

PLAYING IT

SAFE

Be safe and healthy on the job at with these helpful tips provided by PL&B Insurance.

Proper Cooking Temperatures

Food temperature guidelines for restaurant workers

Cooking and serving food at safe temperatures is one of the most effective ways to prevent foodborne illness. Patrons can become extremely ill from eating meat, poultry or fish that is not cooked to the proper temperature.

When patrons become ill from bacterial diseases such as E. coli or salmonella, they can suffer from symptoms for up to six weeks after consuming the food. In addition, children, pregnant women, people over 65 and those with chronic illnesses may experience serious health issues as a result of eating tainted foods. Protect the health of your patrons and keep them coming back for great meals by following these safety precautions.

Food Delivery

Food safety begins when your restaurant receives the shipment of food. If perishable items are not refrigerated at 5° C or below for more than four hours, the food should be thrown out. Frozen foods that are not kept at -17.8° C or below should be thrown out as well. When deliveries are made, check the temperatures and notify your supervisor before accepting foods with temperatures that fall outside of these ranges.

Storage

Many foods can spoil while in the refrigerator or freezer simply because the appliance is not set at the proper temperature. Refrigerators should be set at 3.3° C or below in the air and the food itself should be 5° C or below. In addition, seafood should be stored at -

1.1° to 1.1° C and fresh produce should be at 5° to 7.2° C.

Thawing

When thawing frozen foods, place the item in the refrigerator or under running water that is 21° C or cooler. Never allow items to sit at room temperature to thaw.

Cooking

The cooking temperature of foods, especially meats, is the most important part of food preparation. Remember to measure temperature using a thermometer in the thickest part of the food and avoid touching fat, gristle or bone. If you are preparing a dish with multiple ingredients, follow the temperature guidelines for the ingredient with the highest temperature requirement.

The following are recommended internal temperature minimums:

- Fish: 62.8° C
- Roasts and steaks: 62.8° C
- Pork: 71° C
- Eggs: 71° C
- Ground meats: 71° C
- Poultry: 73.9° C

Using a food thermometer to ensure that the food you're preparing is cooked to the proper temperature not only prevents the spread of foodborne illness, but to help you avoid overcooking the dish as well.



Don't Let Your Eyes Fool You!

Many people assume that if meat is no longer pink in the middle, then it is fully cooked. But one in four hamburgers turns brown before it has reached a safe temperature in the middle. Use a food thermometer instead!

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