

FOOD AND NUTRITION PROCEDURES

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

H7

Subject: **THAWING FOODS**

PURPOSE: To prevent foodborne illness by ensuring that all foods are safely maintained at the appropriate internal temperature during the thawing process.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to food service employees who prepare or serve food.

KEY WORDS: Cross-Contamination, Temperatures, Cooking

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Train food service employees on using the procedure in this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
2. Food products must be thawed by one of the following methods: ([Attachment](#))
 - a. Preferred method - thaw foods in the refrigerator at 41°F or below. NEVER thaw foods at room temperature.
 - b. Thaw foods needed for immediate service under potable running water at 70°F or lower. Prepare the product within four (4) hours of thawing.
 - c. Thaw foods in a microwave oven only if product is being cooked immediately.
 - d. Thaw foods as part of the conventional cooking process. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and check the internal temperature of the food before serving.
3. Use the lowest shelf in the cooler for thawing raw meat to prevent cross contamination and separate raw products from cooked and ready-to-eat products.
4. Do not refreeze thawed foods, unless they are first cooked or processed.
5. Label food products with calendar date of removal from freezer. ([Attachment](#))

MONITORING

The food service manager will visually observe that food service employees are following the procedure in this SOP for thawing foods.

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CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. Retrain any food service employee found not following the procedure in this SOP.
2. Discard food products that are being thawed improperly and have exceeded an internal temperature of 41°F.
3. Correct the thawing procedure if internal temperature has not exceeded 41° F.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The food service manager/satellite assistant will verify that foodservice employees are following this procedure by visually observing employees during all hours of operation. The food service supervisor will review the [HACCP Food Safety Checklist](#) to verify that monitoring is being conducted. The [HACCP Food Safety Checklist](#) is to be kept on file for a minimum of five (5) years.

For Action By: Principals, Food Service Managers, Satellite Assistants and All Food Service Employees

Refer Questions to: Department of Food and Nutrition

Created: July 2006

Revised: December 2018, July 2021, August 2022, July 2023

Reviewed: July 2023