



SOUL CAFE

FOOD

HANDLING

PROCEDURES

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Soul Cafe Food Handling Policies and Procedures

If you're a Soul Café food handler, making sure you don't contaminate food through illness or unclean habits is very important to keep food safe to eat.

What are the requirements?

Under Standard 3.2.2 - Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, as a food handler you need to do whatever you can to make sure you do not make food unsafe or unsuitable.

Soul Kitchen Volunteers are provided with the 'Food Standards Code of Australia and New Zealand' and additional Health and Hygiene Information as a part of their induction and sign a form, to say that they have received this information and understand the requirements of this information when volunteering at Soul.

Food Standards Code Australia And New Zealand

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/pages/default.aspx>

(1) A food handler must, when engaging in any food handling operation:

- (a) take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
- (b) take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
- (c) ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted.
- (d) only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering;
- (e) not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
- (f) not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
- (g) not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled; and
- (h) not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.

(2) A food handler must wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):

- (a) whenever his or her hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food;
- (b) immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food; and
- (c) immediately after using the toilet.

(3) A food handler must, when engaging in a food handling operation that involves unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause

- (a) before commencing or re-commencing handling food;
- (b) immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and
- (c) after touching his or her hair, scalp or a body opening.

(4) A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands:

- (a) use the hand washing facilities provided;
- (b) thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water;
- (c) thoroughly dry his or her hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.

Additional Health and Hygiene Information

Be clean and careful

- wash and dry your hands thoroughly
- stop hair, clothes, jewellery or phone touching food or surfaces (e.g. tie hair back, remove loose jewellery, cover open sores)

- don't touch ready-to-eat food with your bare hands - use tongs or gloves
- wear clean clothing and aprons
- do not eat, spit, smoke, sneeze, blow or cough over food or surfaces that touch food.

You need to tell your Team Leader if you think you are sick or have contaminated food in any way.

Wash your hands properly

- use the sink provided just for hand washing
- wet your hands under warm running water
- lather them with soap and thoroughly scrub fingers, palms, wrists, back of hands and under nails for about 15 seconds
- rinse hands under warm running water
- turn off taps using a paper towel or elbow
- thoroughly dry your hands with a single-use towel.

When to wash your hands

- before you start handling food or go back to handling food after other tasks
- before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food
- after using the toilet
- after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating or drinking
- after touching your hair, scalp, nose, etc.
- after doing anything else that could make your hands dirty, like handling garbage, touching animals or children, or cleaning duties.

What if I'm sick?

Some illnesses can be passed to people through food – these are called foodborne illnesses (e.g. gastro and hepatitis A). If you know or think you have a foodborne illness (e.g. you have vomiting, diarrhoea or fever):

- tell your Team Leader
- do not handle food if it's likely to become contaminated
- only return to food handling when a doctor says you are well enough (usually 48 hours after symptoms have stopped).

If you have infected sores on your hands, arm or face; or any discharges from your ear, nose or eyes (such as a cold). You can continue to handle food provided you take extra precautions to prevent food being contaminated. For example, cover the skin sore or take medication to dry up the discharge.

Preparing food

Before preparing food, make sure that hands, clothes, equipment and kitchen surfaces are clean. They will also need to be kept clean throughout food preparation.

Cleaning and sanitising utensils

There are three steps needed to effectively clean and sanitise utensils:

- washing;
- sanitising; and
- drying.

Utensils such as cutting boards, bowls and knives need to be thoroughly washed in warm soapy water. After washing, the utensils should look clean and there should be no food or anything else visible on them. Effective cleaning will remove most of the dangerous bacteria present. Sanitising will then kill any that might remain.

Where possible use the dishwasher as it is very effective at sanitising if it has a hot wash and drying cycle. All utensils must then be thoroughly dried before they are re-used. Air-drying is best but tea towels can be used if they are clean.

Temperature control

The food safety standards specify that potentially hazardous foods must be stored, displayed and transported at safe temperatures and, where possible, prepared at safe temperatures. However, you can also use time, rather than temperature, to keep food safe. This method is explained under 'The 2 hour/4 hour guide'.

