

SOP Template: Hot/Cold Food Holding and Temperature Control

This SOP details the procedures for **hot and cold food holding and temperature control**, emphasizing the importance of maintaining safe food temperatures to prevent foodborne illnesses. It covers accurate temperature monitoring, proper storage methods, timely food rotation, and corrective actions when temperatures fall outside safe ranges, ensuring food safety and quality from preparation to service.

1. Purpose

To ensure all hot and cold foods are held at safe temperatures to prevent foodborne illness and maintain food quality until the point of service.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all food service staff involved in the preparation, storage, and service of hot and cold foods.

3. Responsibility

- Food handlers and kitchen staff: Responsible for proper storage, holding, and monitoring of food temperatures.
- Supervisors/Managers: Responsible for training staff, oversight, and corrective actions.

4. Definitions

- **Hot Holding:** Maintaining cooked foods at or above 135°F (57°C).
- **Cold Holding:** Maintaining cold foods at or below 41°F (5°C).
- **Temperature Danger Zone:** 41°F to 135°F (5°C to 57°C), range in which bacteria multiply rapidly.

5. Procedures

1. Hot Food Holding:

- Keep hot foods at or above 135°F (57°C) at all times using appropriate hot holding equipment (steam tables, heat lamps, warmers).
- Stir foods regularly to distribute heat evenly and prevent drying.
- Check and log temperatures at least every 2 hours.

2. Cold Food Holding:

- Maintain cold foods at or below 41°F (5°C) using refrigeration or ice baths.
- Keep storage units closed as much as possible to maintain temperature.
- Check and log temperatures at least every 2 hours.

3. Temperature Monitoring:

- Use a calibrated, sanitized food thermometer to measure food temperatures.
- Record temperatures in the temperature log with date, time, food item, and initials.

4. Food Rotation:

- Use the First In, First Out (FIFO) system for storage and serving.
- Label all foods with preparation or opening date.

5. Corrective Actions:

- If food is found in the temperature danger zone (41°F–135°F) for less than 2 hours, reheat to

165°F (74°C) or rapidly cool to 41°F (5°C).

- If food has been in the danger zone for more than 2 hours, discard immediately.
- Report temperature deviations to supervisor and document actions taken.

6. Equipment Needed

- Calibrated food thermometers
- Hot holding equipment (steam tables, heat lamps)
- Cold holding equipment (refrigerators, ice baths)
- Temperature logs

7. Monitoring & Documentation

- Temperature of all hot/cold items will be checked and logged every 2 hours.
- All logs will be reviewed daily by supervisor/manager.

8. Training

All relevant staff must be trained on temperature control procedures and reviewed annually or when procedures are updated.

9. References

- FDA Food Code
- Local health department regulations

10. Revision History

Date	Description	Author
2024-06-30	Initial SOP issuance	Food Safety Manager