

# Food Delivery & Storage

Good Hygiene Practice  
Guide No: 6

Document Name	<b>GHP Guide 6: Food Delivery &amp; Storage</b>	Document No	<b>FS/GHP/006</b>
Document Owner	<b>Food Safety</b>	Date of Issue	<b>January 2025</b>
Classification	<b>Internal Use</b>	Version No	<b>04</b>





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## HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt & Delivery / Food Storage

## Legal Requirements

Food Safety Regulations require that food business operators store food products and ingredients in appropriate conditions, designed and maintained to prevent harmful deterioration and to protect food from contamination.

Once deliveries are satisfactorily received, they must be stored in a hygienic manner that will prevent the risk of contamination.

## Food Safety Hazards

Microorganisms that cause illness and food spoilage can grow at temperatures between 5°C and 63°C, often referred to as the danger zone. Keeping all high-risk foods out of the danger zone reduces the risk of food poisoning.

**ALWAYS** keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate during delivery, receipt, and storage, to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

This guide covers delivery and storage of ambient foods, as well as temperature-controlled food storage i.e. food stored under refrigerated or frozen conditions. It is important to read the manufacturer's instructions regarding the correct storage conditions for all food items.

## Food Deliveries – General Controls

Properly inspecting and checking delivered food products is an essential food safety step. The quality and safety of food deliveries can be affected by physical defects, cross-contamination during transport and due to inadequate temperature control.

Follow the steps below to correctly receive and check the delivery of products, record deliveries and deal with rejected items.

1. Check for **physical defects**, such as:

- Rusted, leaking or dented cans
- Damaged or split packaging
- Air pockets or pierced vac pack packaging
- Mouldy food / unpleasant odours
- Signs of insect or rodent damage or infestation
- Over-ripe or discoloured fresh fruit, salads and vegetables



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### 3. Check **shelf-life**:

- Use By and Best Before dates must offer an adequate shelf-life remaining to allow for use within planned food production.
- Whilst food can be used after the Best Before date, these products should not be accepted.

### 4. Check for signs of **cross-contamination**:

- Inspect deliveries to make sure there is no evidence of cross-contamination, for example from raw food or from soil on vegetables to ready-to-eat foods, before accepting the delivery.
- Look for leaks and stained or sticky packaging.
- Reject any ready-to-eat foods that have become contaminated.

### 2. Check the temperature off all chilled and frozen food deliveries:

- Ensure foods are within the relevant acceptable temperature range (frozen foods: between  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$ , chilled foods: below  $+5^{\circ}\text{C}$ .)
- This can be done **either** by taking a copy of the printed vehicle temperature display reading, using an infra-red thermometer or by using a dedicated delivery probe thermometer to take between pack temperature readings.
- In Republic of Ireland physical, between pack temperatures, taken with a dedicated probe thermometer, are required and a printed vehicle temperature reading is **not acceptable**.

### 3. Place all deliveries, and in particular chilled and frozen food, into storage without delay.

### 4. Where appropriate decant larger quantities of food into smaller containers to check for pests and to aid transportation.

### 5. Record details of the delivery:

- Complete all details on the **Food Delivery Record** in the Logbook, on the **Food Delivery Record Form**, or in the digital HACCP equivalent.
- If you have obtained a printed vehicle temperature display readout, attach this to your **Food Delivery Record** form (not acceptable in the Republic of Ireland).

### 6. Place any rejected food in a suitable container or a separate area, label it “not for consumption” and arrange for it to be returned to the supplier. Report details to the Foodbuy support team and in the Republic of Ireland contact the Compass Care and Commercial Department.



## Food Storage – General Control Measures

### 1. Temperature Control

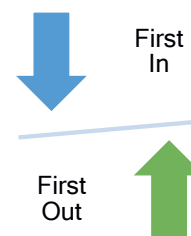
Temperature control is one of the most important features of food safety management. Store foods at the temperatures shown below to maintain product quality and safety:

- Chilled foods: 0°C to +5°C
- Frozen foods: -18°C to -23°C
- Ambient foods: no specific temperature range, but storage areas should be cool, dry and well-ventilated.

### 2. Stock Rotation

Make sure that all foods are labelled and dated, so that every product's shelf-life is clear.

