



FOOD SAFETY ESSENTIALS

Step Into the Hospitality Industry
with Certified Food Handler &
Food Safety Supervisor Skills

FOOD HANDLERS &
FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR MANUAL



BELIEVE . ACHIEVE . SUCCEED

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Welcome, and thank you for choosing Letizia's Training & Development.

If you're reading this, it means you're taking an important step not just toward a qualification, but toward looking after people. At Letizia's, we believe food safety is about more than rules and regulations.

It's about care, responsibility, and pride in your work.

Every meal prepared, every drink served, and every surface cleaned is part of a bigger picture. People trust you with their health, sometimes without even realising it. That trust matters.

Why We Created This Manual

We created this resource because we know that:

- Not everyone learns the same way
- Not everyone enjoys long, complicated manuals
- Real understanding comes from clear explanations and real examples

This manual is written in plain English, with real-life situations you'll actually face in the workplace.

It's designed to support:

- Food Handlers
- Food Safety Supervisors
- Students who are learning
- Workers who want confidence, not confusion

You won't find unnecessary jargon here.

You will find practical guidance, clear expectations, and support.

Our Approach to Food Safety

At Letizia's, we don't train people to just "pass a course".

We train people to:

- Feel confident at work
- Understand why food safety matters
- Speak up when something isn't right
- Take responsibility without fear

Mistakes happen. What matters is how you respond.

Food safety is about doing the right thing – even when no one is watching.

A Shared Responsibility

Food safety is not the job of one person.

It's a shared responsibility between:

- Food handlers
- Supervisors
- Managers
- Business owners

That's why this manual supports both Food Handlers and Food Safety Supervisors, with clear sections that explain responsibilities at every level.

Leadership in food safety isn't about authority, it's about protecting people.

How to Use This Manual

This manual follows a clear learning pathway and is designed to be read alongside training and practical practice.

Each section:

- Builds on the previous one
- Follows the same order used in training sessions
- Links knowledge to real situations
- Supports assessment without teaching answers
- **Some images in this manual link to additional information to help support learning**

Take your time. Ask questions. Put into practise regularly.

Believe. Achieve. Succeed.

At Letizia's, these are not just words, they're how we work.

- **Believe** in yourself and your ability to learn
- **Achieve** by building real skills and confidence
- **Succeed** by doing your job safely, responsibly, and with pride

We're proud to walk this journey with you.

Welcome to Food Safety Essentials.



Chapter 1: What is Food Safety?

Food safety is not about paperwork.

It's not about ticking boxes.

And it's definitely not about catching people out.

Food safety is about protecting people.

Every day, people trust us with their food – children, families, elderly people, and people who are already unwell. Most of them will never meet us, but they trust that what we prepare, serve, or handle is safe.

This chapter explains what food safety really means, why it matters, and who is responsible.

You don't need to memorise laws.

You just need to understand your role.

What Does “Food Safety” Mean?

Food safety means handling food in a way that keeps it safe to eat.

Safe food:

- Does not make people sick
- Is free from harmful germs, chemicals, or objects
- Is stored, prepared, and served correctly

Food safety applies at every stage, including:

- Receiving food
- Storing food
- Preparing food
- Cooking food
- Serving or selling food
- Transporting food
- Cleaning up afterwards

Food safety is not just for kitchens.

It applies in:

- Cafés and restaurants
- Takeaway shops
- Community kitchens
- Childcare and aged care
- Events, food vans, and fundraisers
- Any place where food is handled



Why Food Safety Matters

Most food safety problems don't happen because someone "doesn't care".

They happen because:

- Someone didn't know the rules
- Someone rushed
- Someone assumed "it'll be fine"
- Someone didn't speak up

A small mistake can lead to:

- Food poisoning
- Serious illness
- Hospitalisation
- Legal action
- Business closure

For vulnerable people, like young children, pregnant women, elderly people, or people with allergies, the risk is much higher.

Food safety is about doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

Who Sets the Food Safety Rules?

Food safety rules in Australia are set nationally and enforced locally.

Here's how it works – simply:

Federal Level

- Develops and manages the Food Standards Code
- Sets the national rules around food safety
- Covers things like labelling, additives, and standards

State / Territory Level

- Applies these rules within each state
- Supports enforcement and public health systems

Local Council

- Works directly with food businesses
- Registers food premises
- Conducts inspections
- Can issue warnings, fines, or close a business if food safety is a risk

Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) can:

- Enter a food business at any time
- Inspect food, equipment, and records
- Ask for proof of food safety training
- Take samples
- Act immediately if there is a serious risk



FOOD
STANDARDS
Australia • New Zealand

Everyone Has a Role in Food Safety

Food safety is a shared responsibility.

Food Handlers

Food handlers are responsible for:

- Following food safety procedures
- Maintaining good personal hygiene
- Reporting illness, hazards, or contamination
- Handling food safely at all times

Supervisors and Managers

Supervisors support food handlers by:

- Providing training
- Monitoring practices
- Making sure procedures are followed
- Fixing problems early

And that brings us to an important role.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you have additional responsibility.

This includes:

- Understanding food safety requirements
- Monitoring food handling practices
- Ensuring staff follow procedures
- Making sure records are completed correctly
- Taking corrective action when something goes wrong
- Escalating issues that could risk public health

You are not expected to “know everything”.

You are expected to act when something isn't right.

Food safety leadership is about prevention, guidance, and accountability.



How to Use This Manual

This manual is designed to:

- Support both Food Handlers and Food Safety Supervisors
- Use plain English
- Follow real workplace situations
- Build confidence, not fear

Each chapter includes:

- Clear explanations
- Real-life examples
- Visual prompts (images)
-  **Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility sections**

If you understand this book, you will be prepared to:

- Work safely
- Support others
- Make correct decisions
- Complete assessments with confidence

Key Message to Remember

Food safety is not about perfection.

It's about **awareness, consistency, and care.**

When in doubt:

- Stop
- Ask
- Fix the issue

Protecting people always comes first.



Chapter 2: Contamination, What Can Go Wrong

What Is Contamination

Food contamination happens when food becomes unsafe to eat.

This can occur when harmful germs, chemicals, or foreign objects get into food. Contaminated food may look normal, smell fine, and taste fine, but it can still make someone very sick. Contamination is not always obvious, which is why safe food handling is so important.

Types of Contamination

There are three main types of food contamination.

Biological Contamination

This includes bacteria, viruses, moulds, and parasites. These are living organisms that can grow in food, especially when food is kept in the danger zone for too long.

Chemical Contamination

This happens when chemicals come into contact with food. Examples include cleaning products, pesticides, sanitisers, and fuel fumes.

Physical Contamination

This occurs when foreign objects get into food. Examples include hair, jewellery, glass, plastic, band aids, pests, or packaging.

