



# Fact Sheet 3

## Temperature Control

### The Law

Compliance with all provisions of the *Food Act 2006* is mandatory to all persons who handle, sell or give away food to the public; whether or not it's for profit or for charity.

Under section 38 of the *Food Act 2006*, all food handlers must comply with the Food Safety Standards. This national standard requires all potentially hazardous food to be kept at the correct temperature whether the foods are in transit, being stored or on display.

### Potentially Hazardous Food

Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) are foods that have the potential to cause illness and become unsafe if it is not kept under correct temperature control. PHF's include:

- Meats, or foods containing meat
- Dairy & foods containing dairy products
- Seafood & foods containing seafood
- Processed fruits & veg (e.g. salads)
- Foods containing eggs, beans or other protein-rich foods (e.g. quiche)



### Correct Temperatures

$\leq 5^{\circ}\text{C}$  or below; for cold foods  
 $\geq 60^{\circ}\text{C}$  or above; for hot foods

Room temperature and any temperature between  $5^{\circ}\text{C}$  &  $60^{\circ}\text{C}$  are known as the "Temperature Danger Zone".

This temperature range is where food poisoning bacteria multiply, increasing the likelihood of causing illness.

PHF can only be in the temperature zone for 4 hour then they must be discarded.

### Illness

Food borne illness is generally caused when foods contaminated with food poisoning bacteria, viruses, toxin or a foreign object are consumed.

The most common cause of food borne illness is food poisoning bacteria. Food poisoning bacteria can multiply in food every 20min in the right conditions, including at room temperature.

When a person with a low or compromised immune system, consumes foods heavily loaded with food poisoning bacteria, they can become ill and in approximately 300 cases per year in Australia, die.

For further information, contact Council:

Customer Service

1300 COUNCIL  
[www.wdrc.qld.gov.au](http://www.wdrc.qld.gov.au)





## Thermometers

All food businesses are required to have a thermometer that can be inserted into food, e.g. a probe thermometer.

1. Ensure your thermometer is clean & sanitised (alcohol swabs or rinse under boiling water and dry with paper towel)
2. Ensure your thermometer is calibrated on a regular basis.

## Calibration

All food businesses are required to have a thermometer that is accurate to +/- 1°C. Routine calibration is necessary to ensure your probe is accurate. There are two common methods to calibrate;

Ice slurry; fill a cup with ice, add some water and stir: ice slurry should be between -1°C - 1°C.

Boiling water, bring water to boils and test being mindful of steam burns; boiling water should be between 99°C - 101°C.

If your thermometer is not getting the able readings then you can try changing the battery or replacing the unit.

## Thawing Foods

Ensure when thawing potentially foods you use one of the following methods;

- Under refrigeration for 24-48 hrs.
- Quickly in a microwave oven, or
- Rapidly under cold running water.

## Cooling

Cooking does not kill all bacteria and it's important, if not consuming foods, to cool them quickly. This is especially important when trying to cool large amounts of foods.

***Never leave foods on the stove or counter top overnight; put the entire pot into the cold room or refrigerator.***

When cooling large amounts for foods separate into small shallow containers, leave on the counter for 20minutes then place under refrigeration, ensuring the temperature is reduce from 60°C to 21°C within two hours, then from 21°C to 5°C within the next four hours.

## Reheating

When reheating potentially hazardous foods that have previously been cooked and cooled, ensure a rapid heat process is used to reheat, reheating to piping hot or 75°C.

Any potentially hazardous food that has previously been reheated should not be cooled and reheated a second time. This avoids food being at optimal temperatures that support the growth of bacteria four times (cooling, heating and re-cooling and re-heating).

For further information, contact Council:

Customer Service

1300 COUNCIL  
www.wdrc.qld.gov.au

