

**FOOD AND NUTRITION  
PROCEDURES**  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools

**H12**

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Subject: **DATE MARKING READY-TO-EAT HAZARDOUS FOODS**

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**PURPOSE:** To ensure appropriate rotation of ready-to-eat food to prevent or reduce foodborne illness from *Listeria monocytogenes*.

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

**KEY WORDS:** Ready-to-Eat Food, Potentially Hazardous Food, Date Marking, Cross-Contamination

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Train food service employees on using the procedures in this standard operating procedure (SOP).
2. Label food products with the calendar date on which it is prepared or opened ([Attachment](#)).
3. Refrigerate all ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous foods at 41 °F or below.
4. Ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous foods must be discarded if not consumed within 7 calendar days from the prepared/opened label date.

**MONITORING**

The food service manager/satellite assistant will check refrigerators daily to verify that foods are date marked and that foods exceeding the 7-day time period are not being used or stored.

**CORRECTIVE ACTION**

1. Retrain any food service employee found not following these procedures.
2. Foods that are not date marked or that exceed the 7-day time period will be discarded.

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**VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING**

The food service manager will verify that food service employees are date marking ready-to-eat hazardous foods and will complete the [HACCP Food Safety Checklist](#) weekly. The region 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: July 2021  
Reviewed: July 2023*