Chapter 3: Food Safety

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Training

Food handlers trained in safe food-handling practices and principles can quickly respond to unsafe food handling situations, food recalls, consumer complaints and food-related issues arising from floods, fires or power outages. Child care centres that receive catered meals or prepare meals on site must have at least one certified food handler present.

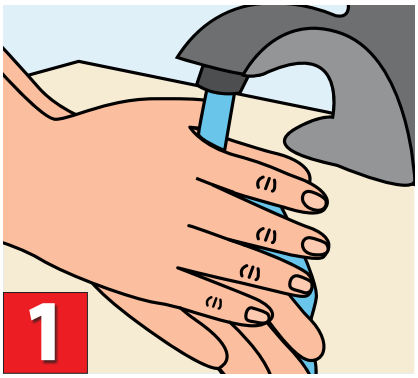
Hand hygiene

Food safety starts with hand hygiene.

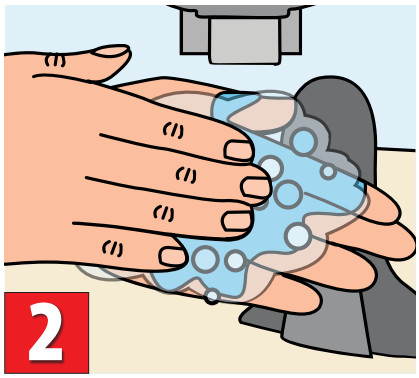
An adequate number of handwashing stations must be present and conveniently accessible by food handlers in all food handling and preparation areas. Sinks must be properly supplied with hot and cold running water, liquid soap in a dispenser, and paper towels or single-use towels. Ensure sinks are maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.



Wash your hands with soap and water before preparing, handling, serving or eating food.



Wet hands



Soap



Scrub



Rinse



Dry



Turn off water with paper towel

Dishwashing methods

Wash dishes and utensils according to one of these manual or mechanical methods.

Manual dishwashing with a two-compartment sink

- First sink: Wash dishes and utensils with soap and warm water, then rinse dishes and utensils with clean water
- Second sink: Sanitize dishes and utensils by fully immersing them in a sanitizing solution.

Please note: This method may only be used if all dishes and cooking equipment are not handled by children / clients.



Manual dishwashing with a three-compartment sink

- First sink: Wash dishes and utensils with soap and warm water
- Second sink: Rinse dishes and utensils with clean water
- Third sink: Sanitize dishes and utensils by fully immersing them in a sanitizing solution

Mechanical dishwashing

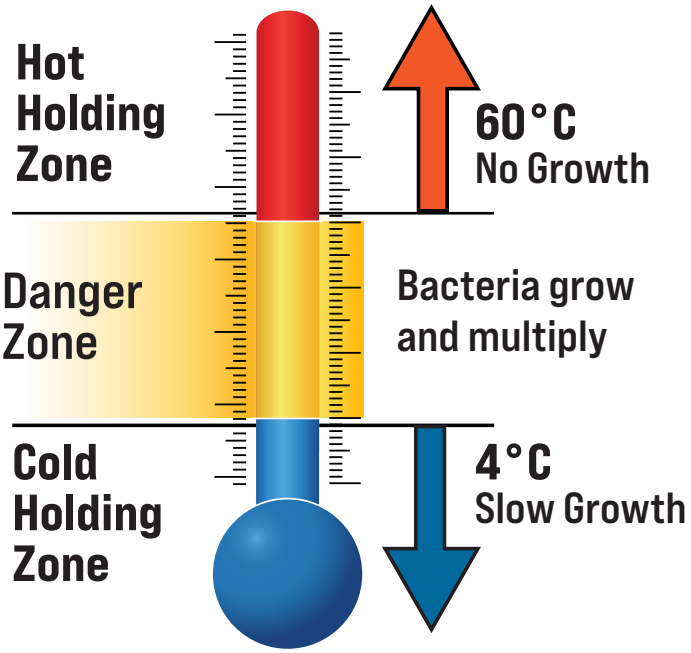
- Dishwashers must have a temperature gauge for verifying water temperatures
- Wash water must be maintained at a temperature between 60 C to 71 C
- Sanitizing can be accomplished by:
  - A rinse cycle that sprays clean water at a temperature not lower than 82 C for at least 10 seconds
  - A rinse cycle that sprays an acceptable sanitizing solution

Acceptable sanitizing solutions

The following sanitizing solutions can be used on contact surfaces or when dishwashing plates and utensils:

- Chlorine solution of not less than 100 parts per million (1:500 mixture of bleach and water) for at least 45 seconds
- Quaternary ammonium compound solution of not less than 200 parts per million for at least 45 seconds
- Commercial sanitizers used in accordance with manufacturer's directions, in consultation with your centre's public health inspector
- Sanitizer test strips are strongly recommended to ensure that your sanitizing solution is the correct strength

Storing food



Harmful bacteria can grow when potentially hazardous foods are left at temperatures between 4 C and 60 C, called the Danger Zone, for longer than two hours. Potentially hazardous foods that have been in the Danger Zone for two hours or longer are not safe to eat and need to be thrown out.

