

## "Do's and Don'ts" for Food Handlers

You have a great responsibility. The quality of the food to be consumed by the patrons is literally in your hands. Examine the food carefully. If there are any signs of spoilage or contamination, don't take a chance. Discard it at once, or call it to the attention of your supervisor. The responsibility for the cleanliness of a large part of the establishment, a part that is usually out of sight of the patrons but none the less important, rests with you. Treat your work area as though there was a sign on the door that read "This Kitchen is Open for Inspection at all Times."

**Do:** Keep hot foods hot (140° F or higher) and cold foods cold (41° F or below) at all times. Remember that milk and milk products, poultry, fish, shellfish, meat, and many salads and salad dressings are potentially hazardous food. If these foods are not handled properly and kept at safe temperatures, they will spoil very quickly and may cause someone to get sick.

**Do:** Keep all foods covered or otherwise protected from contamination while being sorted, handled or prepared.

**Do:** Wash your hands thoroughly *before* beginning work, *before* handling potentially hazardous foods, and *after* using the toilet or performing any task which would result in soiled hands.

**Do:** Check your refrigerators frequently for cleanliness and proper temperature. The temperature should never get above 41° F.

**Do:** Wash thoroughly in clean water all fruits and vegetables intended to be eaten raw.

**Do:** Clean and sanitize, prior to use, all choppers, grinders, slicing machines, cutting blocks, knives, and any other surface which potentially hazardous foods contact.

**Do:** Wear suitable hair restraint to keep hair out of food.

**Do:** Keep storage rooms clean. They quickly collect dirt, insects and old clothes.

**Do:** Place all wet garbage and refuse containing food wastes in leak-proof containers with fly-tight covers.

**Do:** Keep shoes, handbags, and other personal items in the lockers or other facilities which have been provided for this purpose.

**Don't:** Thaw frozen foods at room temperature. Thaw them in the refrigerator, under cool, potable running water, or by cooking.

**Don't:** Allow hot foods to cool at room temperature prior to placing them in the refrigerator.

**Don't:** Use your hands to handle food when a utensil or other suitable equipment is available to use.

**Don't:** Line refrigerator shelves with newspaper, foil, or any other material. Air circulation in refrigerators is essential to proper operation.

**Don't:** Allow unnecessary items and objects to accumulate. Throw away, or store elsewhere, all nonessential items which only make cleaning the kitchen and storage areas more difficult.

**Don't:** Allow vegetables, fruits, or other containers of food to stand on the floors. Dampness or spillage will spoil the foods, and the presence of these materials on the floor hinders cleaning.

**Don't:** Let splatterings of grease collect on stoves, floors, or walls. Other dirt soon sticks to this and you have a mess which takes time and energy to remove.

**Don't:** Wash your hands in utensil-washing sinks or food preparation sinks.