

## 7.12 (c) Food Handling Procedures Policy

<b>Policy number:</b> 7.12(c)
<b>Date last reviewed:</b> July 2023
<b>Reviewed by:</b> Child Care

This policy relates to	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	2.1.3 Healthy Eating and Physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

### Purpose

Educators who supply or prepare food for children will ensure that hygienic practices are used that comply with the Food Standards Australia.

### Background

Food safety standards have been developed to reduce the level of food-borne illness in Australia. Educators who supply or prepare food for children need to meet the food safety standards.

### Policy

Educators who supply meals for children are required to prepare a written menu to be displayed and discussed with parents. Menus will be varied and will comply with Nutrition Australia and the service’s Nutrition Policy. Food provided will be appropriate to the child’s age, nutritional needs and promote an awareness of food from different cultures. Educators supplying food will be required to have completed a food handling course prior to supplying food at their service. Online training is available. The service requires a copy of this certificate.

Educators providing and preparing food for children will use correct food handling practices as outlined in Food Standards Australia. These are:

- Handle food safely;
- Store food safely;
- Maintain good personal hygiene;
- Maintain good cleaning practices.

### Handle Food Safely

Food should be handled with clean hands and gloves or utensils to avoid contamination and cross contamination of food. Equipment such as cutting boards should be in good condition with no crevices or cracks. Chipped, broken or cracked utensils may not be used. A food thermometer

(accurate to + or – 1 degree C) is required under Food Standards of Australia to measure any potentially hazardous food.

Potentially hazardous food is defined by Food Standards Australia as:

- Raw meats, cooked meats and food containing meat, such as casseroles, curries, lasagne and meat pies;
- Dairy products and foods containing dairy products, such as milk, cream, custard and dairy-based desserts;
- Seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood, such as seafood salad;
- Processed fruits and vegetables, such as prepared salads and ready-to-eat fruit packs; cooked rice and pasta;
- Processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein rich food, such as quiche and soy bean products; and
- Foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches, rice and pasta salads.

A separate cutting board should be used to prepare raw and cooked foods (different colours are recommended).

Fruit and vegetables should be washed well.

Frozen food should be thawed in the fridge or microwave.

Areas where food is prepared will be kept clean and only clean utensils will be used for handling food. Animals must be kept away from food preparation areas. Practical measures must be used to prevent pests from the areas where food is handled.

Tongs or gloves are recommended when serving food. Gloves should be worn for one task only (i.e. breaking up a cooked chicken for sandwiches). When starting the next task, new gloves are to be worn.

Different utensils should be used for raw meat and foods that are ready to eat, such as cooked meats, unless they have been thoroughly cleaned, sanitised and dried.

High risk foods (i.e. mince, burger patties, sausages, chicken nuggets) should be cooked thoroughly until they are no longer raw and there is no sign of pink remaining.

Clean and dry serving dishes should be used for cooked food and food that is ready to eat.

Food should be heated or cooked until steaming hot. The temperature needs to reach above 60°C to kill the bacteria. If using a microwave, cover food with microwave-safe wrap or microwave cover to trap steam. Stir food and rotate dish at least once through the heating process. Ensure that food

is steaming throughout and not just on the edges and allow time for food to reduce to an appropriate temperature before giving it to a child. Only reheat food once.

If keeping food hot on cooktops or in ovens the equipment temperature needs to be set high enough to ensure that the food remains hot (60° C or hotter)

Cold food, which is to be served hot, will need to be quickly and thoroughly heated until it is steaming hot and then kept hot until it is served. Food needs to be reheated to over 60°C and held at this temperature for at least 2 minutes. A thermometer may be used to check that all of the food reaches this temperature. Food standards suggest that thermometers be used to take temperature when establishing heating capacity of appliances with individual types of food.

### ***Procedures to Take the Temperature of Food***

It is recommended that temperature of 60 degrees be reached when reheating food.

The probe of the thermometer must be cleaned and sanitised before it is used to measure the temperature of the food. It should be washed in very hot soapy water and thoroughly dried with a disposable towel or air-dried.

The following method must be used to check the temperature of food:

- Insert the clean, dry probe into the food. Temperature readings are not instant – wait until the temperature has stabilised before reading;
- If the food is packaged or frozen, place the length of the probe between two packages of the food;
- The temperature needs to be taken at the centre of food as it can vary significantly from the outer to the centre of food;
- Stabilise the thermometer between measuring hot and cold foods by allowing the thermometer to come back to room temperature.

### **Store Food Safely**

Bacteria grow in temperatures between 5°C and 60°C. They multiply by splitting in two and under the right conditions, they double their number every 10 to 30 minutes. They grow faster around room temperature, but will multiply anywhere between 5°C and 60°C. This range is known as the temperature danger zone for food. For this reason, it is not safe to leave food at room temperature for more than 2 hours and perishable food should be kept cold during transportation. When storing food at less than 5°C, bacteria become inactive or multiply very slowly, although they are not killed. Cooled or frozen food needs to be defrosted under controlled conditions (fridge) and heated to above 60°C to kill bacteria.