How Contamination Happens

Contamination can happen in many ways, including:

- Unwashed hands
- Dirty benches, equipment, or utensils
- Poor personal hygiene
- Cross contamination between raw and ready to eat food
- Chemicals stored near food
- Pests and droppings
- Food stored incorrectly

Food can become contaminated at any stage, from delivery through to service.

Use this picture for Q. 9
in Food Handlers Assessment



SITXFSA005

Use this picture for Q. 35
in Food Handlers Assessment



Why Contamination Is Dangerous

Contaminated food can cause food poisoning and serious illness.

Some people are more at risk than others, including young children, elderly people, pregnant women, and people with allergies or weakened immune systems.

What may cause mild illness in one person can cause serious harm in another.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for identifying contamination risks and putting controls in place to prevent them. This includes monitoring hygiene practices, storage, cleaning, and food handling processes.

If contamination is suspected, you must act immediately. This may include stopping food service, isolating food, disposing of unsafe food, retraining staff, and recording corrective actions.

Key Message to Remember

You cannot always see contamination.

Safe food handling, good hygiene, correct storage, and cleaning procedures are essential to keeping food safe.

If something does not feel right, stop and take action.



Chapter 3: High Risk Foods and Vulnerable People

What Are High Risk Foods

High risk foods are foods that allow bacteria to grow easily if they are not handled or stored correctly.

These foods usually:

- Need temperature control
- Contain moisture
- Are high in protein
- Are ready to eat or partly cooked

If high risk foods are kept in the danger zone for too long, bacteria can multiply quickly and make people sick.

Common High Risk Foods

Examples of high risk foods include:

- Meat and poultry
- Seafood and shellfish
- Dairy products such as milk, cream, yoghurt, and cheese
- Eggs and foods containing eggs
- Cooked rice and pasta
- Ready to eat foods such as sandwiches, salads, sushi, and cut fruit
- Foods that have been cooked and then cooled

These foods must be handled with extra care at all times.

Why Some Foods Are Riskier Than Others

High risk foods support bacterial growth more easily than dry or shelf stable foods.

Bacteria grow fastest when:

- Food is warm
- Food is left out too long
- Food is not stored correctly
- Food is handled with poor hygiene

You cannot always see, smell, or taste bacteria, which is why following food safety procedures is critical.



Who Are Vulnerable People

Some people are more likely to become seriously ill from unsafe food.

Vulnerable people include:

- Young children and babies
- Elderly people
- Pregnant women
- People with allergies
- People with weakened immune systems
- People who are already unwell

What may cause mild illness in a healthy adult could cause serious harm to a vulnerable person.

Extra Care in High Risk Settings

In places such as childcare, aged care, hospitals, and community services, food safety controls must be even stricter.

This may include:

- Tighter temperature control
- Shorter time limits
- Higher hygiene standards
- More frequent monitoring
- Conservative decisions about discarding food

When in doubt, food should not be served.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for identifying high risk foods in your workplace and ensuring controls are in place to protect vulnerable people. This includes monitoring time and temperature, ensuring correct storage, supervising handling practices, and making decisions to discard food when safety cannot be guaranteed.

In high risk settings, you must apply stricter controls and document decisions made to protect public health.

Key Message to Remember

High risk foods require high responsibility.

When food safety is done well, most people never notice. When it is done poorly, the consequences can be serious.

Protecting vulnerable people must always come first.



Chapter 4: Personal Hygiene, Your First Defence

Why Personal Hygiene Matters

Personal hygiene is one of the most important parts of food safety.

Food handlers can easily contaminate food through poor hygiene. Germs can be transferred from hands, hair, clothing, jewellery, or the body onto food, surfaces, and equipment.

Good personal hygiene helps prevent food poisoning and protects both customers and coworkers.

Personal Hygiene Expectations

Anyone handling food must:

- Wear clean clothing or a clean uniform
- Keep hair tied back or covered
- Keep fingernails short and clean
- Avoid wearing jewellery while handling food
- Maintain good personal cleanliness

Food handlers should always present themselves in a clean and hygienic manner when working with food.

Clothing and Uniforms

Clothing and uniforms can carry dirt, germs, and contaminants.

Good practice includes:

- Wearing a clean apron or uniform at the start of each shift
- Changing clothing if it becomes dirty or contaminated
- Not wearing work uniforms outside the workplace
- Wearing appropriate footwear for the work area

Dirty clothing can contaminate food and food contact surfaces.

Hair, Jewellery, and Personal Items

Hair and jewellery are common sources of physical contamination.

Good practice includes:

- Tying long hair back or wearing a hair covering
- Trimming facial hair or using a beard covering if required
- Removing jewellery such as rings, watches, bracelets, necklaces
- Avoiding fake nails, nail polish, and false eyelashes
- Keeping personal items such as phones away from food areas

These items can fall into food or prevent proper handwashing.



Maintaining Personal Health

Food handlers must not handle food if they are unwell.

Symptoms that must be reported include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Sore throat with fever
- Skin infections
- Weeping wounds

Working while sick can put others at serious risk.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring personal hygiene standards are followed at all times. This includes monitoring staff presentation, addressing hygiene issues immediately, providing guidance and training, and excluding staff from food handling duties when they are unwell.

You must support staff to report illness without fear and ensure hygiene procedures are understood and followed.

Key Message to Remember

Good food safety starts with you.

Clean hands, clean clothing, and good personal habits protect the food you handle and the people who eat it.

If you would not be comfortable eating the food yourself, stop and fix the issue.



Chapter 5: Handwashing, When and How

Why Handwashing Is So Important

Hands are one of the most common ways food becomes contaminated.

Food handlers touch many things during a shift, including food, equipment, money, phones, bins, and their own body. If hands are not washed correctly, germs can be transferred straight onto food and food contact surfaces.

Good handwashing is one of the simplest and most effective ways to prevent food poisoning.

When Handwashing Is Required

Food handlers must wash their hands:

- Before starting or returning to food handling duties
- Before preparing or handling food
- After using the toilet
- After coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, or touching the face or hair
- After handling raw food
- After handling rubbish or cleaning chemicals
- After handling money or using point of sale equipment
- After eating, drinking, or smoking
- After touching wounds or bandages
- Any time hands may be contaminated

Handwashing must be done every time, not just when hands look dirty.

Correct Handwashing Method

Correct handwashing must follow these steps:

- Wet hands with warm running water
- Apply soap
- Lather and scrub hands thoroughly, including palms, backs of hands, between fingers, thumbs, and under fingernails
- Rinse hands under running water
- Dry hands thoroughly
- Use paper towel to turn taps off, if you do not have automatic taps.

Handwashing should take enough time to clean all areas of the hands properly.

Drying Hands Properly

Hands must be dried using:

- Disposable paper towels
- Single use towels
- An air dryer

Hands must not be dried on clothing, aprons, tea towels, or cloths. Damp hands can spread germs more easily than dry hands.

