

Hotel F&B™



FOR HOTEL, RESORT, AND CASINO FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATIONS

Aloft-y Expectations

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Hold It Now

Follow these six steps for safer holding.

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Prepare to practice your powers of observation. Proactive management of service transactions and proper holding times are imperative but easy to forget in busy, high-volume production areas.

Time and temperature monitoring and control are particularly important when foods and vessels are residing in ambient air within a kitchen. Your staff must consider their workflow plan for a given set of assigned tasks and make every effort to have the smallest amount of product residing in the danger zone.

I ask that you take some time out of one day during a busy production week and observe the handling of products. Consider these factors when making your observations:

- Is your staff effectively batch-processing items to minimize Time-Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) products residing in the danger zone?
- When you are considering preparation procedures and related equipment needs for a recipe, consider the amount of time the ingredients will need to be in the danger zone as well as the temperatures that must be achieved at each step for safety. Will an equipment change or simple rearrangement minimize out-of-temperature holding times?
- The designs and layouts of production areas should foster practical and realistic flow of products through the processing steps.
- Designs should include temporary

cold-holding areas and, if needed, hot-holding areas for products under process with as short as possible distances to refrigeration and hot-holding. This minimizes the pressures on staff to remove large quantities of products out of refrigeration and bring them into the preparation areas. Large amounts of products in less secure production areas, compared to storage areas, also increases the opportunity for intentional adulteration.

- Holding or in-process times and temperatures should not just be considered for food products. You need to maintain control of equipment and utensils as well. As you observe your production over a longer period of time, consider how long a piece of equipment is "contaminated" before it is washed and sanitized again.
- How are your production utensils being held? Are they contaminated and allowed to reside in the danger zone for extended periods of time only to be "washed off" by manipulating another product? Control the time they reside in the danger zone and switch them out at least every four hours. Utensils on your buffets most likely will need much more frequent change-outs and tighter controls given the number of guests that are potentially handling and/or mishandling them. If you change the utensil, change the utensil rest as well. ■

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