

Food Safety and Sanitation: Guidelines for Volunteer Group Social Functions

If your church, club, group or organization is planning an activity that involves serving a meal, use these guidelines during the preparation and serving.

Preparation and Serving

If possible, designate a person familiar with food service experience to coordinate and supervise the activity. Plan food service activities so that most of the food preparation is done in an approved and licensed kitchen. Use kitchens that have commercial equipment, three-compartment sinks, and hand-washing sinks with disposable hand towels or hot air dryers. Kitchens located in churches or clubs are subject to Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) inspection, if food is prepared totally from the kitchen more than seven days in a year.

Food Handlers

Make sure food handlers adhere to the following basic guidelines during food preparation.

- Practice good personal hygiene and cleanliness in dress and work habits.
- Always work with clean hands. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and hot water after any work interruption. Clean fingernails regularly and cut them short.
- Keep hands away from mouth, nose and hair. Cover coughs and sneezes with a handkerchief or tissue, and never sneeze or cough near food.
- Never work around food with any infection, cut or cold. Prohibit persons affected with a communicable disease or who are carriers of such a disease from preparing and serving food.
- Wear plastic gloves over cuts and abrasions and when handling foods that will not be cooked, such as salads or sandwich meats.
- Always wear clean clothing and hair restraints (caps or hair nets). Provide clean aprons for food handlers.

- Never smoke, eat or drink in food preparation or equipment washing areas.
- Never use cooking utensils to taste food. Avoid licking fingers or sampling the food while it is being prepared or served. To taste, place a sample on a clean dish and use a clean spoon — not the cooking spoon.

Display and Service

Keep a good quality, accurate thermometer (within $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$) on hand to maintain safe temperatures. Use a bimetallic stemmed thermometer, which can be purchased in an equipment supply store or from a food supplier.

Plan and arrange food display and service so potentially hazardous foods are served within two hours of preparation or less. Potentially hazardous foods are foods or groups of foods that require temperature control because they support rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic bacteria. They include any food that consists in whole or part of milk or milk products, raw shell eggs, meats, poultry, fish, shellfish, baked or boiled potatoes, homemade garlic-in-oil mixtures, cut melons, raw seed sprouts and cooked beans, rice or pasta.

Before serving, maintain hot foods at an internal temperature of 135°F or above. Check temperatures of foods throughout service. Remove cold foods if held above 41°F and hot foods held below 135°F . Check temperatures in the product's center or thickest part.

For foods that have been cooked, but will be served cold, rapidly cool in an ice water bath to an internal temperature of 41°F within two hours. When practical, chill ingredients used in cold food preparation before use.

Do not allow meat, poultry or turkey dressings, or stuffings to remain at temperatures between 41°F and 135°F . Never serve a turkey that has been stuffed. Prepare stuffing separately from the turkey for group events.

Avoid cross-contamination of foods. Store raw foods away from cooked foods. Never use the same utensils for raw and ready-prepared cooked products unless they are washed and sanitized.

Upon completion of the social function, discard foods that have been served but not consumed. Guests who serve themselves should not be allowed to reuse soiled plates. Encourage guests to get a new plate each time they serve themselves.

Store and serve high acidic beverages, such as punch and fruit beverages, in containers made from food grade plastic, stainless steel or glass. Aluminum-plated, porcelain or enamelware containers should never be used for storage or serving acidic beverages.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Manual Cleaning and Sanitizing

Washing dishes, pots and pans in a three-compartment sink takes six steps.

1. Clean and sanitize the sinks and the work surfaces before each use.
2. Scrape and presoak items to be cleaned to remove food soil that may reduce the effectiveness of the detergent. Silverware should be presoaked in a hot, soapy water solution.
3. Wash in the first sink, using a clean detergent solution, at 120°F. Use a brush or cloth to loosen soil.
4. Rinse in the second sink, using clean, potable (drinking) water at 120°F to remove all traces of food and detergent that may interfere with the sanitizing agent.
5. Sanitize in the third sink by immersing items in hot water at 170°F for 30 seconds or in a chemical sanitizing solution for one minute. Chlorine concentration should be at least 50 parts per million (1 teaspoon per gallon of water). Follow manufacturer's directions for other sanitizers such as quaternary ammonia (QUATS).
6. Air dry. Do not wipe dry. Wiping can re-contaminate all the newly sanitized equipment and utensils.

Machine Cleaning and Sanitizing

Follow the manufacturer's directions. Scrape or soak tableware, equipment and utensils before washing. Load the dishwasher properly. Overloading or improper loading will result in ineffective cleaning.

Make sure dishes and utensils are exposed to each phase of the dish washing cycle (wash, rinse, sanitize).

Temperature requirements for a hot-water machine:

- Wash cycle: 150 to 165°F
- Sanitize cycle: 180 to 195°F or
- Utensil surface temperature: 160°F

Requirements for chemical sanitizer machines:

- Chlorine solution: 50 ppm minimum concentration
- Other chemical sanitizers: follow manufacturer directions
- Exposure time: follow instructions for your machine

Leftovers

Leftovers are foods prepared and served (as on a buffet), but not consumed. Plan so leftovers are kept to a minimum. Once served, food should not be reserved or reused. Exceptions to this are non-potentially hazardous foods that are still in the original packaging, such as crackers.