Rotate food products when replenishing to ensure that FIFO: first in first out, principles are followed. This helps ensure effective stock rotation and minimise spoilage and waste.



### 3. Freezing Bought in Fresh Food

It is recommended that food is purchased, prepared and cooked as near as possible to the service period in order to guarantee food safety and quality, however, it may be necessary to freeze purchased fresh food in order to prolong product shelf-life and avoid excess food waste.

- Always check and adhere to the manufacturer's information regarding the suitability of the product for freezing. Some products are not suitable for freezing because they have been previously frozen and refreezing these foods can pose a food safety hazard. Other foods may not be suitable for freezing as this can affect the quality of the food.
- Food must be within its shelf-life. Ideally it should be frozen upon receipt, but no later than 2 days before the Use By date. Do not freeze food on or past its Use By date.
- Do not refreeze any food which has already been frozen and defrosted.
- Keep products in the original packaging with any manufacturer's information and shelf-life information visible.
- Ensure a food label is applied to clearly show the date the food was frozen and apply a maximum shelf-life of 6 months (3 months in Republic of Ireland), unless otherwise specified by the manufacturer.

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### 4. Prevention of Cross-Contamination

Keep raw food separated from cooked and ready-to-eat foods. Storage should ensure that there is no risk of cross-contamination. This can be achieved by:



- Storing raw foods in different refrigerators to cooked and ready-to-eat foods, where possible.
- If separate fridges are not available, storing raw foods in separate areas to ready-to-eat and cooked foods.
- Storing ready-to-eat foods above eggs and unwashed salads, fruit and vegetables.
- Storing raw meat, poultry and fish below all other foods.
- Ensuring ready-to-eat, cooked and raw foods are stored in suitable, preferably lidded, containers or that they are wrapped/covered (this does not apply to unpackaged fruit, vegetables and herbs).

Dry goods must be stored off the floor and on suitable shelving or racking, with access for cleaning and inspection.

Secure/wrap opened packs of dry food or place foods in impervious containers with close-fitting lids.

Thoroughly empty, clean and dry the food containers once emptied and before restocking.

Follow the guidance on storage in GHP13 Allergens to prevent allergen cross-contact.

Always keep cleaning products away from foods. Where a dry food store is also used for storage of equipment and/or cleaning products, ensure there is proper segregation from food items.



All **containers** must be food grade and made specifically for food storage. Containers that have previously been used for cleaning products should never be used for food storage, even if they have been thoroughly cleaned after use.

The outside and inside of food containers must be cleaned and sanitised between uses.

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### 5. Ice Cream

Ice cream should be stored at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$ . However, where ice cream is being stored for service, it may be kept in a holding freezer at a temperature of between  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  without compromising food safety. After service product should be returned to a storage freezer operating at  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### 6. Eggs

Wherever possible, store eggs under refrigeration, or alternatively follow manufacturers recommendations and store eggs in a cool, dry place below  $20^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Store eggs in their original packaging and keep them separate from other foods. If eggs are stored in the same refrigerator as raw meats and/or cooked foods, ensure that they are always below any cooked and ready-to-eat foods, but above raw meats to avoid risk of cross-contamination.



### 7. Sushi and Sashimi

A separate area of the refrigerator must be provided for the storage of sashimi and for sushi containing raw fish or shellfish.





## Temperature Monitoring Refrigerators and Freezers

### Compass Rules:

Fridge and freezer temperatures are monitored, and the **Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record** form or digital HACCP equivalent is completed to demonstrate that correct storage temperatures for chilled and frozen foods have been maintained.

### Compass Guidance:

Fridge and freezer temperature displays can be unreliable, and temperatures of the units must be recorded using a thermometer. Infrared thermometers can be used to check fridge and freezer temperatures, or alternatively, a temperature probe can be used.



Record all thermometer temperature readings to one decimal point on the Refrigerator / Freezer Temperature Record form or the digital HACCP equivalent. Make sure that equipment being monitored is clearly identified by name or number, so that records can be traced back to specific equipment. Record any relevant corrective actions etc in the comments section.

### Fridge temperature checks:

To obtain accurate temperatures that demonstrate the overall performance of fridges, a food simulant should be used. Manufactured food simulants may be purchased or alternatively blocks of butter, margarine or lard, pots of jelly, or bottles of water can be used. (Please note, water bottles must NOT have sanitiser, or any other chemical added to them.)

