

Food Safety and Hygiene

Steps in managing food safety in the workplace

Ten Tips for Better Barbecues, Potlucks, and Parties

Cal Poly's Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management department encourages members of the campus community to celebrate together, while prudently managing the risks of food borne illness. We understand that we can't eliminate the risk of food borne illness altogether, and we offer these food safety guidelines as a means to improve your experience breaking bread together.

1. **Consider catering the event.** Catering puts most of the burden of food safety on others.
2. **Avoid perishable foods.** Examples of foods that spoil easily are dairy, eggs, cheeses, fish, and meats.
3. **Consider prepackaged, prewashed foods.** Making these simple choices will reduce the chance of introducing food-borne bacteria into the event.
4. **Clean – Wash hands, surfaces, and utensils often.** Food-borne bacteria are invisible and can spread throughout the kitchen and get on cutting boards, utensils, sponges, countertops, and food. Keep yourself and co-workers safe by keeping your hands, surfaces, and utensils clean. Make sure fruits and veggies are washed thoroughly, too!
5. **Separate, Don't Cross-Contaminate.** Raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs can contain harmful bacteria. Prevent cross-contamination by keeping these foods separate from others during preparation and cooking. Use different ice for cooling drink containers than you use for drinking. Wear disposable gloves when preparing and serving for others.
6. **Cook to Proper Temperatures.** Heating foods to the right temperature for the proper amount of time will kill harmful bacteria that cause food-borne illness. Use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature. Bacteria that cause food-borne illness grow at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F.
7. **Refrigerate Promptly.** At room temperature, harmful bacteria can grow rapidly in food. The more bacteria there are, the greater your chances of becoming sick. Cold temperatures keep most harmful bacteria from multiplying, so keep perishable foods in the refrigerator.
8. **Follow the two-hour rule.** Don't give bacteria a chance to grow – keep food at above 140°F or below 40°F. If you put food out at room temperature, don't leave it out for more than two hours.
9. **Clean Up Completely.** Leaving food out allows bacteria to grow and attracts varmints, and the varmints bring messes of their own.
10. **Become better educated.** Take our food safety training class on the Environmental Health and Safety website under food safety. Be a leader in your workgroup regarding this issue!