

# AMY'S FOOD SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

October 2025



## UPCOMING SERVSAFE® CLASSES

October 27th – Louisville  
October 29<sup>th</sup> – Lexington  
November 3rd – Louisville  
November 10th – Louisville  
December 2nd – Louisville  
December 15th – Louisville

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

2025 Taste of Louisville  
October 17<sup>th</sup> Mellwood Arts  
Center. Visit [kyra.org/events](http://kyra.org/events) to  
purchase tickets.

2025 Fall Restaurant Forum  
November 17<sup>th</sup> TOPGOLF  
Louisville. Visit [kyra.org/events](http://kyra.org/events)  
to register.

## TIME AND TEMPERATURE ABUSE

Food Safety is not just a regulatory requirement; it is the bedrock of public health and the foundation of trust between restaurants and their guests. Understanding the risks to the food served to the public is paramount to avoid any type of contamination from happening.

According to data published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), inadequate time and temperature control during preparation or cooking was the second most common contributing factor for foodborne illness outbreaks between 2014-2022.

Time and temperature abuse is one of the most common risk factors for a foodborne illness. When food is left in the temperature danger zone (41°F-135°F) for too long pathogens start to grow to unsafe levels. Pathogens are the harmful microorganisms that grow in food by mitosis, in which the pathogens double in number 2 to 4, 4 to 8, 8 to 16 and so forth and cause illness. To prevent this from occurring, the time and temperature of certain foods must be controlled throughout the flow of food. These foods are known as TCS foods- time and temperature control for safety. Examples would be:

- Milk and dairy products- store at 41°F or lower.
- Meat, beef, pork, and lamb- store at 41°F or lower and cook ground meats to an internal temperature of 155°F for 17 seconds. Cooks all steak, chops, and other meat cuts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F for 15 seconds. Meat Roasts should be cooked to a minimum temperature of 145°F for 4 minutes.
- Fish, shellfish, and crustaceans- store at 41°F or lower and cook seafood to an internal temperature of 145°F for 15 seconds.
- Baked potatoes- keep below 41°F or above 135°F
- Shell eggs- store at 41°F or lower and cook to an internal temperature of 145°F for 15 seconds.



- Poultry- store at 41°F or lower and cook to an internal temperature of 165°F.
- Heat-treated plant food such as cooked rice, cooked beans and vegetables- cook to an internal temperature of 135°F and hold at the same temperature or higher.

Other food items that fall under the TCS category and need to be monitored include tofu, cut leafy greens, sliced fruits, peeled garlic, and non-treated garlic and oil mixtures.

It is important to monitor and record food temperatures during prep, cooling, cooking and holding. Food needs to be cooked to the correct internal temperature and if cooling, follow the two-stage cooling method. The goal is to cool food from 135°F to 70°F within two hours and to 41°F or lower in the next four hours. If the food is going to be held for service, then cold food should be held at 41°F or lower and hot food should be held at 135°F or higher. Follow best practices when using a thermometer, always insert the thermometer into the thickest part of the food and take readings in different spots and always clean and sanitize the thermometer before and after each use.

Reheating food is also important when considering time and temperature abuse. Food reheated for immediate service can be reheated to any temperature as long as it was cooked and cooled correctly. Food reheated for hot holding during service needs to be reheated to 165°F for fifteen seconds within two hours.

It is important to train your food handlers in ways to avoid time and temperature abuse during the flow of food. Having a Certified Food Protection Manager onsite during all operating hours that can train and coach the food handlers on your food safety management system is key to avoiding a potential food borne illness outbreak.

*Learn more about Time and Temperature abuse and other risk factors to your food by signing up for a ServSafe® manager class with the Kentucky Restaurant Association.*

*National Restaurant Association Food Safety month  
ServSafe Manager 7<sup>th</sup> edition revised book*



**Registered ServSafe Proctor  
& Certified ServSafe Instructor**

Amy Shankle  
133 Evergreen Rd  
Louisville, KY 40243  
502-400-3736  
[amy@kyra.org](mailto:amy@kyra.org)  
[www.kyra.org](http://www.kyra.org)