and Wiping Cloth
- Use 1 capful unscented bleach mixed per gallon of water. Store wiping cloth in bleach or sanitizer solution between uses. Change solution frequently
- Wipe food contact areas and spills with wiping cloth.
- Read and carefully follow label directions on sanitizer use.

Personnel Hygiene
- All personnel must wash hands thoroughly before handling food, after using the toilet facilities after smoking and/or when your hands become contaminated.
- Food handlers should not be ill or have open sores.
- Do not smoke in a food preparation area.
- Food preparation personnel should wear effective hair restraints such as a hair net or baseball cap.
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