

15A NCAC 18A .2806 FOOD STORAGE AND PROTECTION

- (a) Once pre-packaged food has been opened, the food shall be stored in clean, resealable bags or containers made of plastic or glass that are tightly covered and manufactured for the purpose of food storage.
- (b) Food that is stored in child care center classrooms or other rooms intended for child care use, shall be limited to foods that are individually packaged unless the classroom is equipped with a food preparation area.
- (c) Notwithstanding Paragraph (b) of this Rule, bulk dry goods or food stored in freezers may be stored in rooms in child care centers that are not equipped with a food preparation area when all food preparation involving the bulk dry goods or frozen food is done in the kitchen or an approved food preparation area.
- (d) Bulk food stored in a refrigerator shall be stored at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below and stored in the child care center's kitchen or in an approved food preparation area equipped with a full-size refrigerator. Specialty bulk milk that is sent from home for consumption by a child while at the child care center may be stored as set forth in this Paragraph when the child's parent or guardian provides written permission and the specialty bulk milk is sent to the child care center at the beginning of each week unopened, labeled with the date received by the child care center, and labeled with the name of the child to whom the bulk specialty milk belongs. Any remaining bulk specialty milk shall be sent home at the end of the week with the child to whom the bulk specialty milk belongs.
- (e) Dry goods that are stored in containers shall be labeled.
- (f) Food and containers of food shall not be stored under exposed sewer lines. Food shall not be stored in toilet or laundry rooms, except that child care centers licensed for fewer than 13 children and located in a residence may store food in laundry rooms if the food is stored and protected as required in Paragraph (g) of this Rule.
- (g) Food shall be stored above the floor and in a manner to protect it from dust, pests, drip, splash, and other contamination.
- (h) Raw meats, poultry, fish, shellfish and eggs shall be stored in a refrigerator or freezer on shelving beneath and separate from other foods. The temperature of potentially hazardous food provided by the child care center for consumption by children shall be 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below, or at 135 degrees Fahrenheit or above at all times, including field trips, catering events, and outdoor service, except during periods of preparation and service immediately prior to consumption.
- (i) Sealed, commercially pre-packaged food may be stored in undrained ice as long as the food is not fully submerged in ice or water. Wrapped sandwiches and other foods shall not be stored in direct contact with ice.
- (j) The following shall apply to refrigerated storage of food:
 - (1) Refrigeration equipment shall be provided in such number and of such capacity to ensure the maintenance of potentially hazardous food at the required temperatures during storage. Each refrigerator shall be provided with a numerically scaled indicating thermometer that is accurate to ± 3 degrees Fahrenheit and located to measure the air temperature in the warmest part of the refrigerator. Recording thermometers that are accurate to ± 3 degrees Fahrenheit may be used in lieu of indicating thermometers.
 - (2) Potentially hazardous food requiring refrigeration after preparation shall be cooled to an internal temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Cooling of potentially hazardous foods shall be initiated upon completion of the food preparation or hot storage. Methods such as pouring into pans, agitation, and chilling with ice or water circulation external to the food containers shall be used to cool potentially hazardous food. Potentially hazardous food that will be transported cold shall be prechilled and held at a temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or below.
 - (3) Ice used for cooling stored food and food containers shall not be used for human consumption.
- (k) The following shall apply to the hot storage of food:
 - (1) Hot food storage equipment shall be provided in sufficient number and capacity to ensure the maintenance of food at the required temperature during storage. Each hot food unit shall be provided with a numerically scaled indicating thermometer that is accurate to ± 3 degrees Fahrenheit and located to measure the air temperature in the coolest part of the unit. Recording thermometers that are accurate to ± 3 degrees Fahrenheit may be used in lieu of indicating thermometers. Where it is impractical to install thermometers on equipment such as steam tables, steam kettles, heat lamps, cal-rod units, or insulated food transport carriers, a metal stem-type, thin probe, numerically scaled indicating product thermometer that is accurate to ± 3 degrees Fahrenheit shall be used to check internal food temperature.
 - (2) The internal temperature of potentially hazardous foods requiring hot storage shall be 135 degrees Fahrenheit or above except during periods of preparation and service. Potentially hazardous food that will be transported hot shall be held at a temperature of 135 degrees Fahrenheit or above during transportation.

(l) In the event of a fire, flood, water supply interruption, power outage, or other event that results in the contamination of food, or that might prevent potentially hazardous food from being held at required temperatures, the person in charge shall either discard the food in question or contact the local health department for information on food safety.

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