

Reheating Foods Safely

Food that is cooked and refrigerated that is being prepared for **immediate service** may be reheated to any temperature.

However, if a food is cooked, cooled, and reheated with the intention of hot holding, the food must be reheated to a temperature of at least **165° F**. When foods are prepared ahead and then reheated, they should move through the danger zone as rapidly as possible. Reheating has to be done in a maximum of **2 hours**. As long as all proper cooling and reheating procedures are followed each time, foods may be cooled and reheated more than once.



Food should be brought to the proper temperature over direct heat (burner, flattop, grill, or conventional oven) or in a microwave oven. A steam table will adequately hold reheated foods above 135°F/57°C, but it will not bring foods out of the danger zone quickly enough. Instant-read thermometer should always be used to check temperatures. Reheat sauces, soups and gravies by bringing them to a rolling boil.

When reheating in the microwave, arrange food items evenly in a microwave safe glass or ceramic dish (add some liquid if needed), cover and rotate the food for even heating. Be sure the covering is microwave safe, and vent the lid or wrap to let the steam escape. Covering leftovers when reheating retains moisture and ensures that food will heat all the way through. The moist heat that is created will help destroy harmful bacteria and will ensure uniform cooking. Microwaves can cook unevenly and leave “cold spots” where harmful bacteria can survive. Always allow a stand time to complete the cooking and before checking with a food thermometer.



If you are re-heating a commercially processed and packaged food, then the reheating temperature is 135°F within 2 hours (if hot holding).