Cooking

Always cook food thoroughly.

Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers until juices run clear - beef steaks can be cooked to preference. Cooking will reduce dangerous bacteria to safe levels if it is done properly. Remember that some food-poisoning bacteria can protect themselves from cooking and while they will not be present in enough numbers to make someone sick just after the food is cooked, they can start growing again if the cooked food is left at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C for too long. Therefore, cooling cooked food quickly is so important.

Wherever possible, try to cook food as close to the time that you will be serving or selling it. For example, if you can, take the food to the event and cook it there. This reduces the chance of the food becoming contaminated after it has been cooked. It also means that there won't be enough time for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels on the cooked food before it is eaten.

Cooling food

If you decide you want to pre-cook food and then cool it, you will need to ensure that the food is cooled rapidly to 5°C. If a large container of cooked food, for example a beef curry, is placed in a refrigerator for cooling, it can take as long as 24 hours to cool to 5°C. This is very dangerous as the centre of the food will remain warm and allow food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The Food Safety Standards require cooked food to be cooled to 5°C within 6 hours. The food must be cooled from 60°C to 21°C within 2 hours and from 21°C to 5°C within a further 4 hours. Safe cooling can be achieved by:

- removing the food from the stove top, oven or other heat source after it has cooked;
- allowing the food to initially cool outside the refrigerator - but make sure it is placed in the refrigerator as soon as any part of it drops to a temperature of 60°C; and
- placing the food in shallow containers.

Use a thermometer to check that the cooked food is being cooled within the 6-hour time limit.

Reheating food

Cold food (which is to be served hot) will need to be quickly and thoroughly heated at the event until it is steaming hot and then kept hot until it is served. It is best to re-heat the food to a temperature of 70°C and hold the food at this temperature for at least two minutes. Use your thermometer to check that all of the food reaches at least this temperature.

Keeping food hot

Hot food will need to be kept hot (60 ° C or above) at the event. This could be achieved by using gas or electric appliances. Safe temperatures are 5°C or colder, or 60°C or hotter. Potentially hazardous food needs to be kept at these temperatures to prevent food-poisoning bacteria, which may be present in the food, from multiplying to dangerous levels. These bacteria can grow at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C, which is known as the temperature danger zone. The fastest rate of growth is at around 37°C, the temperature of the human body.

What foods are potentially hazardous?

Foods normally considered to be potentially hazardous are:

- raw meats, cooked meats and food containing meat, such as casseroles, curries, lasagne and meat pies
- dairy products and foods containing dairy products, such as milk, cream, custard and dairy-based desserts
- seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood, such as seafood salad
- processed fruits and vegetables, such as prepared salads and ready-to-eat fruit packs
- cooked rice and pasta
- processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food, such as quiche and soya bean products
- foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches, rice salads and pasta salads.

The food safety standards also require you to have a thermometer if you prepare, handle or sell potentially hazardous food. This will enable you to check that safe temperatures are being maintained.

If potentially hazardous foods have to be cooled, their temperature should be reduced as quickly as possible. The temperature should fall from 60°C to 21°C in less than two hours and be reduced to 5°C or colder in the next four hours. It is difficult to cool food within these times unless you put food into shallow containers.

Keeping food cold

When you are preparing food, make sure that you have enough refrigerator space or insulated boxes with ice bricks to store the food. It is important to remember that refrigerators do not work properly when they are overloaded or when food is packed tightly, because the cold air cannot circulate.

If you are running out of room in your refrigerator, remove foods that are not potentially hazardous, such as drinks. The temperature of these foods is not critical and they can be kept cool in insulated containers with ice or ice blocks.

Keeping food hot

If you are keeping food hot on cooktops, in ovens or in bain marie units, the equipment needs to be set high enough to ensure that the food remains hot (60 ° C or hotter).

