

Verified against FDA Food Code 2022 + Supplement to the 2022 Food Code (Nov 2024) — retail values, not home-cooking temperatures

RAPIDRECALL™ STUDY AID

COOK IT TO

HIGHEST-YIELD FACTS ON THE EXAM



Poultry & Stuffed Foods
chicken · turkey · stuffing with meat · stuffed pasta
165°F
INSTANTANEOUS



Ground Meats — Not Poultry
beef/pork burgers · sausage · injected or tenderized beef or pork
155°F
17 SEC · POULTRY STAYS 165°F



Fish & Whole Cuts
seafood · steaks · chops · eggs served right away
145°F
FOR 15 SECONDS



Plant Foods, Hot-Held
vegetables · grains · commercially processed reheats
135°F
HOT-HOLD FLOOR

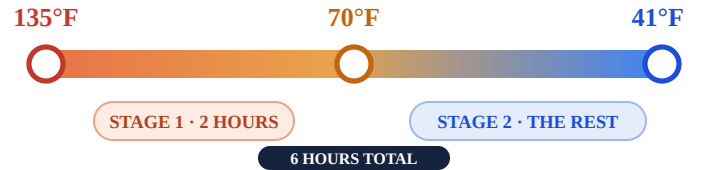
Classic trap: the temperatures you learned at home are different. USDA says 160°F for ground beef — on this exam the retail Food Code value, **155°F**, is the right answer.

HOLD IT THERE

- Hot holding** — steam table, soup well **135°F or above**
- Cold holding** — cooler, salad rail **41°F or below**
- The danger zone** — minimize all time here **41°F – 135°F**
- Reheat** — food you cooked and cooled **165°F / 15 sec, within 2 hr**

COOL IT DOWN

ONE 6-HOUR BUDGET



A fast stage 1 **gives stage 2 the leftover time** — one 6-hour budget, not two fixed blocks. Made from room-temp ingredients? Chill to 41°F in **4 hours**.

THAW IT — ONLY FOUR LEGAL WAYS



In the Cooler
the safest way — plan ahead
41°F or below
THE DEFAULT METHOD



Under Running Water
fully submerged, water moving
70°F or below
4 HR MAX ABOVE 41°F



In the Microwave
straight into cooking, no pause
Cook It Now
NO INTERRUPTION



As Part of Cooking
no thawing step at all
Frozen → In
STRAIGHT FROM FROZEN

Never on the counter. Never in a sink of standing warm water. Both park food in the danger zone.

DATE MARKING — 7 DAYS

MON
DAY 1

TUE
2

WED
3

THU
4

FRI
5

SAT
6

SUN · DAY 7
LAST DAY

Ready-to-eat TCS food held over 24 hours at 41°F or below. **The day you prep or open it is Day 1** — so it is discarded on Day 7, not seven days later. Combine two dated foods? The mix **keeps the earlier date**.

REHEATING

- Your kitchen** cooked it, cooled it, warming it back up **165°F / 15 sec, within 2 hr**
- Factory-sealed**, ready-to-eat, just warming it **135°F, within 2 hr**

Reheating is not the same as hot holding. Hot hold is **135°F**; a full reheat of in-house food is **165°F**.

TCS FOOD — WHAT THE RULES APPLY TO

TIME/TEMPERATURE CONTROL FOR SAFETY

Milk & dairy

Eggs

Meat & poultry

Fish & shellfish

Cooked rice, pasta, beans

Cut melon & leafy greens

Cut tomatoes

Sprouts

Tofu & soy protein

Garlic-in-oil mixtures

Baked potatoes

Moist, protein-rich, not acidic? Assume it is **TCS** — it needs every rule on this page. Dry goods, whole raw produce, and unopened shelf-stable items generally do not.

 **HANDWASHING — 20 SECONDS, EVERY TIME**

10–15 SEC OF THAT IS SCRUBBING · EXAM VALUE 100°F (FDA 2022: 85°F)

**1 · WET**
warm running water

**2 · SOAP**
work up a lather

**3 · SCRUB 10–15 SEC**
backs, between fingers, nails

**4 · RINSE**
fingertips pointing down

**5 · DRY**
single-use towel or air

WASH AGAIN EVERY TIME YOU
use the restroom · touch raw food · handle trash · touch your face or phone · switch tasks · put on new gloves

 **COOLER STORAGE ORDER**

TOP TO BOTTOM

Ready-to-Eat Food
no cooking needed

Seafood
145°F

Whole Cuts of Beef & Pork
145°F

Ground Meat & Ground Fish
155°F

Whole & Ground Poultry
165°F

The rule: **the higher its cooking temperature, the lower it sits.** Raw poultry always on the bottom so nothing drips onto food below it.

 **SANITIZER STRENGTH**

 Chlorine
50–99 ppm, ≥100°F, ≥7 sec

 Quat — follow the product label
~150–400 ppm, ≥30 sec

 Iodine
12.5–25 ppm, pH ≤5, ≥30 sec

**TEST STRIPS, EVERY BATCH**
Too weak does not sanitize. Too strong is a chemical hazard.

 **THE BIG 9 ALLERGENS**

ASK — NEVER GUESS

Milk

Eggs

Fish

Crustacean Shellfish

Tree Nuts

Peanuts

Wheat

Soy

 **Sesame — the newest one**

THE BIG 6 ILLNESSES — TELL YOUR MANAGER BEFORE YOUR SHIFT, NOT AFTER

Norovirus

Hepatitis A

Shigella

Shiga Toxin–Producing E. coli

Salmonella Typhi

Nontyphoidal Salmonella

 Also: vomiting · diarrhea · jaundice · sore throat with fever · infected cut on your hand

 **THE THREE-COMPARTMENT SINK**

IN THIS ORDER

**1 · WASH**
detergent, 110°F+

**2 · RINSE**
clean water, no soap

**3 · SANITIZE**
correct ppm, timed

**4 · AIR DRY**
never towel dry

Clean is not sanitized. Cleaning removes what you can see; sanitizing reduces germs to safe levels. Food-contact surfaces need both — and again every 4 hours of continuous use.

 **GLOVES & BARE HANDS**

**NO BARE-HAND CONTACT**
with ready-to-eat food — gloves, tongs, or deli paper

**WASH HANDS FIRST**
gloves go on clean hands — never a shortcut

CHANGE GLOVES WHEN THEY
tear · get dirty · touch raw food · switch tasks · 4 hours max
Exam value. The Food Code sets no glove clock — gloves are one-task items, discarded when torn, soiled, or on any interruption.

 **THE FLOW OF FOOD — WHERE IT CAN GO WRONG**

CHECK TEMPERATURE AT EVERY HANDOFF

**RECEIVE**
cold ≤41°F · hot ≥135°F · frozen stays frozen

**STORE**
order + date marks

**PREP**
separate boards

**COOK**
hit the temperature

**HOLD**
135°F or 41°F

**SERVE**
clean hands, no bare

When in doubt, throw it out — no smell test, no taste test, no second chances on TCS food.

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