

# Temperature and time: identify the purpose

**SELECTED RULES | PAIR EVERY NUMBER WITH ITS CONDITIONS**

**Exam quick reference, not every exception.** Corrected 2022 FDA Food Code + December 2024 Supplement. Provider 2026 transition is unconfirmed. For 2026 operational differences, see Companion p. 19; locally adopted rules govern operations.

| Stage                                      | Selected rule / distinction                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Receive / hold cold                        | Ordinary TCS food: 41 F or below. Shell eggs: refrigerated AIR at 45 F or below. Higher receiving exceptions depend on distribution law.             |
| Hold hot                                   | 135 F or above. Qualifying complete-process roast exception: 130 F or above.                                                                         |
| Cook poultry / stuffed foods               | 165 F instantaneous; ground poultry is still poultry.                                                                                                |
| Cook non-intact meat / batch eggs          | 155 F for 17 seconds; also ratites and comminuted fish.                                                                                              |
| Cook intact meat / fish                    | 145 F for 15 seconds; raw eggs for immediate individual service use this route. Whole roasts use the separate full process.                          |
| Microwave raw animal food                  | 165 F throughout; rotate/stir, cover, stand covered 2 minutes.                                                                                       |
| Cook plants for hot holding                | 135 F.                                                                                                                                               |
| Cool cooked TCS food                       | 135 to 70 F within 2 hours; to 41 F within 6 hours TOTAL from 135 F.                                                                                 |
| Cool TCS food from ambient ingredients     | To 41 F or below within 4 hours.                                                                                                                     |
| Reheat operation-cooked food for holding   | 165 F for 15 seconds throughout; maximum 2 hours from 41 F to endpoint. Microwave: 165 F throughout plus rotate/stir, cover, 2-minute covered stand. |
| Reheat commercial packaged RTE for holding | Inspected processing-plant product: 135 F within the 2-hour interval.                                                                                |
| Immediate individual service               | Properly cooked, cooled, refrigerated food may be served at any temperature; not a holding-batch shortcut.                                           |
| Four-hour time control                     | Advance written procedure; ordinary start at 41 F or below or 135 F or above; mark deadline; serve/cook-and-serve or discard.                        |
| Six-hour time control                      | Cold start at 41 F or below only; advance procedure; mark removal/deadline; never above 70 F; serve/cook-and-serve or discard.                       |
| Date mark                                  | Ordinary refrigerated RTE TCS held over 24 hours: up to 7 days at 41 F or below; preparation/opening = day 1. Earliest applicable date controls.     |
| Fahrenheit-only thermometer accuracy       | Food: within 2 F. Ambient air/water: within 3 F. Tolerance never raises the food limit.                                                              |

**Always pair the NUMBER with the FOOD, PURPOSE, TIME, and CLOCK START. A cooling clock is not a time-control clock.**

## SOURCE CHECK

3-202.11; 3-401.11-.13; 3-403.10-.11; 3-501.14, .16-.19; 4-203.11-.12

# People, transfer, and sanitizing: keep distinctions

SELECTED RULES | PAIR EVERY NUMBER WITH ITS CONDITIONS

| Recall anchor                       | Condition that prevents a wrong answer                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Exclude versus restrict             | Exclude: not working/entering as an employee. Restrict: no exposed food or clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single-use items.                                                                                  |
| Vomiting / diarrhea                 | Exclude unless noninfectious; without a listed diagnosis, full return after at least 24 symptom-free hours or qualifying written medical documentation.                                                                       |
| Diagnosed Norovirus, Shigella, STEC | Never symptomatic: restrict non-HSP, exclude HSP. Full clearance requires regulatory approval AND either qualifying medical clearance or the pathogen-specific time conditions.                                               |
| Diagnosed infection clocks          | Norovirus: more than 48 hours; Shigella/STEC: more than 7 calendar days after symptoms resolve, or from diagnosis if never symptomatic. Not automatic return.                                                                 |
| HSP                                 | Susceptible people PLUS qualifying care/service setting. An older restaurant guest alone does not make the operation HSP.                                                                                                     |
| Wash hands                          | Full procedure at least 20 seconds; rub 10-15 seconds. Sink delivers at least 85 F under this edition.                                                                                                                        |
| Nine major allergens                | Milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soybeans, sesame.                                                                                                                                          |
| Allergen cross-contact              | Unintended allergen transfer. Removing a visible topping or adding sanitizer does not reliably remove allergen protein.                                                                                                       |
| Clean then sanitize                 | Wash, rinse, sanitize, air-dry. Continuous TCS use: generally at least every 4 hours; sooner after contamination or relevant task changes.                                                                                    |
| Manual hot-water sanitizing         | At least 171 F for at least 30 seconds immersion.                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Hot-water dish machine              | Manifold: generally 180 F; stationary-rack/single-temperature: 165 F. Utensil surface: 160 F verified by irreversible indicator.                                                                                              |
| Chlorine selected examples          | 100 ppm / at least 55 F / pH at most 10: 10 sec. 50 ppm / at least 100 F / pH at most 10 OR at least 75 F / pH at most 8: 7 sec. Follow label too.                                                                            |
| Iodine / quat                       | Iodine: 12.5-25 ppm, at least 68 F, pH at most 5 or effective labeled pH. Quat: labeled concentration, at least 75 F, hardness at most 500 ppm or label allowance. Generally at least 30 sec for each, consistent with label. |
| Air gap                             | Twice inlet diameter, never less than 1 inch above flood-level rim.                                                                                                                                                           |
| Imminent health hazard              | Stop affected operations, notify authority, correct, obtain approval before resuming discontinued operations.                                                                                                                 |

**Do not mix authorities:** CDC Norovirus prevention advice says stay home while sick and at least 48 hours after symptoms stop. That is distinct from the conditional Code return rules above. Diagnoses and settings require the full decision path in the companion.

## SOURCE CHECK

1-201.10(B); 2-201.11-.13; 2-301.12; 5-202.12-.13: people and water

4-501.112, .114; 4-602.11; 4-703.11; 8-404.11-.12: sanitizing and emergencies

2024 Supplement: 2-201.13 and disinfection amendments

CDC: Norovirus food-worker prevention guidance