

GCC KITCHEN HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES

INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE A CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS SHOULD NOT WORK OR HAVE ACCESS TO THE CHURCH KITCHEN

- A handwashing sign must be posted. All persons working in the kitchen must wash their hands with soap and warm running water before beginning work.
- Protect all storage, preparation, cooking and serving areas from contamination.
- Food handlers must use utensils, disposable papers, disposable gloves or any other means to prevent bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food.
- A clean dishtowel (from the drawer) should be used at each event. Dry dishtowels on the drying rack above the sink are to be put in the laundry bucket underneath the sink to be taken home to be washed and returned at a later date. Towels should be laundered in the hottest washing machine cycle.
- Utensils and dishes that are dishwasher-safe are to be scraped, and cleaned and disinfected in the dishwasher. Items not dishwasher-safe are to be cleaned with hot soapy water, dried with a clean dishcloth and put away.
- All leftover food that has been served should be thrown away or taken home immediately unless still in its original packaging. Unserved food (eg.- half a pan of brownies, half a pot of soup) may be packaged, labeled and put into the freezer.
- Before leaving the building all dishes are to be washed and put away where they were found, all surfaces should be wiped clean and disinfected, the floor swept, and all other supplies and equipment put away. Used dish towels are to be hung to dry on the drying rack or taken home to be washed with those in the laundry bucket underneath the sink and returned. Towels should be laundered in the hottest washing machine cycle.
- If food is brought into the kitchen prior to an event, it must be specifically labeled with the name of the event (e.g. Food for _____ Funeral, Food for Coffee Hour).
- Disposable containers should be used whenever possible dishes should be clearly marked with the owner's name. Any unclaimed/unmarked dishes or plastic ware will go to the church's Thrift Shop to be sold four weeks after they are found.
- Children of primary-school age and younger should be restricted from access to the kitchen unless accompanied by a responsible adult and closely monitored.

Food Preparation Guidelines

- Never thaw foods by allowing them to sit at room temperature. Use one of the following methods:
 - Refrigerator: The refrigerator allows slow, safe thawing. (Place thawing meat and poultry into a container to prevent juices from dripping onto other food.)
 - Cold Water: Place food in an airtight plastic bag and submerge in cold tap water. Change the water every thirty minutes. Cook food immediately after thawing.
 - Microwave: Follow instructions in your microwave book for correct thawing procedure. Use foods immediately after microwave thawing.
- Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water before use. Thick-skinned produce may be scrubbed with a brush. Do not use soap.
- Do not cross-contaminate.
- Use different cutting boards for raw meats, vegetables, and cooked food.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, fish, and the juices away from other food.
- After cutting raw meats, wash hands, cutting board, knife, and counter tops with hot, soapy water.
- Eggs should be prepared immediately after breaking.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure that food is cooked to the proper temperature:
 - Cooked foods - minimum temperature of 135° F.
 - Roasted meats (such as beef, pork, and lamb) - minimum temperature of 145° F.
 - Ground meat - minimum temperature of 160° F.
 - Poultry - minimum temperature of 165° F.
 - Leftovers – reheat to a minimum temperature of 165° F.
- Never partially cook food for finishing later as this increases the risk of bacterial growth on the food.

Food Storage Guidelines

- Refrigerated foods should be held at or below 40° F. Frozen foods should be held at or below 0° F.
- Only use foods before the “use by” date.
- Store ready-to-eat food such as bread, salad, or cake on the highest shelves in the refrigerator. Store raw meats and poultry on the lowest shelves.

- Protect food products from contamination by keeping them covered or packaged until being served.

Sanitation Guidelines

- Always wash hands with soap and warm, running water for at least twenty seconds before beginning food preparation, after handling food, when changing from one task to another (e.g., cutting meat to cutting bread), and after using the restroom.
- Use paper towels or clean cloths to wipe up kitchen surfaces or spills.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitize any piece of equipment and any place where food is prepared, both before and after each use.
- Sponges should be disinfected appropriately. Food grade chlorine bleach is the easiest and most effective chemical sanitizer:
 - For spray bottles, make a solution of one teaspoon unscented liquid chlorine bleach per quart of cool water. Spray surfaces such as countertops and cutting boards with this solution and allow to air dry. If you choose to dry surfaces with a towel, allow the bleach spray to remain on the surface for at least thirty seconds.
 - For buckets or sinks, mix one tablespoon unscented liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of warm water. Allow pots, pans and utensils to soak in the diluted bleach solution for two minutes. Drain, and allow to air dry. Do not add more bleach than is recommended, and be sure to start off with a surface that has been washed and rinsed.
 - Diluted chlorine bleach solution can be stored in a closed container such as a spray bottle for up to one week.
 - Large mop sink should ONLY BE USED for mops and their buckets.

Food Handling and Serving Guidelines

- Use disposable gloves when handling or serving ready-to-eat foods.
- Serve foods in small containers, using a clean container to refill supplies from the oven, saucepan, or refrigerator.
- When serving, hot food should be held at 140°F or above and cold food should be held at 40°F or below.
- Perishable food on a buffet should never be left in the temperature danger zone (between 40°F and 140°F) for more than two hours. This includes both hot food and cold food. If food has been in this zone for more than two hours (or 1 hour in temperatures above 90°F) it should be discarded.