



TIME AS A CONTROL

There are times in an operation when food will need to be held without temperature control, this is also known as “Time as a Control”. Time as a control needs to be monitored carefully as bacterial can grow rapidly and can reproduce every 20 minutes when held in the temperature danger zone (41°F to 135°F) as demonstrated below.

0 minutes = 1 bacteria cells

40 minutes = 4 bacteria cells

20 minutes = 2 bacteria cells

60 minutes = 8 bacteria cells

10 hours = 1 billion bacteria cells

Due to the rapid growth of bacteria it is important to follow the requirements below when using time as a control.

If time is used as a control written procedures must be prepared in advance, maintained in the establishment and available to the regulatory authority.

- The food must have an internal temperature of 41°F or less if removed from cold holding or 135°F or higher if removed from hot holding.
- The food must be marked with the discard time not to exceed four (4) hours after being removed from hot or cold holding.
- The food must be discarded if:
 - It has not been served within four (4) hours from the time it was removed from temperature control.
 - The food is in unmarked containers.

Or:

- The food must have an internal temperature of 41°F or less when removed from cold holding and not exceed 70°F. The product can be held a maximum of six (6) hours.
- The food must be monitored to ensure the warmest portion of the product does not exceed 70°F.
- The food must be marked with the time it was removed from cold holding and the time that 6 hours will have passed (the discard time).
- The food must be discarded if:
 - The temperature of the food exceeds 70°F.
 - The food exceeds the six (6) hours from the time it was removed from temperature control.
 - The food is in unmarked containers.