

## Food Safety

Ensuring the safety of the foods that we eat and serve is critically important in preventing foodborne illness. It is easiest to think about preventing foodborne illness if you think in terms of four basic rules: Clean, Separate, Chill and Cook.

### Clean

- Always wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water before handling food. Rub hands together vigorously for 20 seconds before rinsing thoroughly.
- Wash work areas and utensils in hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before going on to the next one.
- Use plastic or non-porous cutting boards. Wash in dishwasher or with hot soapy water after each use.
- Use disposable towels or machine wash cloth towels with hot soapy water often.

### Separate

- Store raw meat and poultry on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so juices don't drip onto other foods.
- Use one cutting board for raw meat products and another for salads and other foods which are ready to be eaten.
- Always wash work areas with hot soapy water after they have come in contact with raw meat or poultry.
- Never place cooked food on a plate which has previously held raw meat or poultry.

### Chill

- Refrigerate or freeze perishables or prepared food within two hours.
- Never defrost food on the kitchen counters. Use the refrigerator, cold running water or the microwave.
- Divide large amounts into small, shallow containers for quicker cooling. Label and date containers.
- Don't pack the refrigerator. Cool air must circulate to cool food quickly.
- Keep cold foods at or below 40°F.

### Cook

- Use a meat thermometer which measures the internal temperature of cooked meat and poultry to make sure that the meat is cooked thoroughly.
- Cook ground beef and ground pork to 160°F, ground turkey and ground chicken to 165°F, chicken and turkey breasts to 170°F, whole poultry, legs, thighs and wings to 180°F.
- Re-heat cooked meats and foods to 165°F, bring sauces, soups and gravy to a boil when reheating.
- Make sure there are not cold spots in food when cooking, stir often. Keep hot foods at or above 140°F before and during serving.