

FOOD SERVICE GUIDELINES FOR EMERGENCY SHELTERS

- All food products must be from an approved commercially prepared source. Home canned foods are prohibited and home prepared foods are discouraged due to unknown sanitary conditions in private homes.
- Wash hands with hot soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom.
- Always wash hands; wash, rinse and sanitize cutting boards, dishes and utensils after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood.
- Wash, rinse and sanitize cutting boards, dishes, utensils and counter tops after preparing each food item and before starting on the next food. Proper cleaning and sanitizing may be achieved by washing in hot, soapy water, rinsing in a clear, hot rinse and immersing or spraying with a solution of 5.25% unscented household bleach and water (one tablespoon of bleach per 2 gallons of warm water equals approximately 100 parts per million chlorine). Cleaning may be accomplished using an automatic home dishwasher, but sanitization may not be adequate.
- All fruits and vegetables must be washed prior to slicing, cooking, or serving.
- No smoking in the food preparation, serving and utensil washing areas. Restrict activities of food handlers to food preparation and service functions (to prevent cross contamination, individuals involved in shelter sanitation and diaper changing should not serve as food handlers).
- Consider using paper towels to clean up kitchen surfaces and dispose of immediately. If cloth towels are used, wash them often in the hot cycle of a washing machine.
- Use a different cutting board for each raw meat product or, clean and sanitize between species.
- Never place cooked food on a plate which previously held raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- To assure proper INTERNAL product temperatures, a metal stemmed, dial-type thermometer should be obtained and used. Heat meat, pork and fish to at least 145 degrees F. for 15 seconds; cook poultry to 165 degrees F. for 15 seconds. Heat eggs until yolk and white are firm, 155 degrees F. for 15 seconds.
- When cooking in a microwave oven, make sure there are no cold spots in food where bacteria can survive. Cover food, stir and rotate for even cooking, If there is no turntable, rotate dish by hand once or twice during cooking to achieve an internal temperature of 165 degrees F.
- Keep hot foods hot (140 degrees F.) and cold foods cold (41 degrees or below) during transportation and serving. Serve foods promptly.
- Refrigerate (41 degrees F. or below) or freeze (0 degrees F.) perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within 2 hours. Food not refrigerated within the 2 hours should be discarded. Don't overcrowd the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to keep food safe.
- Heat leftovers thoroughly to at least 165 degrees F. Divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers for quick cooling in the refrigerator. Rapid chilling may be achieved by placing food container in an ice bath and stirring; or ice may be added to food as an ingredient to speed cooling.