

Food Service & Display

Good Hygiene Practice
Guide No: 11

Document Name	GHP Guide – Food Service & Display	Document No	FS/GHP/011
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Legal Requirements and Overview

Cold Display

It is a legal requirement that cold food is kept at +8°C or below (+5°C or below in Republic of Ireland). To ensure compliance with this requirement it is recommended that fridges and chilled display cabinets are operated at +5°C or below (+5°C or below mandatory in Republic of Ireland).

Ready-to-eat high risk foods such as sandwiches and salad items being served where the very young, the elderly, immune compromised people and/or pregnant women are present must be held at +5°C or below to minimise the risk of listeriosis.

Exceptions:

Cold food may be displayed out of chilled storage (above +8°C and above +5°C in Republic of Ireland) for sale or service, for a **single period only of up to 4 hours** postproduction. Consideration should be given to the type of food and the ambient temperature. High-risk foods should not be displayed at ambient where temperatures are high. Topping up of ambient displays of refrigerated foods is not permitted as this risks breaching the 4-hour tolerance period.

Pies, where the pastry fully encases the filling (meat, fish, meat substitute and/or vegetables), and sausage rolls that have been cooked in the unit can be displayed at ambient temperatures for the day of production (not applicable in Republic of Ireland). Any items left at the end of the day must be discarded.

Hot Display and Hot Holding

Food must be cooked/reheated thoroughly and to at least 75°C (82°C in Scotland). Hot holding equipment is designed to keep food hot and must not be used to reheat food. Food in hot holding or display units must be kept above +63°C.

Exception:

Hot food may be displayed out of temperature control for a **single period only of up to 2 hours** post cooking/reheating. Topping up of ambient displays of hot foods is not permitted as this risks breaching the 2-hour tolerance period.

After this time, either reheat the food until it is piping hot (unless it has been previously reheated) and put it into hot holding above +63°C, chill it down as quickly as possible and refrigerate at +8°C and +5°C in Republic of Ireland or below, or throw it away.

Wooden Boards

Wooden boards may be used for display and service of low-risk foods, such as pastries, cakes, cheese boards and desserts. However, they must be smooth, without any cracks, crevices or other damage, and made from non-toxic material to ensure that they can be effectively cleaned and sanitised.

Where possible cellophane, parchment paper or a similar disposable barrier should be placed between the board and the food.

Boards should be dishwasher safe and cleaned in a dishwasher.



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HACCP Chart Reference

Hot Hold / Counter Service / Bar / Hospitality

Cold Food Display

Compass Guidance:

- Ensure all cold display units are switched on and operating to temperature before loading them.
- Do not overfill display units and ensure foods are not above the load line of a chilled food well as the product will not be chilled sufficiently by the cold air circulation.
- Allow plenty of space between the food containers in chilled cabinets or food wells to allow air to circulate effectively.
- Open display refrigeration units are not designed to cool foods down, but to maintain food at the required temperature. Wherever possible, pre-refrigerate the foods and their containers before placing them on display to ensure correct temperatures are achieved.
- Canned meats, fish, pulses and mayonnaise that are going to be used in cold displayed foods should be pre-chilled overnight or pre-cooled in blast chiller.
- Place small quantities of foods on display and replenish, with pre-chilled foods from back up storage. Do not 'top-up' existing containers of composite dishes, such as salads or dressings.
- Where relevant use clean, shallow containers which are made from a material which will allow cold temperatures to transfer easily, e.g. metal, ceramic or food grade plastic bowls or dishes.
- Do not use poor thermal conductive materials such as bricks, wooden crates, wicker baskets, matting etc., to elevate food containers in refrigerated display cabinets as this prevents the transfer of cold temperatures to the food.
- Ensure suitable precautions are taken to minimise the risk of allergen cross-contact on salad bars / deli counters. Use separate knives, chopping boards and equipment for preparing and serving allergen free foods. Use separate tongs, serving spoons etc. for different items and in particular for allergen free foods.
- Cold display units should be protected from direct sun as sun rays will impact on the temperature of displayed foods.



