

Food Safety Basics

Serving safe food is the basic, most important thing we can do. If we get people sick when they eat with us, it doesn't matter how cold our beer is, or how tasty our food is, or how friendly our servers are. People won't come back, and they'll tell their friends. So here are some of the things we think are important, and more importantly, how they relate to your daily job requirements and activities.

“Big 5” Public Health Interventions

These are the 5 main risk factors that most commonly lead to foodborne illnesses, according to the Virginia Department of Health. Under each section, we discuss how we aim to reduce the risk of each one with our day to day behavior and kitchen procedures. You do not have to remember all of these exactly, just the concepts for now, and as you work more you'll learn and see more of the details.

The “Big 5” PHIs

1. Holding Temps
2. Cooking Temps
3. Dirty Equipment
4. Personal Hygiene
5. Unsafe Food



Inadequate Holding Temperatures

If we do not hold hot food hot, and cold food cold, we can make people sick. Cold food needs to be held below 40° and food we hold hot has to be above 135°. Meats like chicken and burgers have to be cooked to a certain temperature too.

Cold Stuff

This is the line coolers, freezers, and walk-ins. They have to keep everything below 41°.

- We do line checks and have sensors installed in the coolers to keep cold food cold. If you notice that a cooler feels hot, tell someone!
- During slow times, please close your sandwich unit lids so they don't have to work as hard.
- Keep line unit doors closed as much as possible.
- No gaps! Big gaping holes in the tops of the sandwich units allow cold air to escape and can kill the unit and freeze anything on the inside. Use hotel pans to fill any gaps in the top, big or small.

Hot Stuff

We hold soups and queso above 140. If you notice that these feel cool, tell someone!



Improper Cooking Temperatures

If we don't cook, cool, and reheat food properly, we can make people sick.

Thermometers

As a server, you don't need to use a thermometer very often. Our expos do sometimes, and our kitchen managers do often, but we don't often expect you to check temps. But there should always be one available at the expo station, for you to use if you need it. Always grab a sanitizer wipe and clean the thermometer after use.

Meat Temps

A big thing you can check as a server is whether or not your tables' food is cooked properly, by looking at it visually. We do cook burgers to red or pink if people ask, but if someone asks for a no pink and you see some red or pink in there, let a manager know so we can correct it.

Proper Cooling

We have a checklist and procedure for each item we cool. The main time you'll notice this happening is if you hear the cooling timer go off in the prep area. If you're the only one back there, just grab a manager and let them know so we can do the temp check it's set to remind us for.



Contaminated Equipment or Utensils

If we don't use clean utensils and equipment, we can make people sick.

Sanitizer Buckets

Every station should have one. One towel per bucket. Towel needs to be fully in the bucket. No dirty towels sitting on food contact surfaces.

If you notice a sanitizer bucket is dirty or oily, it probably isn't sanitizing. Grab a new one!

Cleaning Food Contact Surfaces

Green bucket with soap and green scrub pad. Damp towel rinse. Red bucket with sanitizer. Air Dry.

Dishes

If you notice something looks or feels dirty, tell someone! Don't use it! We may need to adjust the chemical levels in the dishwasher or replace a chemical altogether. The longer you wait to tell someone the more likely we are to get someone sick.

Cutting Boards

We have long cutting boards at our sandwich stations but we prefer to use smaller cutting boards on top of them. When cutting boards get deeply scratched, they need to be replaced. We can replace multiple of the smaller cutting boards for the price of one large cutting board. This helps us keep our cutting boards safe and clean.

We also have non-slip mats that go under the cutting board and can just be run directly through dish. Don't use a wet towel as you may have seen in other restaurants.




Poor Personal Hygiene

If we practice or allow poor hygiene, we can make people sick. Here are the things that we pay close attention to.

FEELING SICK?
We Need To Know!

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, you **MUST** report them to a manager before working your shift.

VOMITING
INFECTED SORES
DIARRHEA
YELLOWING
OF EYES OR SKIN
SORE THROAT
with a **FEVER**



We are also required to report these foodborne illnesses to the VDH:
Salmonella • Hepatitis A • Shigella • E. Coli • Norovirus

Help keep our guests and your coworkers safe by reporting your illness to a manager.

HAND WASHING 101

When it comes to personal hygiene, hand washing is one of the most important steps in preventing Norovirus and cross-contamination. It's also one of the easiest!