Common Handwashing Mistakes

Common mistakes include:

- Rinsing hands without soap
- Not washing long enough
- Missing fingertips and thumbs
- Turning taps off with clean hands after washing
- Drying hands on clothing or aprons
- Wearing gloves instead of washing hands

Gloves do not replace handwashing.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring that correct handwashing facilities are available and accessible at all times. This includes providing warm running water, soap, and appropriate hand drying methods.

You must monitor handwashing practices, correct unsafe behaviour immediately, and ensure staff understand when and how to wash their hands properly.

Key Message to Remember

Clean hands protect food.

If you are unsure whether you need to wash your hands, wash them. Handwashing is never the wrong decision.



Chapter 6: Illness, Cuts and Wounds

Why Health Matters in Food Handling

Food handlers can spread illness through food without meaning to.

Germs from illness, cuts, or wounds can transfer from the body to hands, food, surfaces, and equipment. This can cause food poisoning and serious illness, especially for vulnerable people. Protecting food starts with protecting your health.

When You Must Not Handle Food

Food handlers must not handle food if they are unwell.

Symptoms that must be reported include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Sore throat with fever
- Skin infections
- Weeping wounds or infected cuts

If you are sick, you must report it immediately and stop food handling duties.

Returning to Work After Food Poisoning

If a food handler has had vomiting or diarrhoea, they must not handle food.

A food handler can only return to food handling duties when:

- At least 48 hours have passed since symptoms stopped
- They are feeling well
- There is no risk of contaminating food

This rule protects customers, coworkers, and vulnerable people.

In some workplaces such as childcare, aged care, or healthcare settings, a medical certificate may also be required before returning to food handling duties.

Cuts, Wounds and Bandages

All cuts and wounds must be covered to prevent contamination.

Good practice includes:

- Covering cuts and wounds with a food grade bandage
- Using a brightly coloured and metal detectable bandage
- Covering bandages on hands with a single use glove
- Changing bandages if they become loose, wet, or dirty

Open or infected wounds must not be exposed while handling food.

Gloves and Food Safety

Gloves can help protect food, but they do not replace handwashing.

Gloves must be changed:

- Before starting food handling
- After handling raw food
- After coughing, sneezing, or touching the body
- After using the toilet
- After handling rubbish or money
- When damaged, dirty, or contaminated

Hands must be washed before putting on gloves and after removing them.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

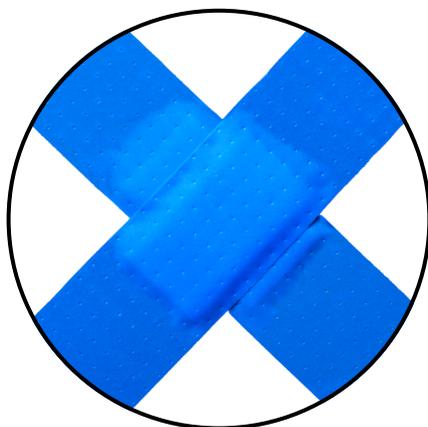
As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring that staff report illness and do not handle food when unwell. You must ensure the 48 hour symptom free rule is followed after vomiting or diarrhoea.

You are also responsible for monitoring wounds and bandaging, ensuring correct use of gloves, supporting staff to report health issues without fear, and documenting decisions made to protect food safety.

Key Message to Remember

Never work with food when you are sick.

Cover cuts properly, wash hands regularly, and speak up if something is not right. Protecting people must always come first.



Chapter 7: Temperature Control and the Danger Zone

Why Temperature Control Matters

Temperature control is one of the most important parts of food safety. Bacteria grow quickly when food is kept at unsafe temperatures. If food is not kept hot enough or cold enough, bacteria can multiply to dangerous levels and cause food poisoning. Correct temperature control helps keep food safe from preparation through to service.

What Is the Danger Zone

The danger zone is the temperature range where bacteria grow fastest.

The Danger Zone is:

- Between 5 degrees Celsius and 60 degrees Celsius

Food kept in this range for too long can become unsafe to eat, even if it looks and smells normal.

The longer food stays in the danger zone, the higher the risk.

Safe Temperature Guidelines

To keep food safe:

- Cold food should be kept at 5 degrees Celsius or below
- Hot food should be kept at 60 degrees Celsius or above
- Frozen food should be kept frozen solid
- Food should be cooked thoroughly to safe internal temperatures

Temperature control applies during storage, preparation, cooking, holding, display, transport, and cooling.



Infrared thermometer for surface temperatures

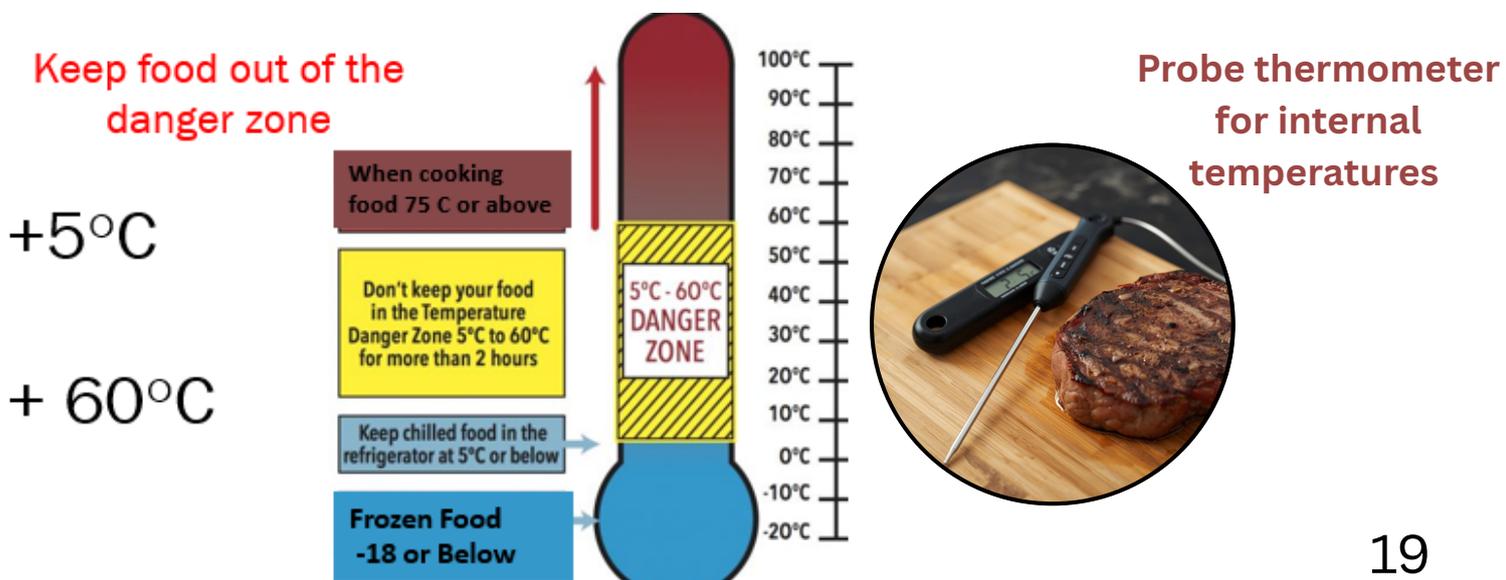
Hot Holding and Cold Holding

Hot holding is used to keep cooked food safe until it is served.

