

# Holding Foods

**Always hold food  
at the correct temperature:**



\*Note: The Temperature Danger Zone in the current FDA Food Code is 41°F to 135°F. Some jurisdictions are on older versions of the Food Code and use 41°F to 140°F. Use the temperature that is in the version of the Food Code followed by your jurisdiction.

## Definition-

All hot foods must be held hot (135°F or higher\*) and cold foods must be held cold (41°F or lower). Food temperatures must be taken during holding to ensure food safety.

## Information-

Handling food properly and at the right temperature is critical in maintaining food safety. The following steps should be taken to ensure that food is held at the proper temperature.

## Process for Hot Holding-

1. Prepare and cook only as much food as needed.  
(Do batch cooking when possible.)
2. Do not use hot holding equipment to reheat food.
3. Maintain hot foods at 135°F or higher in hot holding equipment.
4. Measure internal food temperature with calibrated thermometers.
5. Discard after four hours.

## Process for Cold Holding-

1. Place cold foods in pans or on plates, but never directly on ice.
2. Protect cold food from contaminants with covers or sneeze guards.
3. Maintain cold foods at 41°F or lower.
4. Measure internal temperature at two hour intervals.
5. Record temperatures in Service Temperature Records.

## You Should Know

1. Monitor hot and cold holding temperatures at each meal.
2. Take corrective action whenever necessary. Appropriate corrective actions might include:
  - a. Reheat food that is less than 135°F.
  - b. Check or adjust temperatures of hot holding cabinets.
  - c. Adjust temperatures of refrigerators and milk coolers.
  - d. Use ice for cold holding.
3. File Service Temperature Records in HACCP File.