

# Time as Public Health Control



**With written procedures, it may be possible for your operation to allow time and temperature control for safety (TCS) foods that are ready-to-eat (hot or cold) to be stored without temperature controls for a certain time frame. Food not served or consumed during this time frame must be discarded and may not be reused or sold.**

## Requirements

- A written procedure must be prepared in advance if time as a public health control (TPHC) rather than “temperature with time” is used to prevent the growth of bacteria associated with foodborne illnesses.
- The procedure must describe how food will be monitored, marked, and disposed.
- A food that is prepared, cooked, and refrigerated prior to TPHC must be properly cooled and this cooling requirement must be included in the written procedure.
- A copy of the approved written procedure must be available on the premises for review.
- The food containers must be marked or labeled with the time food must be cooked, served or discarded.
- The food must be cooked, served or discarded within the maximum time marked on the container once removed from temperature control.
- The food must not be returned to temperature control once TPHC begins.
- The food must be discarded at the end of the time frame.
- An unmarked or improperly marked container must be discarded.

## Maximum Time of Up to 4 Hours

- Cold food (41°F or below) can be held up to 4 hours after it is removed from temperature control if the temperature is not monitored.
- Hot food (135°F or above) can be held up to 4 hours after it is removed from temperature control.

## Maximum Time of Up to 6 Hours for:

- Cold food (41°F or below) can be held up to 6 hours after it is removed from temperature control if the temperature is monitored and never rises above 70°F.
  - The temperature of the food must be monitored to ensure the warmest portion

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does not exceed 70°F during the 6-hour period.

- The food must be discarded if the temperature exceeds 70°F.

## Points to Remember

- Procedures must be written, reviewed, and followed prior to using TPHC.
- Food must be properly cooked and/or cooled before using time as a public health control.
- Food must be protected from any contamination.
- Food cannot be reused or packaged and sold for retail sale. It must be discarded or immediately consumed when using TPHC.
- TPHC cannot be used for raw eggs if highly susceptible populations such as immunocompromised persons of any age, preschool-age children or older adults are served.

## What's Needed Before Implementing TPHC?

- ✓ Written procedures, including a process for temperature monitoring.
- ✓ Marking the food container to identify the time that is four or six hours from the point of removal from temperature control.
- ✓ Instructions for serving, cooking, or discarding the food within four or six hours of removal from temperature control.
- ✓ Assurances that the food is properly prepared, cooked, and refrigerated before time is used as a public health control.
- ✓ Instructions for discarding food in unmarked containers or exceeding the four- or six-hour limit.

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