

Food Safety Tips for Food Event Volunteers

Foodborne illness outbreaks can happen anywhere and can affect a large number of people. Many outbreaks result because a food worker may not take food safety seriously!

The good news is that a foodborne illness is preventable! Follow these tips to avoid a foodborne illness outbreak:

KEEP CLOTHES CLEAN

Dirty clothes not only give customers a bad impression, but also carry harmful microorganisms.

- Wear clean clothes.
- Wear clean aprons.
- Roll up long sleeves.
- Keep hair from falling into food! Wear hair pulled back and/or wear a cap.
- Remove aprons when leaving area.

KEEP HANDS CLEAN

Hand-washing is one of the easiest, most effective ways to prevent foodborne illnesses.

- Wash hands often: Before you start your shift; before putting on gloves; after handling raw foods; after coughing or blowing your nose; after handling the garbage; after using the bathroom; after handling money.
- Wash hands with lots of soap. Soap creates a slippery surface for the “germs” to slide off.
- Scrub hands together for at least 10–15 seconds. (sing Happy Birthday to yourself)
- Dry hands on a paper towel. Do NOT use dish towels or apron or your clothes to dry your hands!
- If you have a cut on your hand, use plastic gloves.
- Trim fingernails and keep them clean.



SERVE FOOD SAFELY

- Serve food not fingers! Do NOT touch food with bare hands. Use tongs, forks, gloves, deli tissues or scoops to handle food.
- Protect foods from dust, sneezing, and handling by guests. Use appropriate packaging and covers on food.
- Never chew gum.
- Do NOT prepare food or work if you are sick with vomiting and/or diarrhea.

USE CLEAN EQUIPMENT/UTENSILS

When dirty equipment and utensils are used, harmful microorganisms will be transferred to the food.



- Use a mechanical dishwasher OR 3 sinks for washing, rinsing and sanitizing.
- Use clean dishes and utensils for food preparation.
- Wash equipment and utensils with hot, soapy water after use with each type of food, when preparing several foods (e.g. cutting pies, then salad greens).
- Wash and sanitize food contact surfaces (e.g. counters, tables, refrigerators, etc.).

USE PROPER SANITIZING SOLUTIONS

- Use chlorine bleach and water to make a sanitizing solution:
- Washing dishes and utensils:
 1. Wash in warm soapy water.
 2. Rinse in clear water.
 3. Sanitize for at least 10 seconds. Use 1 tablespoon bleach per 1 gallon of water (use 2 tsp concentrated bleach per gallon of water).
 4. Air dry.
- Sanitize any surface that may come in direct contact with food—like counters, tables, etc. Use a cloth dipped in solution or spray on sanitizer and let air dry.

USE A FOOD THERMOMETER

Eating undercooked foods has resulted in serious food-borne illness outbreaks.

- Use a calibrated food thermometer to check that foods are cooked to the proper internal temperature.
- The following foods should reach an internal temperature of:

Product	Temperature
Whole meats (chops, steaks, roasts)	145°F, plus 3 minute rest/stand time for safety
Ground meats	160°F
Poultry, ground or whole	165°F
Soup, stews, egg dishes, stuffing, casseroles	165°F

Source: USDA, *Revised Cooking Temperature*, May 2011

COOL FOODS CORRECTLY

Hot foods stored in large containers in the refrigerator cannot cool down quickly.

- Foods must be cooled from 140°F to 70°F within 2 hours and then cooled to 40°F or lower in an additional 4 hours.
- Store foods in small shallow pans (2–3 inches deep) and refrigerate immediately.
- Metal containers chill foods fast.
- Use ice to quickly chill foods and to keep them cold.

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT

If hot foods are held below 140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep hot foods at 140°F or higher.
- Keep food hot in a 200°F oven.
- Use a food thermometer to check the temperature of hot foods.
- Keep each batch of food in a separate pan. (Don't mix batches of food items.)
- Do not let hot food sit at room temperature for more than 2 hours.

KEEP COLD FOODS COLD

If cold foods are held between 40°–140°F, microorganisms will grow rapidly.

- Keep cold foods at 40°F or lower.
- Limit time at room temperature to 2 hours (maximum) to preserve quality and safety. (For cold foods in hot weather, time should be no more than 1 hour.)
- Refrigerate ingredients for mixed foods prior to combining. (i.e. refrigerate potatoes and eggs before combining with dressing when making potato salad)

Used with permission by Barbara Fuller, program specialist, Human Sciences Extension and Outreach.

Permission granted by Suzanne Driessen, extension educator, Food Safety, University of Minnesota Extension

Reviewed by Catherine Strohbehn, PhD, RD, CP-FS
HRIM Extension and Outreach Specialist

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

... and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964.

Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, and the United States Department of Agriculture cooperating.