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# Serving It Safe

SECOND EDITION

Produced by the  
National Food Service Management Institute  
under a Cooperative Agreement  
with  
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# Introduction

## Getting the Most from *Serving It Safe*

In work environments, individual employees can make a big difference – in positive as well as negative ways. This is especially true in foodservice where an employee can introduce a food safety hazard at any point in the food production process. Foodservice personnel are the single most critical element in keeping the foodservice operation safe and sanitary.

### All foodservice personnel have a lot at stake as they prepare and serve food each day.

- Serving food that is improperly stored, prepared, cooked, or held may cause customers to become seriously, even fatally, ill.
- Unsafe foodservice practices also place employees in danger.
- The good reputation of a Child Nutrition Program must be built on serving safe food.

### Some ways to ensure food safety are to

- EMPOWER employees with the knowledge and skills they need to prepare and serve foods safely.
- HELP them realize the key role they each play every day in protecting students' health and well-being.
- HOLD THEM RESPONSIBLE for preparing and serving food safely.

### The technical material presented in *Serving It Safe* is based primarily on

- *Serving It Safe: A Manager's Tool Kit.*
- *2001 Food Code*
- *ServSafe Coursebook*
- *ServSafe Essentials*

The *2001 Food Code* is a reference document for regulatory agencies responsible for overseeing food safety in retail food establishments such as restaurants and grocery stores and institutions such as nursing homes and child care centers. The *Food Code* is updated periodically; state, local, and tribal jurisdictions may use the *Code* as a model for their sanitation codes.



### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- *Serving It Safe*
- *Poster*



The reader may notice that in some cases this edition of *Serving It Safe* recommends a more conservative approach to food safety practices than the *Food Code*. In such instances, the recommendation will be noted as “best practice.” The *Food Code* suggests minimum standards. A foodservice operation may select a more conservative approach to ensure a margin of safety. Recommended temperatures listed in this edition of *Serving It Safe* reflect the 2001 *Food Code* and may be different than local or state requirement.

State and local public health department codes may have requirements different than those presented in this document. *Serving It Safe* should be adapted to include State and local public health department code requirements and school district policies and procedures.

## ***Serving It Safe***

The six chapters of *Serving It Safe* provide foodservice personnel at all levels with an up-to-date source of information for managing a safe and sanitary foodservice operation. The Table of Contents for *Serving It Safe* can be used to locate information about food safety.

**CHAPTER 1: *Food Safety Is Top Priority*** describes the responsibilities of foodservice personnel to prepare and serve safe food to customers including students, school faculty and staff, and visitors. The chapter describes why food safety is important and gives general guidance on how foodservice personnel can assure the preparation and service of safe foods.

**CHAPTER 2: *Prevent Foodborne Illness—Understanding Microorganisms*** introduces the causes and prevention of foodborne illness. The chapter also describes how to respond when symptoms of foodborne illness are reported.

**CHAPTER 3: *Basic Facts about Microorganisms*** includes a description of the most common foodborne illnesses caused by bacteria, viruses, molds and yeasts, and parasites. Bacteria and viruses are the microorganisms of greatest concern in foodservice, and the chapter describes how the growth of these microorganisms can be prevented or controlled.

**CHAPTER 4: *A Clean and Sanitary Foodservice*** provides the foodservice director and manager with guidance on promoting food safety through good personal hygiene and common sense when working near food or with food. The chapter also includes information on maintaining a clean and sanitary environment for the preparation and service of food.

**CHAPTER 5: *A Process for Preventing Foodborne Illness*** explains the eight steps in the food production process and how to prevent foodborne illness at each step.

**CHAPTER 6: *Introduction to Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)*** presents an overview of the HACCP system. The seven principles of HACCP are explained and examples are provided.