Cold holding is used to slow the growth of bacteria in refrigerated food.

Food must be checked regularly to make sure temperatures remain within safe limits.

Equipment temperatures alone are not enough to confirm food safety.



Cooling and Reheating Food

Food must be cooled and reheated correctly to prevent bacterial growth.

Good practice includes:

- Cooling food quickly
- Storing cooled food in the refrigerator
- Reheating food thoroughly until it is hot all the way through
- Never reheating food more than once

Incorrect cooling and reheating increases the risk of food poisoning.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring food temperatures are monitored and recorded. This includes checking cold storage, hot holding equipment, and food temperatures using a clean and sanitised thermometer.

If food is found outside safe temperature limits, you must take corrective action immediately.

This may include reheating food, rapidly cooling food, discarding unsafe food, repairing equipment, retraining staff, and recording actions taken.

Key Message to Remember

Temperature control protects food.

If food has been in the danger zone for too long, it must not be served. When in doubt, throw it out.



Chapter 8: Thermometers, Using Them Properly

Why Thermometers Matter

You cannot tell if food is safe just by looking at it, smelling it, or tasting it.

A thermometer is the only reliable way to check if food is at a safe temperature. Using thermometers correctly helps prevent food poisoning and protects customers and coworkers.

Types of Food Thermometers

There are different types of thermometers used in food handling.

Common types include:

- Probe thermometers used to measure the internal temperature of food
- Infrared thermometers used to measure surface temperature only
- Temperature gauges on equipment such as fridges and bain maries

Probe thermometers are the most accurate for checking food temperature.

Infrared thermometers do not measure internal temperature and must not be used on their own to confirm food safety.

How to Check Food Temperature

When checking food temperature:

- Use a clean and sanitised probe thermometer
- Insert the probe into the thickest part of the food
- Avoid touching bones, trays, or containers
- Wait until the temperature reading stabilises
- Record the temperature if required

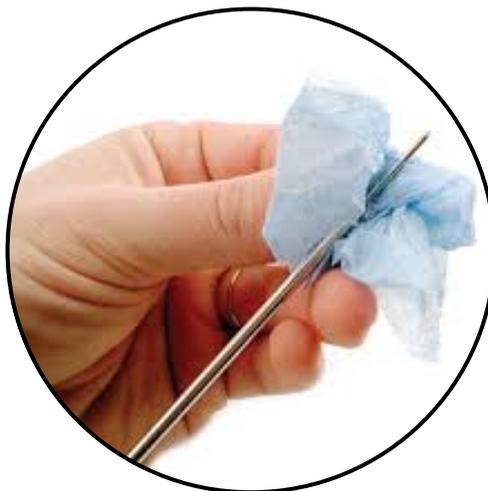
Packaged chilled food should be checked by placing the thermometer between packages or along the length of the package.

Cleaning and Sanitising Thermometers

Thermometers must be cleaned and sanitised:

- Before use
- Between checking different foods
- After use

Dirty thermometers can spread contamination between foods.



Thermometer Accuracy and Calibration

Thermometers must be accurate to ensure food safety.

Calibration checks that a thermometer is reading the correct temperature. One common method is the ice point method.

This involves placing the thermometer probe into an ice and water mixture and checking that it reads close to zero degrees Celsius.

If a thermometer is inaccurate, it must be repaired, replaced, or removed from use.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

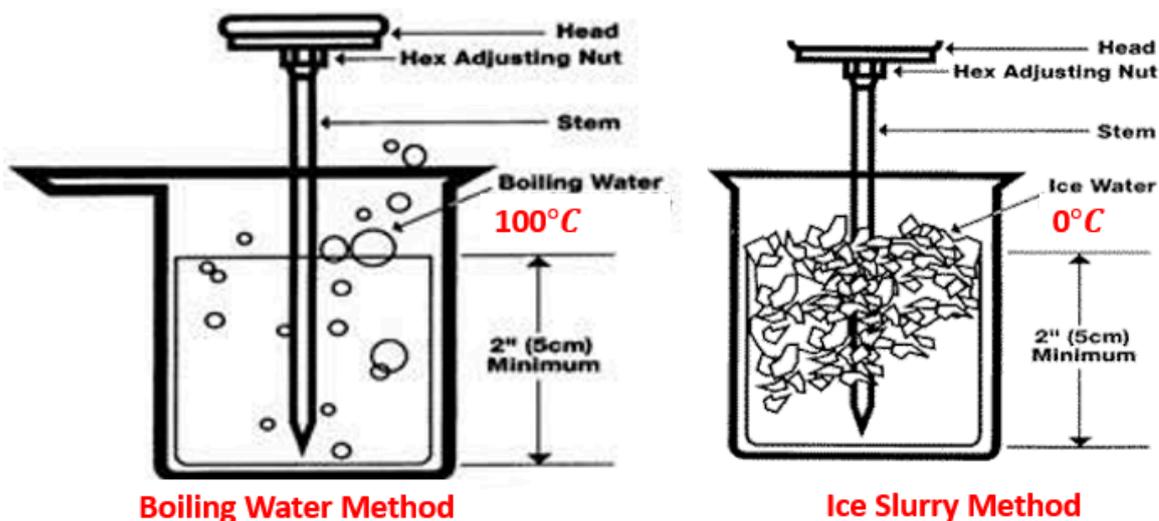
As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring thermometers are available, accurate, and used correctly. This includes organising calibration checks, training staff in correct use, and ensuring temperatures are monitored and recorded where required.

If inaccurate readings are found, you must take corrective action and ensure unsafe food is not served.

Key Message to Remember

Thermometers protect people.

If you are not checking temperatures, you are guessing. Guessing has no place in food safety.



Two Methods to
Calibrate
Thermometers

Chapter 9: Safe Handling of Different Food Types

Why Different Foods Need Different Care

Not all foods carry the same level of risk.

Some foods allow bacteria to grow more easily than others, especially when they are not stored or handled correctly. Understanding how to safely handle different food types helps prevent contamination and food poisoning.

Food must always be handled in a way that prevents cross contamination.

Raw and Ready to Eat Foods

Raw foods can contain harmful bacteria that can transfer to ready to eat foods.

Good practice includes:

- Storing raw food separately from ready to eat food
- Keeping raw meat and poultry on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator
- Using separate utensils and cutting boards
- Washing hands between handling raw and ready to eat food

Raw food must never come into contact with cooked or ready to eat food.

Meat and Poultry

Meat and poultry are high risk foods and require careful handling.

