

# Cooling Potentially Hazardous Foods

**PURPOSE:** To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all potentially hazardous foods are cooled properly.

**SCOPE:** This procedure applies to foodservice employees who prepare or serve food.

**KEY WORDS:** Cross-Contamination, Temperatures, Cooling, Holding

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP. Refer to the Using and Calibrating Thermometers SOP.
2. Follow California Retail Food Code requirements.
3. Modify menus, production schedules, and staff work hours to allow for implementation of proper cooling procedures.
4. Prepare and cool food in small batches.
5. Chill food rapidly using an appropriate cooling method:
  - a. Place food in shallow containers no more than 4 inches deep.
  - b. Separate the food into smaller or thinner portions.
  - c. Use a quick-chill unit such as a blast chiller.
  - d. Stir the food in a container placed in an ice water bath.
  - e. Add ice as an ingredient.
  - f. Using containers that facilitate heat transfer.
  - g. Use ice paddles.
6. Chill cooked, hot food from:
  - a. 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours. Take corrective action immediately if food is not chilled from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours.
  - b. 70°F to 41°F or below in remaining time. The total cooling process from 135°F to 41°F may not exceed 6 hours. Take corrective action immediately if food is not chilled from 135°F to 41°F within the 6 hour cooling process.
7. Chill prepared, ready-to-eat foods such as tuna salad and cut melons from 70°F to 41°F or below within 4 hours. Take corrective action immediately if ready-to-eat food is not chilled from 70°F to 41°F within 4 hours.

**MONITORING**

1. Use a clean, sanitized, and calibrated probe thermometer to measure the internal temperature of the food during the cooling process.
2. Monitor temperatures of products every hour throughout the cooling process by inserting a probe thermometer into the center of the food and at various locations in the product.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION**

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Discard cooked, hot food immediately when the food is:
  - a. Above 70°F and more than 2 hours into the cooling process; or
  - b. Above 41°F and more than 6 hours into the cooling process.
3. Use a different cooling method for prepared ready-to-eat foods when the food is above 41°F and less than 4 hours into the cooling process.
4. Discard prepared ready-to-eat foods when the food is above 41°F and more than 4 hours into the cooling process.

**VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

Foodservice employees will record temperatures and corrective actions taken on the Cooling Temperature Log. Foodservice employees will record if there are no foods cooled on any working day by indicating “No Foods Cooled” on the Cooling Temperature Log. The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice employees are cooling food properly by visually monitoring foodservice employees during the shift and reviewing, initialing, and dating the temperature log each working day. The Cooling Temperature Logs are to be kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

**DATE IMPLEMENTED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVIEWED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE REVISED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **BY:** \_\_\_\_\_