Refrigerated storage

- Refrigerate all potentially hazardous foods such as meat, poultry, fish, cooked rice and dairy products because they can grow disease-causing organisms. They must be maintained at temperatures of 4 C or colder
- Arrange food containers in the refrigerator so that air circulates freely. Don't overcrowd the refrigerator
- Routinely clean and disinfect all interior surfaces, racks, and trays of the refrigerator

Dry storage

- Keep dry food storage areas clean, dry, well-ventilated and adequately lit
- Rotate foods in storage so that the oldest food is in front (first in, first out)
- Store foods on shelves up off the floor to prevent cross-contamination and allow for easy cleaning
- Use non-absorbent, easy-to-clean shelving
- Routinely clean and sanitize all food storage areas
- Store opened products in sealed vermin-proof containers
- Label all food containers
- Keep non-food items, especially cleaning products, insecticides, mops and brooms, in a separate area away from foods

Food source

- Ensure foods come from inspected and approved sources only. Keep your receipts accessible to show your centre's public health inspector.
- Do not serve foods prepared in private homes. An exception is allowed for a parent that provides an individual meal to their child. Breastmilk, milk or formula from a private home can be supplied to a designated child provided it is properly stored and labelled.

Food samples

- It is recommended that child care centres take samples of each potentially hazardous food from every meal and keep them for 10 days. Food samples may be kept by your food caterer on your behalf. Keep a letter on site from your food caterer regarding this arrangement.
- Freeze or refrigerate food samples
- During a gastroenteritis outbreak, keep food samples until the outbreak is declared over by Public Health
- Each food sample should be 100 grams

Waste disposal

- Ensure garbage containers are able to store all garbage that is generated between collection days
- Choose durable plastic or metal garbage containers with tight-fitting lids
- Routinely clean and sanitize all garbage containers





Catering services

Child care centres may choose to have food supplied by an inspected food catering service; this service is responsible for ensuring food safety and that meals meet nutritional guidelines, including those in Canada's Food Guide.

All food premises in Niagara Region, including kitchens at child care centres and catering services, are routinely inspected for compliance with O. Reg. 493/17 – Food Premises, under the authority of the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Catering services that transport potentially hazardous foods should check the internal temperatures of the foods at the time they leave the original facility and at the time they are delivered; if longer distances are being travelled, food temperatures should also be monitored during transit. It is recommended that these temperatures be recorded in a food delivery log. Delivery personnel should also remind their clients that the food should be kept at safe temperatures until it will be used / consumed.

Child care centres should also document the internal temperatures of potentially hazardous foods at the time of delivery. If potentially hazardous foods arrive to the child care centre at an unsafe temperature (within the temperature danger zone of 4-60 C the delivery should be refused and alternate meals arranged.

Water disruptions

Every situation involving a water disruption is different. Always call Public Health immediately upon determining unscheduled loss of water, and report planned water disruptions as early as possible. Loss of running water, hot and cold, typically means child care centres must close and staff must arrange for parents or guardians to pick-up their children.

A written contingency plan should be available for how the centre will respond to an unplanned water disruption until the centre is able to close. The plan should include:

- Immediate suspension of all food preparation, handling and service unless a safe potable water supply, such as a water hauler connection, can be established
- Manual and mechanical dishwashing must also be discontinued
- Provision of an alternative supply of drinking water, such as bottled water
- A plan for continued access to washroom facilities and diapering areas, until children can be picked up. Temporary wash stations may be used if equipped with a supply of hot and cold potable water, pump soap, single-use paper towels and appropriate collection of grey water. Please consult with Public Health to verify your temporary hand washing set-up is satisfactory
- Alcohol-based hand rub should be available for staff use during diapering. Alcohol-based hand rub should be at least 70 per cent alcohol, equipped with an NPN (Natural Product Number) and within expiry date.
- An increased frequency for cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces in the centre during the disruption

A public health inspector will provide guidance to centre staff throughout the duration of the disruption to ensure safety for both staff and children.