Good practice includes:

- Storing meat and poultry in sealed containers
- Keeping meat and poultry refrigerated at safe temperatures
- Preventing juices from dripping onto other foods
- Cooking meat and poultry thoroughly
- Cleaning and sanitising surfaces after handling

Improper handling of meat and poultry can cause serious foodborne illness.

Seafood and Shellfish

Seafood can spoil quickly if not handled correctly.

Good practice includes:

- Storing seafood in the coldest part of the refrigerator
- Keeping seafood covered and separate from other foods
- Leaving shellfish in the shell for as long as possible
- Discarding seafood with strong odours or damaged shells

Seafood must never be left at room temperature.



Eggs and Egg Products

Eggs and foods containing eggs can carry harmful bacteria.

Good practice includes:

- Storing eggs in the main body of the refrigerator
- Keeping eggs in clean, intact cartons
- Avoiding cracked or dirty eggs
- Using eggs before their use by date
- Keeping egg based foods refrigerated

Eggs must not be washed before storage, as this can remove their protective coating.

Cooked Rice and Pasta

Cooked rice and pasta are high risk foods once cooked.

Good practice includes:

- Cooling cooked rice and pasta quickly
- Storing cooled food in the refrigerator
- Reheating food thoroughly before serving
- Discarding food if it has been left in the danger zone too long

Incorrect handling of rice and pasta can lead to serious food poisoning.

Dry Goods

Dry goods are lower risk but still require correct storage.

Good practice includes:

- Storing food off the ground
- Keeping food in clean, dry conditions
- Storing food away from chemicals
- Checking dates and rotating stock
- Sealing opened packaging properly

Poor dry goods storage can lead to contamination and pest activity.

Defrosting Frozen Food Safely

Frozen food must be defrosted safely to prevent bacterial growth and contamination.

Good practice includes:

- Defrosting food in the refrigerator
- Defrosting food in a microwave if it will be cooked immediately
- Keeping defrosting food covered and separate from ready to eat food
- Preventing defrosting food from dripping onto other foods
- Never defrosting food at room temperature

Once defrosted, food must be handled as a high risk food and kept under temperature control.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring different food types are stored, handled, and prepared safely. This includes preventing cross contamination, supervising food handling practices, monitoring storage conditions, and taking corrective action when unsafe practices are identified.

You must ensure staff understand that different foods require different controls and that procedures are followed consistently.

Key Message to Remember

Different foods carry different risks.

Understanding how to handle each food type safely helps protect customers, coworkers, and your workplace.

Chapter 10: Cleaning, Sanitising, and Sterilising

Why Cleaning and Sanitising Matter

Cleaning and sanitising are essential parts of food safety.

Food residues, grease, and dirt allow bacteria to survive and grow. If surfaces and equipment are not cleaned and sanitised correctly, food can become contaminated even if it is handled properly.

A clean workplace protects food, staff, and customers.

Understanding the Difference

Cleaning, sanitising, and sterilising are not the same thing.

Cleaning

Cleaning removes visible dirt, grease, food scraps, and waste from surfaces and equipment. Cleaning must be done before sanitising.

Sanitising

Sanitising reduces the number of bacteria and germs to a safe level. Sanitising is required in food handling areas.

Sterilising

Sterilising removes all micro organisms. This is not usually required in food businesses and is mainly used in medical environments.

Cleaning without sanitising is not enough.

When Cleaning and Sanitising Are Required

Cleaning and sanitising must be carried out:

- Before food preparation begins
- Between handling different food types
- After spills or contamination
- After each shift
- When equipment becomes dirty
- After handling raw food

Surfaces that come into contact with food must be cleaned and sanitised more often.



Using Cleaning Chemicals Safely

Cleaning and sanitising chemicals must be used correctly.

Good practice includes:

- Using food grade sanitisers
- Following manufacturer instructions
- Mixing chemicals at the correct strength
- Wearing protective equipment if required
- Storing chemicals away from food

Chemicals must never be stored near food or food contact surfaces.

Cleaning Equipment and Utensils

Equipment and utensils must be cleaned and sanitised properly.

Good practice includes:

- Scraping food scraps into bins before cleaning
- Washing with hot water and detergent
- Rinsing thoroughly
- Applying sanitiser
- Allowing equipment to air dry where possible

Dishwashers must be used on appropriate cycles to ensure effective cleaning and sanitising.

Cleaning Schedules and Records

Cleaning must be planned and monitored.

Cleaning schedules help ensure tasks are completed regularly and correctly. Records show that cleaning has been done and help identify problems early.

Failure to clean and sanitise properly can lead to contamination and pest activity.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring cleaning and sanitising procedures are followed correctly. This includes monitoring cleaning schedules, checking chemical use, verifying that cleaning is effective, and ensuring records are completed.

Some businesses may use environmental swabbing to verify that cleaning and sanitising procedures are effective and to detect the presence of foodborne pathogens in food preparation areas.

If cleaning is not completed or is ineffective, you must take corrective action. This may include re cleaning, retraining staff, reviewing procedures, or adjusting cleaning schedules.

Key Message to Remember

You cannot sanitise a dirty surface.

Cleaning removes dirt, sanitising reduces germs, and both are essential for food safety.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring cleaning schedules are followed and records are completed. You must check that cleaning is effective, chemicals are used correctly, and corrective action is taken if tasks are missed or standards are not met. Cleaning records must be kept as part of the food safety program.

Key Reminder for Staff

If it is not written down, it is assumed it was not done.

Cleaning protects food, people, and your workplace.

Example of a Cleaning Schedule

Area or Equipment	When to Clean	Cleaning Method	Person Responsible	Completed
Food preparation benches	Start of day, between food	Clean with detergent, rinse,	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cutting boards	Start of day, between food	Clean, rinse, sanitise, air dry	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knives and utensils	After each use	Wash, rinse, sanitise, air dry	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handwash sinks	Start and end of shift	Clean and sanitise	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floors	End of shift	Sweep, mop with detergent and	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bins	When full and end of shift	Empty, wash, sanitise, reliner	Food handler	<input type="checkbox"/>

Area or Equipment	When to Clean	Cleaning Method	Person Responsible	Completed
Refrigerator shelves	Weekly	Remove food, clean, rinse,	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cool room floors	Weekly	Sweep, mop, sanitise	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage shelves	Weekly	Clean and sanitise	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walls and splashbacks	Weekly	Clean and sanitise	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Area or Equipment	When to Clean	Cleaning Method	Person Responsible	Completed
Exhaust hoods and filters	Monthly	Remove and clean as per	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behind equipment	Monthly	Move equipment, clean and sanitise	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pest inspection areas	Monthly	Inspect and clean	Supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Chapter 11: Pest Control and the Food Environment

Why Pest Control Matters

Pests can contaminate food, surfaces, and equipment.

Pests such as rodents, insects, birds, and cockroaches carry germs that can cause food poisoning. Even signs of pests can make food unsafe.

Preventing pests is much easier than trying to fix a pest problem once it starts.

