



Time as a Public Health Control Application

What is time as control?

Using only **time** rather than **time and temperature** to control growth of bacteria and keep food safe. Food is generally held under mechanical temperature control (hot holding units and refrigerators) to ensure safe product and to control bacterial growth in potentially hazardous foods. When time is closely monitored, food may be kept under no temperature control for four hours or less. Within four hours, there will be limited bacterial growth or toxins produced. **Once time is used as a control, food may not be placed back under mechanical temperature control to be saved and used later.**¹

When can time as a control be used?

Time as a control should be used when facility design or procedure is such that mechanical refrigeration or hot holding is impossible. This includes:

- ◆ A working supply of potentially hazardous food held before cooking (e.g. raw hamburger patties that are to be grilled)
- ◆ Ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food that is displayed or held for service or immediate consumption (e.g. buffet service)

What are the conditions of using time as a control?

- ◆ This application must be submitted **before** using time as a control
- ◆ Clear and consistent documentation must be kept. Label the food container to indicate the exact time that food needs to be discarded (four hours past the time that food is removed from temperature control). **If you are found not closely monitoring times, you will lose the privilege of using time as a control.**
- ◆ Food must be cooked and served, served if ready-to-eat or discarded within four hours of removing it from temperature control. Food must still be properly protected in packaging or on display from customer contamination and meet all other requirements of the food code.

The following items must be documented and kept on record:

1. **Cooling methods** of foods that are prepared, cooked, and refrigerated ahead of time.
2. **Reheating methods** for any food prior to using time as control.
3. **Time as a control log sheet.** All items served will be entered into the time as a control log sheet by the kitchen manager before the start of the shift. See attached sheets for an example log sheet.
4. **The time and temperature leaving the kitchen** will also be recorded into the log book.
5. **Time in which items were discarded** (items may not be returned to the kitchen for reuse; they must be discarded within four hours)

¹ MDH Food Code Chapter 4626.0410 Time as a Public Health Control
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Hennepin County Time as a Public Health Control Record

Establishment Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Dates/Times Time as a Control will be used _____

Food items requesting time as a control

Steps for Time as a Control Plan

1. Foods that will be prepared ahead of time:

Detailed cooling method (attach separate methods for each item as necessary)

2. Foods that will be reheated prior to using time as control

Detailed reheating method (attach separate methods for each item)

3. Log book procedure

Person Responsible:

4. Labeling procedure

Person Responsible:

5. Discard procedure

Person Responsible:

I understand this alternative to mechanical controls may be revoked should documentation or procedure fail to be followed.

Signed _____ Date _____

Print Name _____ Title _____

Time as a Control Log Example

Date: _____

Food Item	Labeled By: (initials)	Temp	Time Taken Out of Temperature Control	Time Discarded or Completely Served	Comment

Time as a Control Log

Date: _____

Food Item	Labeled By: (initials)	Temp	Time Taken Out of Temperature Control	Time Discarded or Completely Served	Comment