Basic Safe Food Handling Practices

Proper Thawing Techniques
- Thaw foods in a cooler operating less than **41°F**
- Under cold running water
- Microwave for immediate cooking
- During the cooking process

Proper Cooling Techniques
- Cool foods from **135°F** to **70°F** within two hours and from **70°F** to **41°F** within four hours
- Cool foods to **41°F** if made of foods at ambient temperatures (i.e. canned tuna)
- Split into smaller portions and cool in shallow pans
- Use ice bath with stirring procedures, use ice as an ingredient, or use a chill stick
- Do not cover containers of cooling foods completely

Proper Hot and Cold Holding Temperatures
- Hold hot foods at or above **135°F**
- Hold cold foods at or below **41°F**

Proper Cooking Temperatures
- **165°F** chicken, turkey, fowl and ground meat stuffing (pork/beef) in bird
- **155°F** ground beef and ground pork
- **145°F** fish, whole muscle beef and pork and veal
- **135°F** vegetables and fruit

Proper Date Marking Techniques
- If food is not going to be used within 24 hours or if the food is to be frozen and then thawed date marking is required. If food is frozen, there should be an indication of the remaining days once it is thawed
- Food must be dated and held for no more than 7 days if held at **41°F**; this date includes preparation

Approved Food Handling Methods
- No bare hand contact with ready to eat foods, proper use of gloves acceptable
- Use spatulas tongs, wax paper or other utensils so not to touch food
- Food employees shall effectively restrain hair or wear hair restraints such as hats, hair coverings or nets, beard restraints, and clothing that cover body hair, which are worn to keep their hair from contacting exposed food, clean equipment and utensils, or linens, or unwrapped single-service or single-use articles

Time as a Public Health Control
- Food handled by time only must have written procedures to serve safe food maintained on site, must be dated with the discard time, have food start in temperature control (**41°F** or less or **135°F** or more). If serving a susceptible population time only cannot be used.

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