

Fresh Fish Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose

To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all foods are cooked to the appropriate internal temperature.

Scope

This procedure applies to Food Service Staff who prepare or serve food.

Key Words

Cross-Contamination, Temperatures, Cooking

Instructions

1. Train Food Service Staff on using the procedures in this SOP. Refer to the washing hands SOP, the cleaning and sanitizing surfaces SOP and the Using and Calibrating Thermometers SOP.
2. Follow State or local health department requirements.

Receiving Fish

1. When receiving whole fish look for bright red gills; shiny skin; bright, clear, full eyes; firm flesh that springs back when touched, and packed in self-draining ice 41° F or below.
2. Dull, gray gills; dull dry skin; cloudy red-rimmed, sunken eyes; strong fishy or ammonia smell; or any indication of thawing and refreezing with temperature above 41° F are cause for concern and should not be accepted.

Thawing Fish

1. Never thaw foods at room temperature.
2. Use one of the two acceptable methods for thawing food:

- a. Thaw foods in the refrigerator at 41°F or below.
 - b. Thaw foods needed for immediate service under potable running water at 70°F or lower. Prepare the product within 4 hours of thawing.
3. Use the shelf below prepared foods and above whole cuts of meat in the cooler for fish to prevent cross-contamination and separate raw products from cooked and ready-to-eat products.
4. Do not refreeze thawed foods, unless they are first cooked or processed.
5. Discard thawed, potentially hazardous foods that have been above 41°F for more than four hours.
6. Wash hands and surfaces often.

Preparing Fish

1. Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
2. Use one cutting board for fresh/raw fish. Different colored boards are a good way to keep track.
3. Wash your cutting boards, dishes, and utensils before switching to a different protein.
4. Use the wash-rinse-sanitize method to clean up kitchen surfaces. Use a clean towel for each step.
5. Never place cooked food on any surface that previously held fresh/ raw proteins unless it has been properly washed, rinsed and sanitized.
6. Don't reuse marinades, breading mixtures or spice mixtures used on raw foods that have been contaminated.
7. Only work in small batches at a time to avoid time temperature abuse.
 - a. Expose food ingredients to room temperature for two hours or less. Food items must be returned to cold holding as soon as possible after service. TOTAL time of food at room temperature shall not exceed four hours.
8. If not cooking right away, properly wrap, label and store for future use.

9. Prepare products that will not be cooked or heated away from cooked and heated products.

Cooking Fish

1. Preheat your cooking equipment to the recipes instructions.
2. Wash, rinse and sanitize the table you will be working from.
3. Place all the fish pans you are cooking onto a speed rack right away to wheel out to your oven/recipe recommended cooking equipment.
4. Set pans on your clean/sanitized table and unwrap your pans.
5. Put your pans in the recommended cooking equipment and cook according to recipe instructions.
6. Rotate food as needed if your cooking equipment doesn't cook evenly.
7. Take end-point cooking temperatures using a calibrated thermometer to check product temperature in the thickest part of the item for 15 seconds.
 - a. Fish must be cooked to a minimum temperature of 145°F.
 - b. Fresh ingredient stuffed fish products must be cooked to a minimum temperature of 165°F.
 - c. If the recommended temperature is not met, continue cooking until the proper temperature is reached.
8. Record the end-point cooking temperature on the Cooking and Reheating Temperature Log.
9. Reduce holding time of foods before serving by using batch cooking.
10. Allow the temperature of cooking equipment to return to required temperatures between batches.
11. Never use hot holding equipment to cook or reheat foods.

Leftovers

1. All potentially hazardous hot foods must be maintained at 41° or lower in refrigeration and shall be consolidated and labeled with the date for reuse.

2. Items must be logged and discarded using the 5 day discard date.

Monitoring

1. Use a clean, sanitized, and calibrated probe thermometer, preferably a thermocouple.
2. Avoid inserting the thermometer into pockets of fat or near bones when taking internal cooking temperatures.
3. Take at least two internal temperatures from each batch of food by inserting the thermometer into the thickest part of the product which usually is in the center.

Corrective Action

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Continue cooking food until the internal temperature reaches the required temperature.

Verification and Record Keeping

- Food service employees will record product name, time, the two temperatures/times, and any corrective action taken on the Cooking and Reheating Temperature Log.
- The Food service manager will verify that foodservice employees have taken the required cooking temperatures by visually monitoring foodservice employees and preparation procedures during the shift and reviewing, initialing, and dating the temperature log at the close of each day. The Cooking and Reheating Temperature Log is to be kept on file for a minimum of 3 years.

Date Implemented _____ By _____

Date Reviewed _____ By _____

Date Revised _____ By _____