Where cold foods cannot be displayed at or below +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland), for example on buffets or where no refrigerated display equipment is available, the following process must be followed:

- Display for a **maximum of 4 hours**
- Discard any leftover foods after 4 hours. Food may not be returned to refrigeration for further use.
- Record details on the **Ambient Food Service Record**, or the digital equivalent.
- Alternatively, a monitoring system, e.g. coloured dots, date/time labels, must be implemented to ensure that the 4-hour period is not exceeded. This must be documented in the comments section in the **Food Service Temperature Record** form, the **Closing Checklist** in the HSE Logbook or the **Digital HACCP System**.

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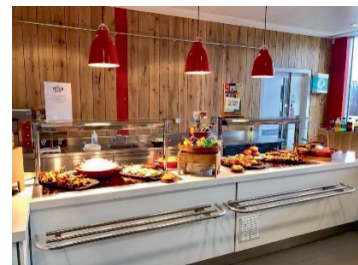
HACCP Chart Reference

Hot Hold / Counter Service / Bar / Hospitality

Hot Food Display

Compass Guidance

- Food must be cooked / reheated thoroughly to at least 75°C (82°C in Scotland).
- Hot food must be displayed and served at +63°C or above.
- Display units are not designed to heat food, and it must be at least above +63°C before it is put in a bain marie, hot cabinet etc.
- Preheat hot holding equipment e.g. bain-maries or hot cabinets before you put any food in them, so that hot hold temperatures can be maintained.
- Do not overload hot holding equipment as this will affect heat transmission and reduce the effectiveness of the equipment.
- Display small quantities of foods and replenish during service as required, with reheated foods from the kitchen.
- Do not 'top-up' existing containers of foods.
- Do not raise hot food on blocks, crates etc as this will affect the temperature of the food being held.



Where hot foods cannot be displayed at or above 63°C, for example on open buffets, the following process must be followed:

- Display hot food for a **maximum of 2 hours**.
- At the end of the 2 hours any leftover food must be:
 - Discarded
 - Quickly chilled to below +8°C and below +5°C in Republic of Ireland and refrigerated.
 - Reheated to at least 75°C (82°C in Scotland) and held above +63°C, only if food has not previously reheated.
- Record details on the **Ambient Food Service Record**, which is available on the HSE website, or the digital equivalent.
- Alternatively, a monitoring system, e.g. coloured dots, date/time labels, must be implemented to ensure that the 2-hour period is not exceeded. This must be documented in the comments box in the **Food Service Temperature Record** form, the **Closing Checklist** in the HSE Logbook or the digital HACCP System.



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HACCP Chart Reference

Hot Hold / Counter Service / Bar / Hospitality

Temperature Monitoring – Food Service and Display

Compass Rules:

Complete the Food Service Temperature Record to demonstrate that correct food display/service temperatures have been achieved and maintained for hot and cold food:

- Monitor the temperature of at least one protein food item on each cold / hot display counter and in each display unit. In the Republic of Ireland all protein foods should be monitored.
- Take temperature readings at the beginning of each service period and every 90 minutes for hot food or every 3.5 hours for cold food, until the end of service, or until sold out.
- Use a designated clean and sanitised probe thermometer.
- Probe the centre of the food item ensuring you don't touch the side or bottom of the dish/container/rack etc. as this may give a false reading.
- For foods such as stews, casseroles, curries etc you must probe the protein component.
- Where possible a food simulant should be used to monitor the temperature in cold display units. The food simulant must be placed in a location that means it is representative of food in the unit. In the Republic of Ireland all open (not pre-packed) protein chilled foods should be physically monitored.
- Allow the reading to stabilise before recording a temperature.
- Note the food item checked, along with the time and the temperature of the food or of the food simulant in the **Food Service Temperature Record** form or digital HACCP equivalent.
- Each entry must be initialled, or signed on digital HACCP systems.
- Take corrective action where food items that are not within the allowed temperature ranges, for example either cool down and refrigerate or re-heat as appropriate.
- Record corrective actions in the comments section.
- Managers must check and sign the record before filing. In Compass Ireland a weekly verification check must be completed on all HACCP records.



**SAFE
FOOD**
served with you in mind

FOOD SERVICE TEMPERATURE RECORD

Unit Name:

Instructions:

- Temperature check one food item from each display unit e.g. hot cupboard, hot counter, soup kettle, Salad bar, Deli bar etc.
- Hot food must be held at or above 63°C and cold food at or below 8°C
- Enter time of checking, food temperature and initials.

