

TIME AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROL

You may use time as a public health control under certain circumstances to prevent bacterial growth or toxin production.

Food items that can be used with “time only” as a public health control:

- A working supply of potentially hazardous food held before cooking.
- Ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food that is displayed or held for service for immediate consumption.



Conditions necessary to use “time only” as a public health control:

- The food establishment must submit written notification to this department of its intention to use time as a public health control prior to putting it into effect.
- The food container or package must be clearly marked to indicate the exact time that is four hours past the point in time when the food is removed from temperature control.
- The food must be cooked and served, served if ready to eat, or discarded, within four hours from the point in time when the food is removed from temperature control. *Once time is used as the control, food **can not** be placed under temperature control again to be saved and used at a later time.*
- All food in unmarked containers or packages, or for which the four hour time limit has expired, must be discarded.
- To ensure that employees know how to properly use time as a control, written procedures must be maintained in the food establishment which detail the following:
 - * marking food packages or containers with a time limit;
 - * how to use time limits when cooking and serving foods, or serving ready to eat foods;
 - * discarding food that is unmarked or for which the time has expired; and
 - * properly cooling foods that have been prepared, cooked, and refrigerated prior to using time as the public health control.