

Food Safety Fact Sheet

The Process Approach

INTRODUCTION

The Process Approach to developing a food safety program categorizes menu items into three broad preparation processes based on the number of times the food passes through the temperature danger zone. School nutrition employees must monitor foods at various steps in the foodservice process and must control temperatures to ensure food safety.

HERE ARE THE FACTS

Menu items served must be categorized into three processes: no cook, same day service, and complex preparation. No cook menu items do not go through the temperature danger zone, same day service menu items go through the temperature danger zone one time, and complex menu items pass through the temperature danger zone three times.

APPLICATION

Sort menu items based on similarity of the preparation process. Menu items within the same group share the same potential hazards.

- No cooked menu items are kept cold from preparation through service.
- Same day menu items are prepared hot and served hot on the same day.
- Complex menu items are prepared hot, cooled, and possibly reheated.

Indicate the menu groupings as part of your food safety plan.

- Use a menu grouping form to show categories.
- Write the category number on each recipe card or production record.

Follow Standard Operating Procedures for all menu items prepared in your school nutrition program.

- Purchase foods from approved sources.
- Store foods properly.
- Follow proper handwashing practices.
- Verify food temperatures.
- Receive foods properly.
- Use good personal hygiene.
- Limit time food is held in the temperature danger zone.





The Process Approach **cont.**

Monitor and record time and temperatures of food throughout the foodservice process.

- For no cook menu items, monitor temperatures at receiving, storing, and holding.
- For same day service menu items, monitor temperatures at receiving, storing, cooking, and hot holding.
- For complex menu items, monitor temperatures at receiving, storing, cooking, cooling, reheating, and hot holding.

Control time and temperature of food at appropriate steps in the foodservice process.

- For no cook menu items, control temperatures during cold holding.
- For same day service menu items, control temperatures during cooking and hot holding.
- For complex menu items, control temperatures during cooking, cooling, reheating, and hot holding.

Remember, follow state or local health department requirements.

References

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