Common Types of Pests in Food Areas

Common pests found in food environments include:

- Rodents such as mice and rats
- Insects such as cockroaches, flies, ants, and beetles
- Birds entering food areas
- Stored product pests found in dry goods

Pests are attracted to food, warmth, moisture, and shelter.

How Pests Enter the Workplace

Pests can enter food premises through:

- Open doors and windows
- Gaps under doors
- Cracks in walls or floors
- Drains and vents
- Deliveries and packaging

Once inside, pests can quickly multiply if conditions allow.

Preventing Pest Problems

Good pest control starts with prevention.

Good practice includes:

- Keeping doors and windows closed or screened
- Sealing cracks, gaps, and holes
- Storing food in sealed containers
- Cleaning up spills immediately
- Emptying bins regularly
- Keeping external areas clean and tidy
- Checking deliveries for signs of pests

Food waste must be managed carefully to avoid attracting pests.

Signs of Pest Activity

Signs of pests may include:

- Droppings
- Chewed packaging
- Dead insects
- Nests or burrows
- Unusual smells
- Damage to food or equipment

Any signs of pests must be reported immediately.



Pest Control Programs

Many food businesses use a licensed pest control provider.

Pest control programs may include:

- Regular inspections
- Monitoring devices
- Treatment when required
- Records of pest activity and actions taken

Pest control chemicals must be used safely and kept away from food areas.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring pest control measures are in place and effective. This includes monitoring for signs of pests, ensuring preventative measures are followed, coordinating pest control services, and keeping records of inspections and treatments.

If pest activity is identified, you must act immediately. This may include isolating food, stopping food service, contacting pest control, cleaning affected areas, and documenting corrective actions.

Key Message to Remember

Pests and food do not mix.

Keeping the food environment clean, sealed, and well maintained is essential to preventing contamination.

If you see signs of pests, report them immediately.



Chapter 12: Food Safety Programs and HACCP

What Is a Food Safety Program

A food safety program is a written system that shows how food is handled safely in a workplace.

It identifies food safety risks, explains how those risks are controlled, and outlines what action is taken if something goes wrong.

A food safety program helps ensure food is safe from delivery through to service.

Why Food Safety Programs Are Important

Food safety programs help prevent food poisoning and protect public health.

They also help businesses:

- Meet legal requirements
- Maintain consistent standards
- Train staff clearly
- Identify problems early
- Show evidence of safe practices

A food safety program is not just paperwork. It is a working system used every day.

What Is HACCP

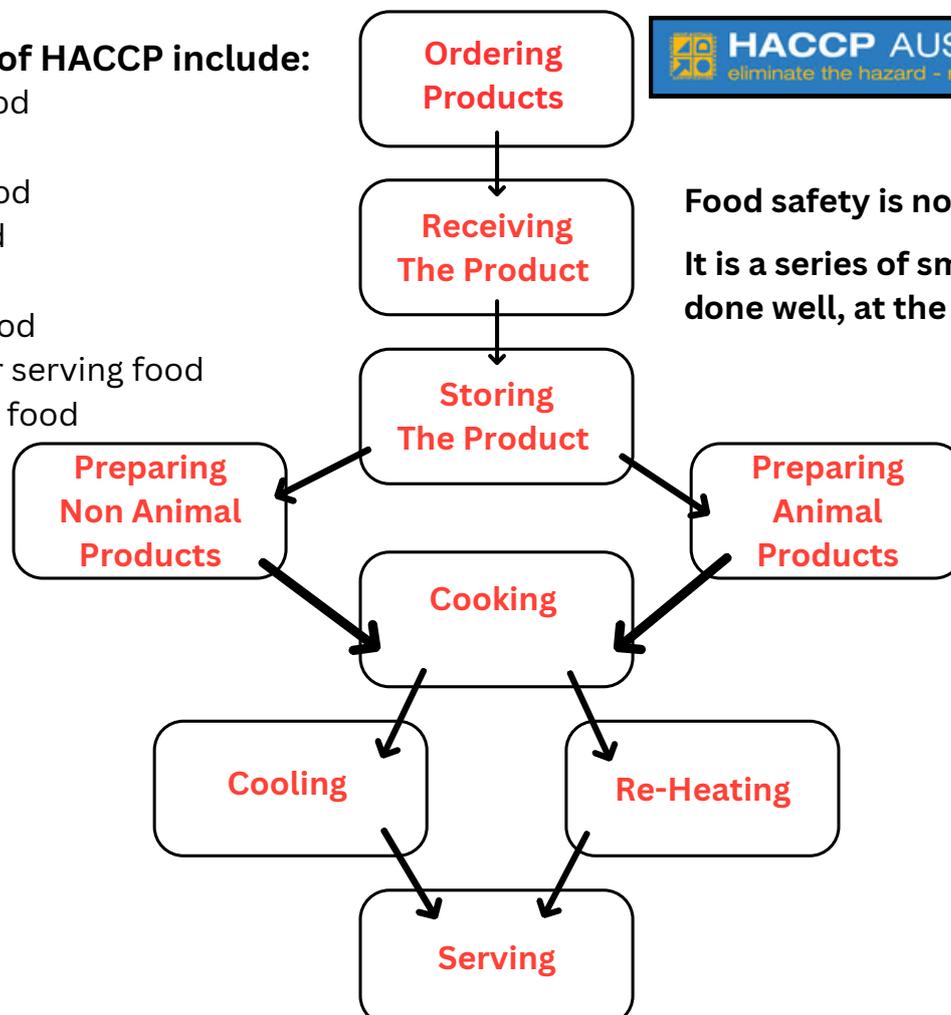
HACCP stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points.

HACCP is a food safety system used to identify risks in food handling and put controls in place to manage those risks.

The focus of HACCP is prevention rather than fixing problems after they occur.

Typical stages of HACCP include:

- Receiving food
- Storing food
- Preparing food
- Cooking food
- Cooling food
- Reheating food
- Displaying or serving food
- Transporting food



**Food safety is not one big rule.
It is a series of small checks,
done well, at the right time.**

Hazards in Food Handling

A hazard is anything that can make food unsafe.

Common food safety hazards include:

- Biological hazards such as bacteria and viruses
- Chemical hazards such as cleaning products and pesticides
- Physical hazards such as glass, metal, hair, or packaging

Identifying hazards early helps prevent contamination.

Critical Control Points

Critical Control Points are steps in the food handling process where a risk can be controlled.

Examples of Critical Control Points include:

- Receiving food deliveries
- Storing food
- Cooking food
- Cooling food
- Reheating food
- Displaying and serving food
- Transporting food

At these points, controls must be in place to keep food safe.

Monitoring and Corrective Action

Monitoring means checking that food safety controls are working.

This may include:

- Checking food temperatures
- Inspecting storage areas
- Reviewing cleaning records
- Observing staff practices

Corrective action is taken when something is not under control.

This may include:

- Reheating food
- Discarding unsafe food
- Repairing equipment
- Retraining staff
- Updating procedures

Corrective action must be taken immediately to protect food safety.