Unit No:

- Check at the start of cold holding and then **every 3.5 hours** until the end of service.
- Check at the start of hot holding and then **every 90 minutes** until the end of service.
- Form can be used for up to 2 services and allergens must be briefed to front house staff before service and this recorded by ticking the relevant box below

Action Required: Daily pre-service briefing carried out to front of house service team indicating presence of any allergens in todays menu (Tick to Confirm)

Service 1

Service 2

DATE	FOOD ITEM	HOT HOLD Min +63°C		HOT FOOD DISPLAY Min +63°C			COLD FOOD DISPLAY Max +8°C			COMMENTS	
		Time	Temp	Init	Time	Temp	Init	Time	Temp		Init
1/06/2025	Chicken casserole				11:05 0	Y2	AB				
1/06/2025	Lamb curry				11:05 0	Y4.5	AB				
1/06/2025	Plain rice				11:05 0	80	AB				
1/06/2025	Beef pie				11:05 0	Y9	AB				
1/06/2025	Gravy				11:05 0	82	AB				
1/06/2025	Bulgur salad							12:00	4.5	WD	
1/06/2025	Quiche Lorraine							12:00	8	WD	
1/06/2025	Sausage roll				12:00 0	Y4	WD				
1/06/2025	Pastie				12:00 0	Y6	WD				
1/06/2025	Beef pie	11:00	80	AB	11:10	Y2	AB				
1/06/2025	Plain rice	11:00	Y9	AB	11:10	Y6	AB				
1/06/2025	Sausage roll				1:30	Y5.5	WD				

CHECKED BY:

Manager to check the record and sign before filing.

DATE:

Return for 6 months

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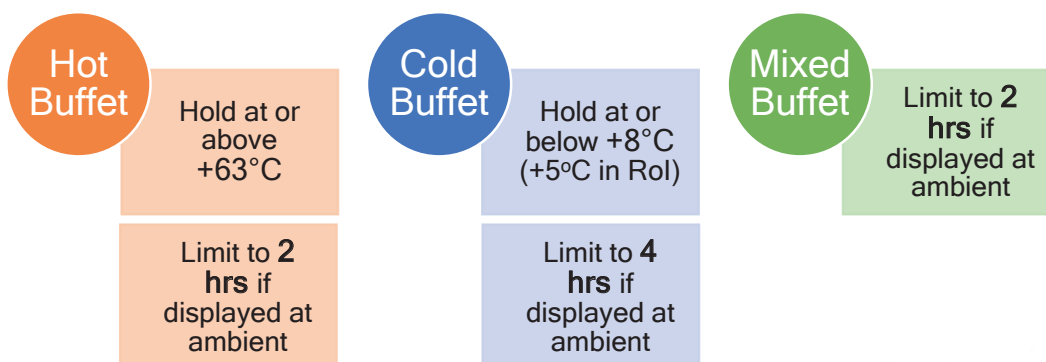
HACCP Chart Reference

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Buffets & Hospitality

Compass Rules:

- Keep food hot (at or above +63°C) or cold (at or below +8°C or +5°C in Republic of Ireland) until immediately before service.
- Record the food service temperature and the time on the **Food Production Temperature Record**.
- Record that the food was for a buffet, trolley-round etc in the comments section.



Compass Guidance:

- For practicality reasons it is recommended that any mixed food buffet i.e. a buffet with both hot and cold food items, is displayed for a maximum period of 2 hours.
- Where appropriate display a courtesy notice beside the buffet advising consumers as to when the food should be eaten.
- Any unused food from mixed buffets that has not been refrigerated or held hot whilst on display must be discarded if not consumed.

Your buffet was placed on display at **.** hours
To ensure that the quality of the food is maintained, please consume within 2 hours

Food Vending Units

Records of vending machine checks show that the equipment is being regularly serviced and that the operating temperature is monitored. Use the **Vending Record** form to record temperatures daily. Vending machines holding ready to eat protein items such as sandwiches, salads or pasties must be operated at temperatures of +5°C or below.

Compass Rules:

- Check the operating temperature of each vending machine daily.
- Ensure stock rotation is undertaken by placing products with the shortest shelf-life at the front.
- Remove and discard any out-of-date foods or foods that will be out of date before the unit is next serviced / restocked.
- Record the date, name of the vending machine and I.D. code or its location.
- Record the time of the 'fill and clean' service, the food shelf-life check and the temperature of the machine.
- Managers must check and sign the record before filling.



