

SOP Template: Procedures for Hot and Cold Holding of Prepared Foods

This SOP details **procedures for hot and cold holding of prepared foods**, ensuring food safety by maintaining proper temperatures to prevent bacterial growth. It covers guidelines for monitoring and controlling holding temperatures, equipment usage, safe storage practices, temperature recording and verification, and corrective actions if food temperatures fall outside safe ranges. The aim is to preserve food quality and prevent foodborne illnesses during service and storage.

1. Purpose

To outline procedures to safely hold hot and cold prepared foods, preventing growth of pathogens by maintaining foods at safe temperatures throughout service and storage.

2. Scope

Applies to all personnel involved in food service, preparation, and storage at all facilities and during all shifts.

3. Responsibilities

- Food handlers: Monitor and record food temperatures.
- Supervisors/Managers: Ensure compliance, review logs, and initiate corrective actions.

4. Equipment Needed

- Food thermometers (calibrated)
- Hot holding units (steam tables, warming trays, etc.)
- Cold holding equipment (refrigerators, ice baths, etc.)
- Temperature monitoring log sheets or digital recording system
- Sanitizing supplies for equipment

5. Procedures

Hot Holding

- Maintain hot prepared foods at **135°F (57°C) or above** at all times.
- Preheat hot holding equipment before placing food in it.
- Stir foods regularly to distribute heat evenly.
- Check the temperature of all hot held foods at least every 2 hours using a calibrated thermometer.
- Record temperatures on the log sheet.

Cold Holding

- Maintain cold prepared foods at **41°F (5°C) or below** at all times.
- Pre-chill coolers and storage containers before use.
- Keep food containers covered and avoid overfilling holding units.
- Check the temperature of all cold held foods at least every 2 hours using a calibrated thermometer.
- Record temperatures on the log sheet.

6. Temperature Monitoring and Recording

Time	Food Item	Temperature (°F/°C)	Initials	Corrective Action (if needed)
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Note: Records must be maintained and available for review.

7. Corrective Actions

- If hot food is found below 135°F (57°C) for less than 2 hours, rapidly reheat to at least 165°F (74°C) for 15 seconds.
- If hot food is below 135°F (57°C) for more than 2 hours, **discard** the food.
- If cold food is above 41°F (5°C) for less than 2 hours, rapidly cool to safe temperature.
- If cold food is above 41°F (5°C) for more than 2 hours, **discard** the food.
- Document all corrective actions taken on the log sheet.

8. Verification and Review

- Supervisors must review temperature logs daily.
- Equipment calibration should be verified regularly.
- Review SOP compliance during routine inspections and staff meetings.

9. Training

- All staff must be trained on hot and cold holding procedures, use of equipment, and recording requirements before handling food independently.
- Refresher training provided annually or when procedures/equipment change.

10. References

- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code
- Local and state food safety regulations
- Company food safety policies