Records and Documentation

Records show that food safety checks have been completed.

Records may include:

- Temperature logs
- Cleaning schedules
- Delivery checks
- Pest control reports
- Training records
- Corrective action records

Records help identify patterns and prove that food safety systems are working.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for understanding and supporting the food safety program and HACCP system in your workplace. This includes identifying hazards, monitoring Critical Control Points, ensuring records are completed, and taking corrective action when required.

Monitoring may include the following techniques:

- Visual inspection of food, equipment and food handling areas
- Temperature checks of food, refrigeration and hot holding equipment
- Completion and review of food safety records and logs
- Environmental swabbing to verify cleaning and sanitising effectiveness (where applicable)
- Chemical tests to ensure correct sanitiser strength when required

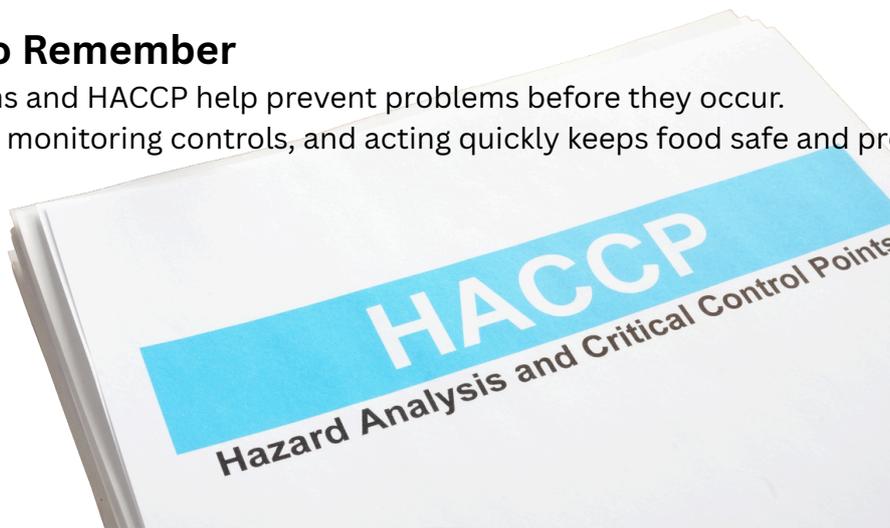
You must regularly review food safety practices and ensure staff understand and follow procedures. Maintaining accurate records is essential for compliance and continuous improvement.

Supervisors must ensure staff know how to identify faulty equipment, report electrical or gas hazards, and follow emergency procedures to protect staff and food safety.

Key Message to Remember

Food safety programs and HACCP help prevent problems before they occur.

Understanding risks, monitoring controls, and acting quickly keeps food safe and protects people.



Chapter 13: Receiving, Storing, and Transporting Food

Why This Stage Is Important

Food safety starts before food is prepared or cooked.

If food is not received, stored, or transported correctly, it may already be unsafe before it reaches the kitchen. Once food safety is compromised at this stage, it cannot always be fixed.

Checking food early helps prevent contamination and food poisoning.

Receiving Food Safely

Food must be checked when it is delivered.

Good practice includes:

- Checking food is delivered by approved suppliers
- Inspecting packaging for damage, leaks, or pests
- Checking use by and best before dates
- Checking temperature of chilled and frozen food
- Rejecting food that is damaged, contaminated, or outside safe temperature limits

Food that does not meet safety requirements must not be accepted.

Storing Food Correctly

Food must be stored in a way that prevents contamination and spoilage.

Good practice includes:

- Storing food at correct temperatures
- Keeping raw food separate from ready to eat food
- Storing raw meat and poultry below other foods
- Using sealed and labelled containers
- Rotating stock using first in first out
- Keeping storage areas clean and organised

Incorrect storage can lead to cross contamination and bacterial growth.

Dry Storage Areas

Dry storage areas must be clean, dry, and pest free.

Good practice includes:

- Storing food off the ground
- Keeping food away from walls
- Storing food away from chemicals
- Sealing opened packaging
- Regularly checking for pests or damaged packaging

Poor dry storage can result in chemical contamination or pest activity.

Transporting Food Safely

Food must be protected during transport.

Good practice includes:

- Using clean vehicles and containers
- Separating raw and ready to eat food
- Using insulated containers for hot and cold food
- Maintaining safe temperatures during transport
- Checking food temperature on arrival

Food must not be transported with chemicals, animals, or personal items.

What to Do If Food Is Unsafe

If food is unsafe at any stage, it must not be used.

Unsafe food should be:

- Isolated from other food
- Clearly identified
- Disposed of correctly
- Recorded if required

Using unsafe food puts people at risk and is never acceptable.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring food is received, stored, and transported safely. This includes checking deliveries, monitoring storage conditions, ensuring correct separation of food types, and confirming transport methods protect food safety. If food safety requirements are not met, you must take corrective action. This may include rejecting deliveries, discarding food, reviewing suppliers, retraining staff, and completing required records.

Key Message to Remember

Food safety begins at delivery.

If food is not safe when it arrives, it will not become safe later.

Checking food early protects everyone.



Chapter 14: Time Based Decisions, The 2 Hour and 4 Hour Rule

Why Time Matters in Food Safety

Food safety is not only about temperature, it is also about time.

When high risk food is kept in the danger zone for too long, bacteria can grow to unsafe levels. Even if food looks and smells fine, it may no longer be safe to eat.

The 2 hour and 4 hour rule helps food handlers decide what to do with food that has been out of temperature control.

What Is the Danger Zone

The danger zone is between 5 degrees Celsius and 60 degrees Celsius.

High risk food kept in this temperature range allows bacteria to grow quickly. The longer food stays in the danger zone, the higher the risk.

Time spent in the danger zone must always be tracked.

Understanding the 2 Hour and 4 Hour Rule

The rule applies to high risk food that has been kept in the danger zone.

Less Than 2 Hours

If high risk food has been in the danger zone for less than 2 hours:

- The food can be returned to the refrigerator
- Or it can be used immediately

The food must still look safe and be handled hygienically.

Between 2 Hours and 4 Hours

If high risk food has been in the danger zone for between 2 hours and 4 hours:

- The food must be used immediately
- The food must not be returned to the refrigerator

Once used, any leftover food must be discarded.

More Than 4 Hours

If high risk food has been in the danger zone for more than 4 hours:

- The food must be discarded
- The food must not be eaten, refrigerated, or reused

This food is no longer safe.

Tracking Time Accurately

All time spent in the danger zone must be added together.

This includes:

- Time during delivery
- Time during preparation
- Time on display
- Time during service

Food may move in and out of the refrigerator, but the total time out of temperature control must be counted.

Extra Care for Vulnerable Settings

In settings such as childcare, aged care, hospitals, or healthcare environments, stricter controls may apply.

Food may need to be discarded sooner, even if it has not reached the 4 hour limit. Protecting vulnerable people always comes first.

Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring the 2 hour and 4 hour rule is understood and applied correctly. This includes monitoring time, making final decisions about food use or disposal, and ensuring records are completed.

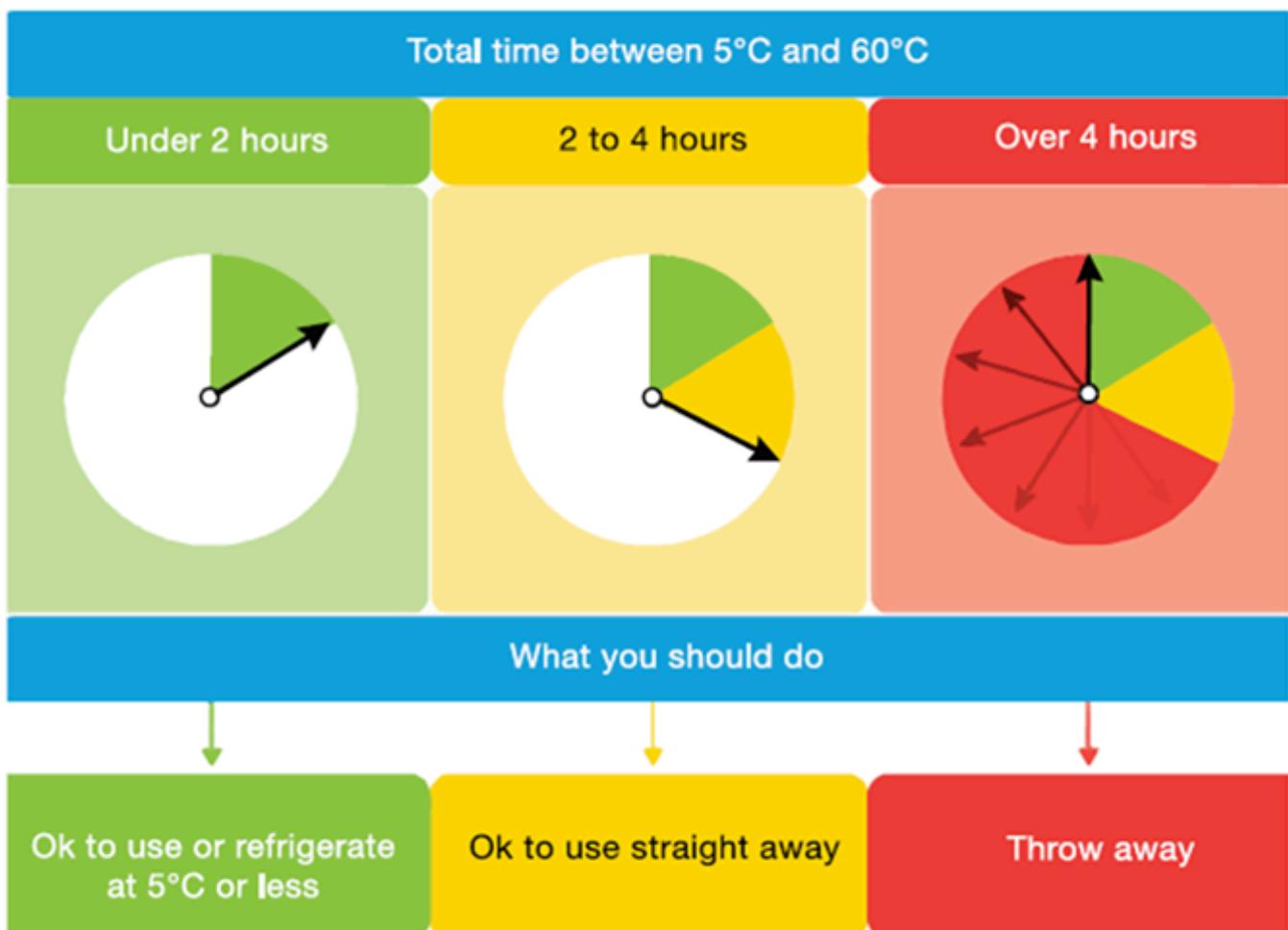
You must take a conservative approach when food safety is uncertain. If there is doubt about how long food has been in the danger zone, the food must be discarded.

Key Message to Remember

Time and temperature work together.

If high risk food has been in the danger zone for too long, it cannot be made safe again. When in doubt, throw it out.

Figure: The 2-hour/4-hour rule for potentially hazardous food brought out of refrigeration
(image provided courtesy of SA Health)



Chapter 15: Food Displays, Buffets, and Self Service

Why Food Displays Need Extra Care

Food displays, buffets, and self service areas increase the risk of contamination. Food may be exposed for longer periods and handled by multiple people. Without proper controls, food can become contaminated by hands, coughing, sneezing, utensils, or pests. Extra care is required to protect food and the people consuming it.

Safe Food Display Practices

Food displayed for service must be protected at all times.

Good practice includes:

- Keeping food at safe temperatures
- Using sneeze guards or protective covers
- Displaying food for the shortest time possible
- Replacing food regularly
- Removing food that has been contaminated or left out too long

Food must never be left uncovered or unprotected.

Buffets and Self Service Areas

Buffets and self service areas allow customers to serve themselves, which increases risk.

Good practice includes:

- Providing separate utensils for each dish
- Replacing utensils regularly
- Ensuring utensils do not fall into food
- Monitoring the area at all times
- Preventing customers from touching food directly

Shared utensils must never be used for multiple dishes. Using the same serving utensil for foods with and without allergens is not permitted.

Preventing Cross Contamination

Cross contamination can occur easily in self service areas.

Good practice includes:

- Separating raw and ready to eat foods
- Clearly labelling food where required
- Providing clean plates for each serve
- Removing food that has been contaminated

Food that has been contaminated must be discarded immediately.



Monitoring Food Displays

Food displays must be actively monitored.

Monitoring includes:

- Checking temperatures regularly
- Observing customer behaviour
- Replacing food before it becomes unsafe
- Cleaning spills immediately
- Removing food that has been compromised

Unattended food displays are a high risk.

Temporary Events and Outdoor Displays

Extra care is required for temporary events and outdoor food service.

Good practice includes:

- Protecting food from dust, insects, and weather
- Using covers and barriers
- Maintaining temperature control
- Limiting display time
- Providing hand hygiene facilities

Food safety must not be compromised due to convenience or speed of service.

■ Food Safety Supervisor Responsibility

As a Food Safety Supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring food displays, buffets, and self service areas are set up and monitored correctly. This includes ensuring protective barriers are in place, utensils are used correctly, temperatures are maintained, and staff actively supervise these areas.

If food safety is compromised, you must act immediately. This may include removing food from service, replacing utensils, adjusting display conditions, retraining staff, and documenting corrective actions.

Key Message to Remember

Food on display must be protected.

If food cannot be protected or monitored properly, it must not be served. Protecting customers always comes first.





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