

Tips for Student Nutrition Programs

Food Safety and COVID-19

Safe food handling is important to prevent the spread of bacteria and germs so students and others do not get sick.

Main measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with other people who are sick.
- Stay two metres /six feet away from others such as staff, volunteers, students, and those making deliveries.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently.
- Wash your hands often. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- Wear a face mask or covering when you are in enclosed, public spaces, and follow any additional requirements in place at your school.
- Download the COVID Alert app so you can be notified directly if you have been in close contact with someone who was contagious with COVID-19.

Before handling food or assembling meal/snack service bins/trays

- Pull your hair back in a hat, scarf, or hair net.
- Wash your hands using warm water, liquid hand soap, and dry them with paper towels.
- If available, wear an apron to protect your clothing.

Foods that need to be refrigerated

- Hazardous food items, such as milk, must be stored at a temperature of 4°C or less.
- Coolers with ice packs can be used for temporary storage with a thermometer to ensure that appropriate temperature is being maintained.

Foods that do not need to be refrigerated

- Non-hazardous food (e.g. unpeeled fruit, bread).
- Whole fruit can sit out with a cover as long as it does not spoil.

While handling food

- If you touch your face, hair, mask, cell phone, or clothes, wash your hands before handling food again.
- Sneeze or cough into your sleeve away from food, utensils (e.g. bins/trays) and food preparation areas. Then wash your hands.
- If food falls on the floor, discard it and wash your hands.
- If you have a cut or a wound on your hand, bandage the wound and wear gloves when handling food.
- If using gloves, change them regularly, and wash your hands before and after using gloves.
 - Remove gloves when changing tasks.
 - When gloves are removed, new gloves must be used each time.
- Prevent cross contamination by:
 - Keeping raw foods away from cooked or ready to eat foods.
 - Using separate equipment and utensils for raw, cooked, and ready-to-eat foods,
 - Washing your hands before and after handling food, and
 - Keeping the counter space clean and clutter-free.

After bins/trays are returned

- If a hazardous food, such as milk, is left out for over 2 hours at 4°C or above, it should be discarded.
- Put away all food properly (e.g. sealed and stored in the refrigerator or cupboards).
- To prevent pests, food and bins/trays should be stored on shelves and not on the floor.
- Clean and sanitize used dishes, equipment and utensils.
- Clean and sanitize food contact surfaces (floor, counters, sinks, etc.).
- All bins/trays should be washed and sanitized before and after each use or sooner if it looks dirty.

If you are unsure what to do in a food handling situation, contact dinesafe@toronto.ca