Keep foods that have not been served above 135°F or below 41°F. If the foods are not served, they should be cooled to 41°F within four hours and refrigerated within two hours of preparation.

Cool foods to below 41°F within two hours by:

- Placing a pan in an ice water bath.
- Increasing surface area by putting food in long, shallow pans, 2 to 3 inches deep.
- Stirring continuously.

Reuse prepared but unserved food as soon as possible.

Reheating

Quickly reheat, within two hours, prepared but unserved food to 165°F before serving. Do not use reheated food more than once. Do not use hot holding equipment, such as a steam table or warmer, to reheat foods. Reheat first on stove top, then transfer to steam table or warming unit. Never mix fresh and reused foods.

Bake Sales

Bake sales do not require a prior KDA permit, but they do represent a health concern. Organizers and sponsors should ensure that good sanitary practices are followed when planning, organizing or holding a bake sale.

Give care and thought to the preparation, transportation, display and serving of “homemade” varieties of foods commonly associated with bake sales (pies, cakes, breads, cookies). Prohibit potentially hazardous foods, such as cream pies, puddings and sandwiches.

When conducting a bake sale, follow these recommendations:

- The sponsor should maintain a list of contributors to the bake sale.
- The listing should include the name, address, and telephone number of the contributor, as well as the type of food donated.
- Food should never be solicited or accepted from any person infected by a communicable disease or who is a known carrier of such a disease.
- Food should be tightly wrapped or sealed during transport. The vehicle(s) used to transport food should also be clean and maintained in good sanitary condition. Food should not be transported with family pets.
- List all ingredients on the wrapping to inform those with food allergies.

Club/Organization Meetings

Club, organization and church meetings often have members bring food to be eaten during or after the meeting. If potentially hazardous foods — such as sandwiches, cream cheese dips and deviled eggs — are included, food sources should be noted and refrigeration and heat storage provided. Remember to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

The Buffet

When serving a meal buffet style, use common sense and acceptable food handling practices.

- Be sure each food item has its own serving utensil.
- Serve food items in shallow (2- to 3-inch-deep) containers, and replenish frequently.
- Keep cold food iced (41°F) or refrigerated.
- Use hot trays for hot foods. Candle type warmers are generally ineffective because they do not produce enough heat to retard bacterial growth.
- Cover hot food as much as possible.
- When using cooking fuel to warm foods, follow good safety procedures.

- Ensure that people get new plates each time they go through the buffet line.

Catered Functions

Before hiring a caterer, ensure that the catering establishment is inspected, approved and licensed by the authorized agency (KDA). When selecting a caterer, choose one whose facilities and vehicles are inspected and clean.

Food Transportation

Food must never be transported in any vehicle compartment that is not clean. It must be free from vermin and contaminants, and in good repair. While in transit, all foods must be adequately protected (covered) from sources of contamination, including animals or family pets. Cold foods must be kept cold, below 41°F; and hot foods hot, 135°F or above. Insulated carriers, such as coolers, are a good solution. However, they should be used only temporarily, because they will not raise or lower inadequate temperatures. In any event, no vehicle should be used for food transportation if it is not clean and in good repair.

Important Facts

- Be sure food handlers are clean, free of disease, and they follow safe food-handling practices.
- Avoid cross-contamination of raw meats, poultry and fish with fresh foods or foods that will not be cooked. Cross-contaminated items may include hands, cooking utensils, and cutting boards.
- Keep potentially hazardous foods — such as meats, poultry, shellfish, cooked potatoes, cream pies, milk products, eggs, and cream cheese — out of the temperature danger zone, 41° F to 135° F. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Use a metal stemmed thermometer accurate to $\pm 2^{\circ}\text{F}$ to measure temperatures of foods.
- Never use leftover foods more than once.
- Cool hot foods quickly (to 41° F within two hours), using an ice water bath or other quick cooling method, and refrigerate.

Internal Cooking Temperatures

Product	F°	Product	F°	Product	F°
Egg and egg dishes		Fresh pork		Sauces, soups, gravies, marinades	
Eggs	Cook until yolk and white are firm	Medium	160	Used with raw meat, poultry or fish	Bring to a boil
Egg casseroles	160	Well done	170	Fish and shellfish	
Egg sauces, custards	160	Ham		Fish	145, fish is opaque and flakes easily
Ground meat and meat mixtures		Poultry (chicken, turkey and wild game birds)		Shellfish	145, fish is opaque and shells open
Turkey, chicken	165	Whole birds and all pieces	165	Leftovers and Casseroles	
Beef, veal, lamb, pork	160	Roast beef		165	
Fresh beef, veal, lamb (roasts and steaks)		Stuffing			
Medium rare	145	Cooked commercially, vacuum sealed and ready-to-eat	140		
Medium	160	Cooked alone or in bird			
Well done	170				

This chart has been adapted for home use and is consistent with consumer guidelines from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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