The 2 hour / 4 hour guide

Although potentially hazardous food should be kept at 5°C or colder or 60°C or hotter wherever possible, this food can be safely between 5°C and 60°C provided it is between these temperatures **for less than four hours**. This is because it takes more than four hours for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The 2 hour/4 hour guide applies to ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food. It provides guidance on how long this type of food can be held safely at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C and what should happen to it after certain times. The times refer to the life of the food, including preparation and cooling, not just to display times, so remember to add up the total time that the food has been between 5°C and 60°C.

Total time limit between 5°C and 60°C

Less than 2 hours

Between 2 hours and 4 hours

More than 4 hours

What you should do

Refrigerate or use immediately

Use immediately

Throw out

Why have a thermometer?

A thermometer is essential in ensuring that food is kept at safe temperatures. If your organisation prepares, handles or sells any potentially hazardous food, it must have a thermometer which is accurate to $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$. This means that when the thermometer shows a temperature of 5°C , the actual temperature will be between 4°C and 6°C . The thermometer must be available for use when foods are being prepared, so you may need more than one if foods are prepared in different places.

How to clean and sanitise your thermometer

As the probe of the thermometer will be inserted into food, the probe must be cleaned and sanitised before it is used to measure the temperature of the food. This is especially important when the thermometer is used to measure the temperature of raw food and then ready-to-eat food, for example raw chicken and cooked chicken. To clean and sanitise your thermometer:

- wash the probe to remove any grease and food particles;
- sanitise the probe using alcohol wipes or very hot water; and
- thoroughly dry the probe using a disposable towel or let it air dry.

Checking temperatures of food

- Determine the warmest area of a coolroom or the coldest area of a hot display unit.
- Insert the clean, dry probe into the food.
- Remember that temperature readings are not instant- wait until the temperature has stabilised before reading.
- Stabilise the thermometer between measuring hot and cold foods by allowing the thermometer to come back to room temperature.
- If the food is packaged or frozen, place the length of the probe between two packages of the food.

Remember that the temperature at the centre of food may be different from the surface temperature. For example, when cooked food is being cooled in the refrigerator, the centre of the food will take the longest to cool. Therefore, when checking the temperature of this food, make sure that you check the centre.

How to check the accuracy of your thermometer

Thermometers have to be accurate to ensure that temperatures are correctly measured. Ask the company that supplied your thermometer how often the thermometer should be checked for accuracy. It is best to have your thermometer regularly checked and maintained by the supplier of the thermometer. However, if you would like to check the accuracy of your thermometer yourself, use the following method.

- Place some ice into a container with a small amount of cold water. The ice should not float if the correct amount of water is used.
- Mix into a slurry and insert the thermometer probe.
- Leave it for about three minutes.
- Check and note the temperature. It should read 0°C .
- Do this three times and compare the temperatures recorded.
- If they vary by more than 1°C , get your thermometer checked by the supplier.

After a power failure

<http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/foodsafetyandyou/keeping-food-safe/flood-fire-power-cut-emergencies>

It is useful to **make a note** of the time the power failed.

Keep it cold! If the power supply is out for more than 4 hours, food in **fridges** can spoil. Keep the refrigerator door closed as much as possible. A closed refrigerator should keep food cold for 4 hours. If food that's meant to be in the fridge is allowed to warm for 2 hours or more, avoid eating it.

Freezers will usually not defrost and allow food to spoil for at least 24 hours, provided the door has been kept shut. If frozen foods have thawed, they should not be refrozen but should be kept cold and eaten as soon as possible.

Resource

Food Standards Australia New Zealand provide the below guides

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/foodsafety/standards/Pages/Guide-books.aspx>

Safe Food Australia – a comprehensive guide to Standards 3.1.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3

Food Safety: Skills and knowledge for food businesses (PDF 1 MB) – a guide to specific requirements on skills and knowledge in Standard 3.2.2

Temperature control of potentially hazardous foods (PDF 71KB) – a guide to the requirements to keep potentially hazardous foods under temperature control in Standard 3.2.2

Food safety programs (PDF 357 MB) – a guide to Standard 3.2.1

Food safety programs for food service to vulnerable persons (PDF 1.4 MB) – a guide to Standard 3.3.1.