

# Mass Feeding for Emergency Operations

## FINDING AND EQUIPPING A MASS FEEDING SITE

### Food safety

- Keep perishable foods at room temperature for periods of 30 minutes or less. Otherwise, maintain cold food at 41°F or below, or hot at 135°F or above.
- Do not serve time/temperature control for safety food (TCS food) such as ground meat or egg salad sandwiches, chicken or other fowl, potato salad and cream-filled desserts and pastries.
- Appropriate meal items include peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, smoked meat or cheese, and canned fruits and vegetables.
- Do not serve home-prepared meals or hot dishes. Home-prepared non-TCS foods such as baked cookies, bars, fruit pies or cakes are acceptable.

**KEEP HOT FOODS HOT AT 135°F OR ABOVE.**

**KEEP COLD FOODS COLD AT 41°F OR BELOW.**

### Sanitizing cooking and eating utensils

Use disposable dishes and utensils whenever possible. Do not reuse plastic or paper items. If you must use washable dishes and utensils, clean them in a standard three-compartment sink, or a sink equipped with three separate containers that can serve as an improvised three-compartment sink.

### Procedure to sanitize cooking and eating utensils

1. Wash all items in the first sink, using a household detergent solution in clean, hot water.
2. Rinse in the second sink, in clean, hot water. Remove all detergent residues, to ensure that the final sanitizing step will be effective.
3. Sanitize your utensils in the third sink. Use a solution made with one tablespoon of bleach for each gallon of water. This will yield a chlorine concentration of 200 parts per million, which should be adequate to sanitize your dishes, even if the water you are using is contaminated. Make sure your dishwashing water is clear and free of sludge or sediment.
4. Air dry all dishes and utensils.

### Food service workers

All persons volunteering to work in your mass feeding center should be properly oriented before they begin work.

### Personal hygiene

- Food workers should wash their hands frequently, particularly after using the toilet, or after handling materials or equipment that may be contaminated.
- Keep yourself and your clothing clean. Cleanliness is essential for all people who work in the mass feeding center.
- People with vomiting, diarrhea, fever, or respiratory illnesses should not be

allowed to work in a food service operation.

- No one with cuts, burns or other skin abrasions should be allowed to handle food unless wounds are covered with waterproof dressings or gloves.

## How to wash your hands

1. Wet your hands
2. Apply soap
3. Rub your hands for 10 to 15 seconds
4. Rinse your hands
5. Dry your hands
6. Keep hands clean

The entire process must last at least 20 seconds. Gloves, wet-wipes or hand antiseptics are not substitutes for handwashing.

## Prevent bare hand contact with food

People in a disaster can be at greater risk for getting sick from unsafe food. One way of keeping food safe is for food workers to wear gloves while preparing food.

It is important that gloves be used the right way:

- Food workers should use utensils such as tongs, scoops, deli papers, or single-use gloves to keep from touching food whenever possible.
- It is important to wear gloves when touching food that will not be cooked (ready-to-eat food) such as sandwiches, carrot sticks and cookies.
- Food workers should wear single-use gloves when they are preparing foods that have to be handled a lot. This includes making sandwiches, slicing vegetables or arranging food on a platter.

It is also important to remember that both hands and gloves must always be clean.

- Always wash hands before putting on clean gloves.
- Change gloves that get ripped or torn.
- Change gloves that get dirty.
- Never wash or reuse gloves.
- Change gloves when you change jobs, such as when you move from making sandwiches to cutting raw vegetables.
- Throw gloves away after you use them.
- Wash your hands after taking gloves off.

## Supervision

If possible, someone who has experience with large food service operations should supervise your mass feeding operation. Possible supervisors include school or institutional food service managers, or people who have worked as cooks, employees or managers in large restaurants.

## Drinking water

If your water has been contaminated or if you are unsure of its safety:

- Use only boiled or bottled water.
- Use only commercially packaged ice from approved sources.

## Garbage handling

Dispose of garbage frequently. If the local community disposal facility is not accessible, use a remote area for temporary storage. Clean these temporary storage areas thoroughly, and transfer garbage to the regular facility when it reopens.

## Resources

Minnesota Department of Health Food  
Business Safety  
([www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety))

Minnesota Department of Health  
Food, Pools, and Lodging Services  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
651-201-4500  
[health.foodlodging@state.mn.us](mailto:health.foodlodging@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)

Minnesota Department of Agriculture  
Food and Feed Safety Division  
625 Robert Street N  
St. Paul, MN 55155-2538  
651-201-6027  
[MDA.FFSD.Info@state.mn.us](mailto:MDA.FFSD.Info@state.mn.us)  
[www.mda.state.mn.us](http://www.mda.state.mn.us)

JANUARY 2019

To obtain this information *in a different format*, call:  
651-201-4500 or 651-201-6000. Printed on recycled  
paper.