All staff must make sure to wash their hands before starting work or after completing any of the following activities:



- Using the Restroom
- Leaving and Returning to the Kitchen/Prep Areas
- Using a Phone
- Eating or Drinking
- Taking Out the Garbage
- Handling Chemicals that Might Affect Food Safety
- Handling Raw Meat, Poultry, or Seafood
- Touching Clothing, Aprons, Hair, Face, or Body (yours or someone else's)
- Clearing Tables or Bussing Dirty Dishes
- Handling Money
- Sneezing, Coughing, or Using a Tissue

5 STEP PROCESS

00:20

To effectively wash your hands, simply follow this 5-step process (which should take at least 20 seconds):

1. Wet hands and arms
2. Apply soap
3. Scrub hands and arms vigorously for 10-15 seconds
4. Rinse hands and arms thoroughly
5. Dry hands and arms with a single use paper towel or a hand dryer

Phones

We do not use our phones on the line. They have poop on them and we can get poop in people's food if we use our phones on the line. Take your phone away from food if you want to use it, and wash your hands before returning to the kitchen. This is so, so important. So. Important.

Handwashing

20 seconds! Use the timer or figure out your handwashing song of choice.

Illness

You must let us know when you are sick and what your symptoms are. We will decide when you can return to work.

But after your return, you should be even more careful than normal to wash your hands really often, and really well. Some intestinal diseases can be contagious for weeks after symptoms stop. Again – keep those gross bathroom phones off the line.

Gloves!

You must wear gloves to touch ready to eat food, and you must change your gloves in between tasks. We have single use gloves for quick grab items and thicker gloves for longer tasks.



Unsafe Food

If we serve food from unsafe sources, we can make people sick – ordering from US Foods and Cavalier helps prevent this, but after we buy it safe we still have to keep it safe. Our job is to avoid serving expired, cross contaminated, or otherwise spoiled food.

Stocking & Labeling

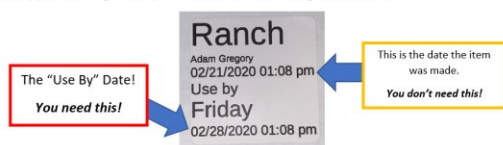
Please date your pans properly when stocking your salad and expo coolers. Learn how to transfer Use By dates from printed label to handwritten label.

Bottle Labeling 101!

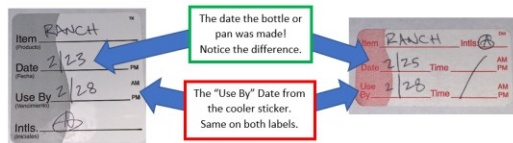
Servers and Cooks, when you make a label for a dressing or sauce bottle or pan, unfortunately we can't use the cool new label printer. This is because we can't adjust the use by date on stickers and just printing new stickers would be changing the product's Use By date incorrectly (artificially extending the life of the product). Here's how to make your hand written labels correctly.

The most important thing is that the "Use By" date on your sticker needs to be the same as the "Use By" on the item in the cooler. The "Date" line should be the date you are making the bottle, which means it will often be different than the label in the cooler. This tells us A) when the bottle was made, and B) when we need to throw the item away. Let's look at an example!

Let's say you're making a ranch pan. The label in the cooler might look like this:



When you fill your label out, you need to complete 4 pieces of information. The item, your initials, the Date, and the Use by. The "Date" is the date you are making the bottle/pan, and "Use By" is the date and time from the label in the cooler! Here's what 2 different labels, made on 2 different days, would look like from the same batch of ranch shown above.



For the time, you can just put the hour. No need to track bottles down to the minute. The goal is for us to never get to the final Use By date anyway so everything is as fresh as possible.

On 2/28 at 1pm, if we still have any, we should stop using this ranch and throw it away!

Easy! Please talk to a manager if you have any questions.



Use By Dates

Please throw away expired food. We have a zero tolerance policy for serving expired food. You are responsible for your cooler and if something is expired, or you don't know how old it is, don't serve it.

Bad Food

Please don't serve something if it smells or looks bad or off. If you wouldn't eat it, don't serve it.

Cross Contamination

Be careful to not mix items on the same cutting board. Going from raw meat to RTE food, etc. Your trainer should show you what items to be careful with at your station.

Allergies

If a food item is rung in with an allergy label, do not start it until you've talked to the expo and clarified what needs to be done for the allergy. Allergy items require fresh gloves, separate utensils and pans, and a fresh cutting board.

As a server, your most dangerous allergen is the walnuts at salad station. Please be careful not to grab walnuts with gloves and then put the same gloves in another item.