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HACCP Chart Reference

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Specialist Groups

Patient Dining

The service of food to residents and patients in a healthcare setting may be subject to additional controls due to the vulnerability of the individuals. As such the following controls must be implemented:

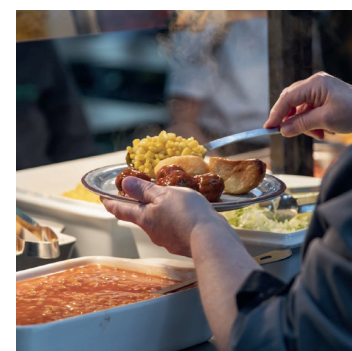
- All ward refrigerators used to store both in unit prepared and bought in food must operate at +5°C or below in order to adequately control the risk of Listeria.
- Cool food in service areas with direct sale or service to patients or residents must be displayed and served at or below +5°C.
- Meals brought in by visitors for patients must be purchased from a recognised supermarket, who will comply with agreed standards of food safety: Tesco, Waitrose, Sainsbury's etc. Once meals arrive, they can be stored in Ward pantry fridges under the following criteria:
 - Clearly marked with date of delivery and use by date
 - Clearly marked with patient name
 - Must be fully sealed
- Once stored they will be monitored by catering staff to ensure:
 - Any dishes that are expired /due to expire will be disposed of and patient informed.
 - Any opened meals will be disposed of and patient informed
 - Any meals not clearly labelled will be disposed of
- Heating of bought in meals will be recorded on the service temperature record clearly marked with dish/patient name and temperature achieved
- Home cooked food is not permitted to be re-heated or served by the on-site catering team



Please refer to additional guidance around the service of medical diet meals within a healthcare setting

Pupil Medical Diet Meals

Service of school meals, particularly within primary school settings, should follow the relevant Medical Diet Policy, to ensure that all dietary requirements are accounted for and the pupils are always served the correct meals for their specific dietary requirements. Please refer to the relevant policy for your Subsector and ensure this is followed.





Preventing Allergen Cross-Contact

Compass Rules:

- All displayed foods must be labelled so that they can be easily identified.
- Ensure that allergen information is available (and on display in Republic of Ireland) for all items on display.
- Never place foods with known allergens directly next to other foods. For example, do not place a pastry with nut topping on the same display platter as pastries without nuts.
- Provide separate serving utensils to prevent cross-contact.
- Where appropriate display signage, requesting customers use the utensils provided for each individual product.
- Monitor the buffet and replace serving utensils as necessary.
- Follow **GHP13: Allergens** for further guidance.

Preventing Contamination

Compass Rules:

- Where possible covers or sneeze guards should be used to protect food from contamination by customers.
- Check electronic fly killers are not located above food displays because debris can be ejected from them.
- Any raw vegetables, fruit, herbs, or other items added to the display for visual effect must be washed.
- Do not place potted herbs in display units.

Preventing Glass Contamination

Compass Rules:

- Use of glass serving dishes should be avoided on service counters and buffets.
- Where glass dishes are used, use plastic serving utensils.
- If glass or crockery breaks near an open salad bar or cold/hot food display, suspend service while the breakage is cleared, and all food removed.
- Never take a chance - glass and crockery fragments can spread over a wide area and can cause serious injury if consumed.
- Lightbulbs and fluorescent light tubes should be shatter-proof, sleeved or protected by a shade or diffuser to prevent contamination if they break.
- Screens fitted to food display equipment should be manufactured in Perspex or other shatter-proof material.
- In Compass Ireland a glass register should be in place that identifies all glass and hard plastic in use and regular checks should be completed.

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Additional Guidance

1. Personal Hygiene
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2 - Personal Hygiene** for additional guidance on good personal hygiene, hand washing technique and uniform standards
2. Cross-Contamination
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 4 - Cross-Contamination** for guidance on how to minimise cross-contamination risks
3. Shelf Life & Labelling
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 5 - Shelf Life & Food Labelling** for additional guidance on labelling food
4. Probe Thermometer Accuracy Check
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 9 - Cooking** for guidance on how to check the accuracy of your probe thermometers used for checking food display temperatures
5. Allergens
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 13 - Allergens** for guidance on allergens and the back of house and front of house processes to manage allergens and inform customers of allergen information
6. Glass policy
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 7 - Food Preparation** for more detail on the glass policy

