



TIME/TEMPERATURE CONTROL OF TCS FOODS

Keeping TCS foods at correct temperatures is critical to prevent bacterial growth. TCS stands for Time and Temperature Control for Safety and is synonymous with potentially hazardous foods (PHF).

These are the minimum holding temperatures for TCS foods:

- Hold hot foods at or above 135°F in a steam table or hot holding unit capable of maintaining the correct temperature. Routinely check temperatures with a calibrated thermometer every 2 hours or less. If the food temperature falls below 135°F (NOT TO EXCEED 4 HOURS), reheat to 165°F, check holding unit, and again hot hold at 135°F or higher. **Discard foods below 135°F longer than 4 hours.** Preheat and monitor hot holding units prior to holding foods. Units unable to maintain correct temperatures shall be repaired or replaced.
- Hold cold foods at or below 41°F in a cold table, walk-in cooler, or refrigerator. **Discard foods held between 41°F and 135°F for longer than 4 hours.** Units unable to maintain required food temperatures shall be repaired or replaced.
- Keep foods in prep stations covered with lids to maintain temperatures.
- Keep only foods used in the immediate preparation process out of refrigeration.
- Commercial equipment with NFS and UL listings are recommended to ensure the ability of a unit to perform and maintain foods at required temperatures.
- **Keep foods out of the temperature danger zone between 41°F and 135°F.** This is the temperature range where bacterial growth readily occurs, with ideal conditions for growth between 70°F and 125°F.
- **When in doubt (???) throw it out!**