The interior of the fridge should be 5°C or lower and the interior of the freezer should be 15°C or lower. These temperatures may be verified from appliance manuals or with a fridge freezer thermometer.

Raw meats should be stored in the bottom of the refrigerator or in a sealed section to prevent drips.

Potentially hazardous food will be stored in the fridge at a temperature of 5°C or less or 60°C or more. If potentially hazardous foods have to be cooled, the food should be cooled as quickly as possible within 2 hours - from 60°C to 21°C; and within a further 4 hours – from 21°C to 5°C.

Placing foods in shallow containers assists to reduce the temperature quickly.

Parents are encouraged to deliver perishable food to an educator's home under refrigeration or using an ice-pack to reduce the time the food is out of refrigeration.

### **Maintain Good Personal Hygiene**

Educators preparing food must take all practicable measures to ensure that the body or anything from the body or clothing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food.

Hands should be washed in a separate location to food preparation:

- Before handling and preparing food;
- After handling raw food;
- After handling an animal;
- Between handling raw food and food that is ready to eat, such as cooked food and salads;
- After using the toilet or assisting children to toilet or nappy changing;
- After smoking, coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, eating or drinking;
- After touching body parts, handling rubbish and other waste.

### ***Procedure for Correct Hand Washing***

- Wet hands under running water;
- Soap hands (using soap on tap), lather well;
- Rub thoroughly, including the wrists and between the fingers;
- Rinse in clean running water;
- Dry thoroughly on clean paper towel, leaving no moisture on the hands.

Outer clothing must be clean and unsoiled and any bandages and dressings on exposed parts of the body should be covered with waterproof dressings.

There should not be any sneezing, blowing or coughing over uncovered food or equipment.

Smoking should not occur where food is handled, prepared or served.

Wherever possible adults handling food must not do so whilst ill or suffering from a foodborne disease.

Children should not be permitted to share drink containers, plates, cups or utensils.

### **Maintain Good Cleaning Practices**

There are three steps to effectively clean and sanitise utensils and surfaces. (Sanitising means to apply heat or chemicals to a surface so the number of bacteria on the surface is reduced to a level that is safe for food contact.)

- Utensils such as cutting boards, bowls and knives need to be thoroughly washed in warm soapy water. This will remove most of the dangerous bacteria present. Sanitising will then kill any remaining bacteria;

A dishwasher is very effective at sanitising if it has a hot wash and drying cycle. Sanitisers are available for surfaces

- All utensils must then be thoroughly dried before they are re-used. Air-drying is recommended;
- Cleaning cloths need to be used for one purpose. Different cloths need to be used for wiping benches than wiping up spills from the floor. Different coloured cloths or disposable towels prevent cross contamination.

### Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010  
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011  
51(1)(a) Conditions on service approval (safety, health and wellbeing of children)  
77 Health, hygiene and safe food practices  
78 Food and Beverages  
79 Service providing food and beverages  
80 Weekly menu  
168 Education and care service must have policies and procedures

Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (ANZFA)

[www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

### Key Resources

Bacteria: Food Safety Matters (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) Student Guide  
“Four Hour, Two Hour Guide and Temperature Control Fact Sheet” Brisbane City Council  
Good Food in Family Day Care (National Family Day Care Council of Australia Limited)  
What is Better Food for Early Childhood Settings (Queensland Health)  
There's more to Food than eating, Food Foundations for children: Birth to 8 years,  
Food Safety It's all in the handling – Queensland Health  
Staying Healthy in Child Care Fifth Edition  
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Protecting Food from Contamination*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-enhealth-manual-atsicnt-l~ohp-enhealth-manual-atsi-cnt-l-ch3~ohp-enhealth-manual-atsi-cnt-l-ch3.9](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-enhealth-manual-atsicnt-l~ohp-enhealth-manual-atsi-cnt-l-ch3~ohp-enhealth-manual-atsi-cnt-l-ch3.9)  
Nutrition Australia: *12 Golden Rules of Safe Food Handling*  
[www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)  
[www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/food-safety](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/food-safety)  
The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne : Childcare and Children's Health Vol 6 No 4 (November 2003) *Food Safety Plans – What Are They?*  
[www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCCH\\_Vol6\\_No4.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCCH_Vol6_No4.pdf)  
National Health and Medical Research Council : *Dietary Guidelines for Australians*  
[www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n29-n30-n31-n32-n33-n34](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n29-n30-n31-n32-n33-n34)  
Food Standards Australia and New Zealand: *Food Safety Practices and General Requirements / Health and Hygiene: Responsibilities of Food Handlers*  
[www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/factsheets/foodsafetyfactsheets/foodsafetypracticesa70.cfm](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/factsheets/foodsafetyfactsheets/foodsafetypracticesa70.cfm)  
[www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/factsheets/foodsafetyfactsheets/healthandhygieneresp101.cfm](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/scienceandeducation/factsheets/foodsafetyfactsheets/healthandhygieneresp101.cfm)  
Family Day Care Australia  
[www.fdca.com.au](http://www.fdca.com.au)  
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing : *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Staff and Carer Book*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc)

### Related Policies

[Appendix H Safe Work Practices](#)

