

CUYAHOGA COUNTY
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B O A R D O F H E A L T H
YOUR TRUSTED SOURCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

Levels of Risk
Food Service Operations/Retail Food Establishments

Risk Level Classifications and Terms:

Large (L) is > 25,000 ft²

Small (S) is < 25,000 ft²

Commercial (C)

Non-Commercial (N)

TCS Foods = Time and temperature controlled for safety foods

1. Level 1 = C1S , C1L, N1S, N1L

Main Concerns: general sanitation, labeling, source of food, storage temperature control, expiration dates

- Pre-packaged non-TCS foods
- Non-TCS beverages (packages, fountain, coffee)
- Pre-packaged refrigerated and/or frozen TCS foods
- Baby food, baby formula
- Over the counter drugs

2. Level II = C2S, C2L, N2S, N2L

Main Concerns: Level I concerns; hand contact, employee health

Permits handling of TCS foods in situations where there is little or no potential for pathogen growth.

- Baking of non-TCS food
- Manufacturing of confectionary products
- Bulk displays of unwrapped non-TCS foods
- Re-packaging of non-TCS food prepared elsewhere
- Warming of food from a commercially processed hermetically sealed container and immediately handled for retail sale or service
- Maintaining hot TCS foods at proper holding temperature until handled for retail sale or service if it was received at 135°F or above
- Manufacture and bagging of ice for retail sale
- The operation only prepares and/or serves non-TCS food
- Hand dipping of frozen desserts, frozen dessert dispenser
- TCS foods received in individual portions and served immediately

- Foods, prepackaged in individual portions, received from a licensed food operation or off premise commercial processor and served cold or heated individually and immediately served.
- Foods received from a licensed food operation or off premise commercial processor in bulk quantities and maintained and served at the same proper temperature as received

3. Level III = C3S, C3L, N3S, N3L

Main Concerns: Level I and II concerns; proper cooking temperatures, proper cooling procedures, proper holding temperatures, contamination issues and/or improper heat treatment in association with longer holding times before consumption, or processing a raw food product to sell as ready-to-eat that requires bacterial load reduction procedures

- Heat treatment dispensing freezer
- Processing of produce for ready-to-eat sales
- Cutting and grinding of meat products
- Slicing of lunch meat
- Reheat in individual portions
- Heating of product from intact commercial sealed package and held hot
- Cook, cool, add additional raw ingredient, cold hold

4. Level IV = C4S, C4L, N4S, N4L

Main Concerns: Level I, Level II, and Level III concerns; food goes through several preparation steps where temperature control is needed to prevent bacterial growth

- Cook/cool/reheat/hot hold, Cook/cool/reheat (with or without additional ingredients)
- Time in lieu of temperature
- Reheats bulk quantities of leftover TCS foods more than once every 7 days
- Transports TCS foods as a catering food service or a commissary food service operation
- Service to high risk clientele including immune-compromised or elderly individuals in a facility that provides either healthcare or assisted living
- Offers as a menu item raw TCS meats, poultry products, fish or foods with these items as ingredients
- Canning, bottling, reduced oxygen packaging, smoking for preservation, juice pressing, acidified food for preservation
- Selling of oyster, clam, and mussels from a shellfish tank
- Uses time in lieu of temperature (TILT) to hold TCS foods in the danger zone