

# Time as a Public Health Control Measure for Hot or Cold Food

Regulation 61-25: Retail Food Establishments



[www.scdhec.gov/food](http://www.scdhec.gov/food)

## Five Key Risk Factors

*repeatedly identified in foodborne illness outbreaks:*

### 1. Improper Holding Temps

### 2. Inadequate Cooking

3. Contaminated Equipment
4. Food from Unsafe Sources
5. Poor Personal Hygiene

*1 and 2 are addressed on this sheet.*

## Regulation 61-25

Citation 3-501.19

Time as a Public Health Control measure may be used instead of time and temperature as long as certain requirements are met and the facility is not one that exclusively serves a highly susceptible population, such as a hospital.

*See information on right for requirements.*

## Public Health Reasons

Food kept without temperature control allows product to warm and cool with the ambient surroundings. For both cooling and warming conditions, growth of pathogenic microorganisms depends on the amount of time the food spends in an optimal temperature range.

Time as a Public Health Control measure (TPHC) refers to using time to monitor food instead of temperature.

Food establishments can now use Time as a Public Health Control of Time/Temperature Control for Safety Foods ([TCS Foods](#)) without temperature control for four to six hours if they meet certain time limits and guidelines.

Citation [3-501.19](#) allows the use of Time as a Public Health Control for safety where food may be held between 41°F and 135°F if the following conditions are properly implemented:

- » Written procedures, prepared in advance, **must be maintained** at the retail food establishment and made available to DHEC upon request.



For holding hot or cold foods without temperature control, a facility **can develop a procedure** to hold food up to a **maximum of four (4) hours** if:

- » The food has an initial internal temperature of 41°F or less or 135°F or greater when removed from hot or cold holding temperature control; **and**
- » The food is marked, or otherwise clearly identified with:
  - The time taken out of temperature control;
  - The four (4) hour discard time; or
  - Both.

For holding cold foods without temperature control, a facility **can develop a procedure** to hold food up to a **maximum of six (6) hours** if:

- » The food has an initial internal temperature of 41°F or less when removed from temperature control; **and**
- » The food temperature does not exceed 70°F at any time during the six (6) hour time period; temperature monitoring will be necessary.

**Once the time limits are reached, any remaining food MUST BE SERVED OR DISCARDED IMMEDIATELY.**