

# AUBURN UNIVERSITY

## FOOD SAFETY AND HANDLING GUIDE

### I. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has established and enforces the laws governing food service establishments and vendors in Alabama including the AU Campus and any AU facility. Auburn University employees, students and volunteers, groups or individuals who provide food to the public are responsible for ensuring proper sanitation and safe food handling; complying with all ADPH regulations; and any liability associated with the food sold or distributed. An ADPH Permit or permit exemption is required for the sale of food. This includes any event where food is sold or a donation is required for entry such as a chili cook off. Exemptions are intended for situations where food will be sold as part of the event (examples include a tailgate party, fund raiser, chili cook off, etc).

#### **Why are guidelines needed for food events?**

Improper cooling, reheating, hot holding, and excessive food handling are the major causes of foodborne illness outbreaks. Many cases can be avoided if you as an event coordinator follow simple guidelines and if University employees, students and volunteers handle food properly. These guidelines are here to protect you, the public, and the University's interests. We do not want anyone to get sick or die from food poisoning.

The guidelines provided are general recommendations for safe food handling. Please refer to the resources provided at the end of this guide for comprehensive information on safe food handling.

#### **Is your event public or private?**

A public event is one in which any advertising or inducement exists for the community to attend. A private event is for University employees or students only, and the food service is limited to a known group. Use the following table to determine if your event is public or private.

<b>Public events</b>	<b>Private events</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advertised/open to the community or</li><li>• Easy to walk in and pick up food or</li><li>• Funds solicited through sales</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited to a known University group</li></ul>
<b>Examples of public events</b>	<b>Examples of private events</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fund raisers</li><li>• Potlucks, if persons other than your immediate University faculty, staff and student groups attend</li><li>• Receptions at Convocation</li><li>• Weekly seminars at which cookies and coffee are provided</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department meetings, lunches or receptions</li><li>• Staff gatherings</li><li>• Coffee breaks</li><li>• Class Meetings</li><li>• Residence hall floor meetings or socials</li></ul>
<b>Additional Guidelines for Public and Private Events</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow the safe food handling and sanitation practices for foods (see below).</li><li>• Monitor food from the time it is delivered to the time it is discarded.</li><li>• Do not accept donated food unless it is from a licensed vendor.</li><li>• If a caterer is used, the caterer should have an ADPH permit.</li></ul>	

## **II. SAFE FOOD HANDLING AND SANITATION PRACTICES FOR A PRIVATE OR PUBLIC EVENT**

These guidelines apply to

- *You*, when you prepare food at home for a private event. You also are responsible for following safe food handling and sanitation practices during serving and clean-up.
- *Licensed vendors*. Accompanied by the event coordinator who is responsible for ensuring these practices are adhered to.

Observe appropriate food and personal sanitation measures before, during and after service.

All foods, if handled properly, can be safe.

### **A. Properly Cooling Foods**

The Alabama Department of Public Health requires that hot foods be cooled from 135 degrees F to 70 degrees F within 2 hours and cooled from 70 degrees F to 41 degrees F within an additional 4 hours.

Food must be properly cooled using one of the following methods:

- Rapidly cooling foods of large volume or prepared in large quantities by cutting large items into smaller pieces or dividing large batches into several smaller ones.
- By placing the pan in larger pans of ice and stir foods as they cool. This is known as an Ice-Water Bath.
- Place the food in shallow stainless steel pans. Thick foods, such as chili and stew, should be in pans with a product depth no more than two inches. Thinner liquids, such as broth may be in pans three inches deep.

### **B. Safe Temperatures for Foods**

- Keep hot foods HOT (135 degrees F or above); keep foods covered to maintain proper temperature, never add fresh goods to old foods, if hot foods temperature falls below 135 degrees F reheat the food to 165 degrees F or higher within 2 hours – one time only
- Keep cold foods COLD (41 degrees F or below); use only cold-holding equipment that can keep foods at 41 degrees F or lower, never place ready-to-eat cold foods in direct contact with ice
- Don't serve raw or partially cooked meat, poultry, fish and eggs

### **C. Minimum Cooking Temperatures**

- 165 degrees F
  - Poultry, stuffed meats, stuffed fish and stuffed pasta
  - Stuffing containing meat, poultry or fish
  - Ground poultry or turkey
  - Any animal food cooked in a microwave
- 155 degrees F
  - Ground meats (beef and pork)
  - Injected meats, comminuted fish and meats
  - Game meats
  - Raw, pooled shell eggs
- 145 degrees F
  - Fish, seafood, pork, beef (cubes, slices, etc.), veal, lamb, mutton
  - Raw shell eggs
  - Whole roast beef, whole pork roasts and corned beef roasts

The temperature of potentially hazardous foods must be 41 degrees F or below AND/OR 135 degrees F or above at all times. Maintain safe temperatures for potentially hazardous foods or don't serve them. (Use a thermometer to check temperatures of potentially hazardous foods.)

Place the thermometer in the center of the dish or the thickest part of the meat away from bone.

#### **D. Potentially Hazardous Foods**

High protein and high carbohydrate foods become hazardous when they are out of safe temperature ranges for more than 4 hours. If a food is kept out of its safe temperature range for more than 4 hours, including preparation, delivery and serving time, then its potential for breeding germs greatly increases.

*Examples of potentially hazardous foods are:*

1. High protein foods

Raw and cooked:

- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Dairy
- Egg products, e.g. deviled eggs

2. High Carbohydrate Foods

Cooked:

- Pasta
- Beans
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Soups, sauces, gravies or
- Food mixtures that contain any of the above items and/or meat or eggs.
- Others
- Warm iced tea (bacteria naturally found in tea leaves)

#### **E. Foods That Are Not Potentially Hazardous**

Low protein, dry high-carbohydrate and high-acidity foods are not potentially hazardous.

