

## Cooking advice for volunteers

Thank you for giving up your time for the good of the community!

Please remember that if you are over 70, have an underlying health condition or are pregnant you should not volunteer as you could be putting yourself at unnecessary risk of infection. In addition if you are suffering from COVID 19 symptoms i.e. a high temperature and new persistent cough; or have been in contact with a sufferer you must isolate for 14 days.

This guide has been prepared to help provide some guidance when preparing meals at home, or in a community church or centre.

Where you attend a community church or centre social distancing must be maintained, to protect yourself and your fellow workers. Care must be given when planning operations to maintain a 2 metre spacing by zonal working, limiting access to the kitchen, extending preparation times and remote working. If you cannot maintain a 2 metre spacing then you must stop activities.

## Preparation

Pre-clean the kitchen before preparing food i.e. any surfaces that come into contact with food must be easy to clean and in a sound condition.

There are a wide range of products available for cleaning and disinfection. Make sure you read the manufacturer's instructions carefully to ensure you are using the right product at the right time. A 2-stage cleaning operation is best with hot soapy water (detergent) followed by a (disinfectant).

Detergents clean the surface and remove grease, but they do not kill bacteria.

Disinfectants kill bacteria and should be used on a visibly clean surface. They do not work effectively if the surface is covered in grease or visible dirt and it is important to follow the specified contact times.

Sanitisers can be used to both clean and disinfect as part of a two-stage approach, first use the sanitiser to clean the surface removing dirt, food and grease then re-apply to the visibly clean surface making sure you leave for the required contact time (refer to label) to disinfect the surface.

## Hand hygiene

Your hands are in direct contact with food so are the most common vehicle for transfer of potentially harmful bacteria so regular hand-washing is essential in a kitchen environment. Please ensure that you use the dedicated wash hand basin and not the washing-up sink. If you are preparing food at home is not likely that you will have an additional sink, so you must consider alternative arrangements.

The 20 second hand-washing protocol is key during this COVID 19 pandemic and will assist in trying to prevent the spread of the virus. Use soap or a liquid soap that is anti-bactericidal and rinsed thoroughly under warm running water, after visiting the toilet, after a break and before handling food, if you touch the hair, face, nose, mouth or ears, after putting on or changing a dressing, handling waste food or rubbish. The process of washing your hands using a liquid soap will help break down the exterior shell of the virus, the running water will wash then away.

Disposable paper towel can be used at home to dry the hands or use a dedicated fresh clean hand towel.

### **Personal hygiene (controlling infection i.e. sickness)**

If you are suffering COVID 19 symptoms i.e. high temperature and/or new dry persistent cough, or have been in contact with a known sufferer, you CANNOT volunteer.

If you are suffering from diarrhoea and vomiting, or are generally unwell you CANNOT volunteer as you are a risk to spreading food poisoning or foodborne bacteria.

The 48 hour rule applies. You must be free of symptoms for 48 hours before you can volunteer or return to work.

Cuts, spots and sores should be completely covered by waterproof dressings.

Please remove watches, jewelled rings and ear rings as they can harbour dirt and bacteria and if they do fall into food will be a choke hazard. Wedding bands are ok to wear.

Always wear a clean apron.

Long hair should be tied back and/or hats can be worn. It is not essential that you wear disposables gloves when handling food providing if the good hand hygiene rules set out above are followed. It is important to remember that wearing disposable gloves is not an alternative to hand washing. If disposable gloves are worn they should be changed frequently.

### **Cross contamination**

Cross-contamination of surfaces is the way potentially harmful bacteria (including viruses) are spread around the kitchen so please apply the following golden rules;

Ready to eat food must be kept separate from raw food.

Do not wash raw meat as the splashes will easily spread any bacteria present.

Always wash ready to eat fruit and vegetables

'Clean as you go' in particular, taps, fridge door handles, worktops etc.

Store raw meats on the bottom shelf of your fridge.

Always wash your hands after touching raw food and before you handle ready-to-eat food.

If you are packaging up food parcels, ensure that raw meat is stored separately from other food items.

### **Correct cook temperatures**

Preheat ovens before cooking.

Check that the core temperature at the centre of a cooked food achieves 75oC for at least 30 seconds.

If you do not use immediately, cool quickly and store in the refrigerator.

Foods must be cooled within 90 minutes. If this is not achievable when divide into smaller portions.

When reheating food, you should aim to reach a temperature of 75oC again and you must only reheat food once.

### **Transporting the food safely**

Food must be transported in a safe way to prevent contamination and be under temperature control i.e. below 8oC or above 63oC. This can be achieved for a limited period, if transported in packaging designed to retain heat or in a cool bag with ice packs.

If service is to be immediate make sure it is completed as soon as possible, and certainly within a maximum of 2 hours for hot food and 4 hours for cold food.

Vehicles must be kept clean and in good condition, if necessary food may be kept in containers capable of keeping food at the right temperature i.e. cool boxes.

You must also practice safe delivery i.e. ring door bell and step back 2 metres

### **Durability**

Please remember to have regard to the use-by information supplied on the packaging of high-risk foods and this needs to be factored into time for consumption by your customer. You need to ensure that your customer is clear on storage instructions i.e. keep in the fridge; and when it should be consumed by i.e. same day or within 24 hours.

### **Allergens**

Foods that contain one of the 14 known allergens should be identified for the safety of the consumer.

This can be a simple check of all the ingredients you have used to make up the food. You should then provide a list of the allergenic ingredients that appear on the labels of packets and containers of your ingredients. You are required to provide this information in a way that is clear to the consumer.

You may receive voluntary food donations which you intend to use. Please ensure that you check the packaging from damage, check use-by dates and allergen information as the same standards apply as stated above.

If you require any further clarification of information please contact us using any of the following methods.

T: 01752 398501

E: [public.protection@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:public.protection@plymouth.gov.uk)

W: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/foodsafetyandhygiene>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthEHTS>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PlymouthEHTS>

Further detailed guidance on all aspects of community cooking please visit the following link.

<https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene/food-safety-for-community-cooking-and-food-banks>