

Temperature Rules for Safe Cooking and Handling of Foods

Safe Cooking and Holding Temperatures for Food

Bacteria multiply rapidly between 40°F and 140°F, doubling in number in as little as 20 minutes. To keep food out of this danger zone, keep cold food cold and hot food hot. Keep cold food in the refrigerator, in coolers, and on the service line on ice. Set your refrigerator no higher than 40°F and the freezer at 0°F. Keep hot food in the oven, in heated chafing dishes, or in preheated steam tables, warming trays, and/or slow cookers. Use a clean thermometer that measures the internal temperature of cooked food to make sure meat, poultry, and casseroles are cooked to the temperatures as indicated in the figure.