- Potato and tortilla chips
- Rolls
- Carbonated drinks
- Bread
- Doughnuts (not cream/custard or cheese filled)
- Prepacked, washed raw vegetables
- Nuts

#### **F. Even if Foods are Not Potentially Hazardous, Can I Still Get Food Poisoning?**

Yes. Cross-contamination can occur. It's the transfer of disease-causing organisms from a contaminated surface to a previously clean surface or area. Follow appropriate sanitation measures to avoid cross-contamination.

### G. Appropriate Sanitation Measures

- Wash hands frequently
  - ✓ Use warm water to moisten hands
  - ✓ Apply soap
  - ✓ Rubs hand together for 20 seconds
  - ✓ Rinse thoroughly under warm running water
  - ✓ Dry with a paper towel.
- Wash your hands after:
  - ✓ Using the bathroom (Hepatitis A can be transferred from fecal material.)
  - ✓ Handling raw food
  - ✓ Eating or drinking
  - ✓ Sneezing or coughing into you hand
  - ✓ Blowing your nose
  - ✓ Cleaning (sweeping, mopping, etc.)
  - ✓ Smoking and chewing tobacco or gum
  - ✓ Taking out the garbage
  - ✓ Changing diapers
  - ✓ Petting animals
  - ✓ Doing anything that could recontaminate your hands
  - ✓ And always before handling food or changing food functions.
- Sanitize the food preparation area frequently using 1 tablespoon chlorine bleach in 1 gallon warm water (75 degrees F):
  - ✓ Counter tops and equipment
  - ✓ Cutting boards, sinks, scrubber and brushes. Use plastic cutting boards, not wood.
- Gloves designed for food prep should be used when working with ready to eat foods. However, gloves must not be used as a substitute for hand washing. Gloves must be clean, intact, and used for one purpose only.
- Make sure your equipment is clean and not contaminated by children, pets, insects or dirty hands.
- Use paper towels to clean up during food preparation and serving. Harmful bacteria multiply quickly in kitchen towels, sponges and cloths.
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or the microwave.
- Change gloves, utensils and dishes when changing functions, e.g., from handling or preparing raw or fresh foods to serving fresh or cooked foods.
  - ✓ Serve grilled food on a clean plate, too, not one that held raw meat, poultry or fish.
- Keep both short and long hair under control. Wear a cap or a hair-net or tie your hair back.
- Have one person serve.
- Keep unused condiments, marinades and sauces separate from leftover condiments, marinades and sauces.
- Do not serve or store food in hazardous material containers, e.g., soft drinks in beakers.
- Do not store any food in laboratory refrigerators.

### H. Leftovers

*“WHEN IN DOUBT TOSS IT OUT.”*

- Ask the following questions:
  - What type of food is it? Potentially hazardous or not hazardous food?

- If the food is potentially hazardous, how long was it out of its safe temperature range, including preparation and delivery time? Throw away potentially hazardous food.
- Never taste food that looks or smells strange to check if you can still use it. Just discard it.
- Refrigerate and freeze perishable leftovers promptly in small, shallow containers for quick cooling. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe.
- Do not mix unused and uncooked foods with leftover foods.
- Do not store any food in laboratory refrigerators or freezers.

#### **I. Garbage**

Immediately after the event, seal all food garbage in plastic garbage bags. Dispose of the bags in a dumpster.

Do not let garbage bags sit out--put them in a dumpster. Garbage becomes odorous, attracts bugs and germs and promotes bacterial growth.

### **III. WHAT IS FOOD VIOLENCE?**

Food violence is tampering with food products, e.g., placing foreign objects or substances into food products with the intent of harming the person(s) who eat(s) the food products.

#### **Tips to avoid food violence:**

Never leave food unattended, e.g., monitor the food from the time it is delivered to the time it is discarded. Make sure those serving the food for public events are "authorized food handlers."

### **IV. GUIDELINES FOR OUTDOOR EVENTS**

- Keep the food under cover, e.g., use awnings, tents, etc.
- Provide hand washing facilities for servers. Use a water container with a spout so that the water flows down over the hands into a basin.
- Follow the safe food handling procedures.
- Contact the Alabama Department of Public Health Department 800-252-1818 for more information.

### **V. WHERE DO I REPORT FOODBORNE ILLNESS?**

Report any cases of foodborne illness to the Health Department 800-252-1818, especially if the food involved comes from a restaurant or commercial outlet.

### **VI. FOOD DONATIONS**

**DO NOT ACCEPT DONATED FOOD UNLESS IT IS FROM A LICENSED VENDOR.**

Where does the food come from? Don't accept donations from someone's home.

Ask how it will be kept safe:

- Is additional preparation needed?
- Where will the additional preparation occur?
- Who will serve it?
- Who will clean it up?
- Are all work areas clean?
- Have safe temperatures been maintained from preparation through delivery?

If you can't answer these questions, don't accept the food. When serving, follow safe food handling and sanitation practices.

**VII. FOOD SAFETY RESOURCE LIST**

Alabama Department of Public Health  
Division of Food, Milk, and Lodging (FML)  
800-252-1818

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline  
Mon - Fri, 10am - 4pm ET  
Recorded messages available 24 hours a day  
888-674-6854

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
Foodborne Illness Line  
24-hour recorded information  
800-232-4636

Additional information and guidance is available on the ADPH website at  
<http://adph.org/foodsafety/Default.asp?id=1139>