

Time as a Public Health Control

Time is usually used with temperature to control bacterial growth and ensure safe food products. It is acceptable, under certain circumstance, to remove foods from temperature control for short periods of time and rely on time only. If used correctly, time can be an effective control to minimize the amount of growth of bacteria or toxins. If time is not monitored closely, bacteria or toxin can multiply causing customer illnesses.

Two time control methods can be used:

Maximum of 4 Hours

- Foods must be cold ($\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$) or hot ($\geq 135^{\circ}\text{F}$) when removed from storage.
- A marking system must be used to identify the time that is 4 hours after it was removed from temperature control.
- Foods must be cooked and served or served within the 4 hour period.
- Foods that remain after the 4 hours are discarded.

Maximum of 6 Hours

- Food must be cold ($\leq 41^{\circ}\text{F}$) when removed from storage.
- Foods cannot rise above 70°F within 6 hours.
- Monitoring is in place to ensure the foods do not rise above 70°F .
- A marking system must be used to identify the time that the food was removed from cold storage and the time that is after 6 hours.
- Foods must be cooked and served within 6 hours and maintained $\leq 70^{\circ}\text{F}$.
- Foods are above 70°F or remain after 6 hours are discarded.

Written procedure

- Before using time as a control, written procedures must be created and staff properly trained.
- Procedure will be reviewed during routine inspections.