Ensure that all food simulants are clearly labelled (e.g. 'Temperature Monitoring - Not for Consumption') and dated, or alternatively the Weekly Temperature Monitoring labels, which are available from Linney, or in Ireland from Café Brands, can be used.

Replace food simulant jelly at least fortnightly. Blocks of butter, margarine, or lard and bottles of water should be replaced monthly but may be replaced less frequently where kitchens are used infrequently or where temperatures are measured using an infrared thermometer. Where water bottles are used, these must be regularly visually inspected, and discarded if there is any sign of contamination, such as debris, food particles or mould.

Temperatures must be accurately checked and recorded twice per day. The first check should take place within 1 hour of the kitchen opening and the second during the afternoon or evening. An additional check is required where units operate a 3-shift or 24-hour service.

Compass Ireland sites using a digital HACCP system that automatically records temperatures must still complete a manual check using a probe once a week and record this in their digital system. A food simulant is not required for this weekly check and the temperature can be checked by placing the probe in-between packs of food.

Refrigerator temperatures must be between 0°C to +5°C. Follow the guidance in the following section if a fridge temperature is found to be above +5°C.

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For **infrared thermometer fridge temperature** checks:

- Hold the thermometer at a distance from the food simulant in-line with the manufacturer's guidance, to ensure an accurate temperature reading, then depress the trigger.
- If the infra-red thermometer reading is outside of the required 0°C to +5°C temperature range, validate the infrared temperature reading by placing a sanitised temperature probe into the food simulant and allowing the reading to stabilise.

For **probe thermometer fridge temperature** checks:

- Place the **sanitised** probe into the food simulant and allow the thermometer reading to stabilise.
- If using the Weekly Temperature Monitoring labels, pierce this at the appropriate day and time.



### Freezer temperature checks:

Freezer temperatures must be recorded once per day. This check should take place within 1 hour of the kitchen opening. The temperature should be -18°C to -23°C. Follow the guidance in the following section if a freezer temperature is found to be above -18°C.

- If using an infrared thermometer, point the thermometer at an item in the freezer and depress the trigger.
- If the infra-red thermometer reading is above -18°C, validate the infrared temperature reading using a probe thermometer.
- If using a probe, place it between packs of food in the freezer and close the door or lid and allow the thermometer reading to stabilise.
- **NEVER** attempt to probe a food simulant or a frozen product as this could result in personal injury.

## Corrective Actions for Out-of-Range Refrigerators

### Compass Guidance:

If the fridge is working but the temperature is **above +5°C and no higher than +8°C**, then the following steps must be taken (this does not apply in Republic of Ireland):

1. Check for potential reasons the temperature is not within the required range and make corrections or adjustments where possible:
  - Is the thermometer operating correctly, might it have low battery power or need recalibrating?
  - Has the refrigerator door recently been opened for an extended period or frequently?
  - Has warm food been placed in the refrigerator?
  - Is the equipment undergoing a defrost cycle?
  - If there is a thermostat, can it be altered?
2. Recheck the temperature within an hour by probing a food item that has been in the refrigerator for more than twelve hours. If the temperature has dropped to +5°C or below, recheck again in an hour to confirm the temperature has stabilised.
3. If the temperature is still **above +5°C but no higher than +8°C**, continue to monitor hourly throughout the day and place a service call to your equipment maintenance provider to request a check of the operating performance of the unit.
4. If the temperature is still above +5°C but no higher than +8°C at the end of service, move all high-risk foods to an alternative fridge.
5. Record your actions on the Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record or digital HACCP equivalent.



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If the temperature of the refrigerator is **above +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland)**, and you can be sure that it has been above +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland), for less than 4 hours then the following the steps must be taken:

1. Immediately transfer food to another refrigerator or use it straight away.
2. Do not place high-risk ready-to-eat food on ambient display.
3. Place a service call with your equipment maintenance provider to ensure the refrigerator is repaired or replaced as soon as possible.
4. Contact your HSE Manager for advice.
5. Record your actions on the Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record or digital HACCP equivalent.

If the temperature of the refrigerator is **above +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland)**, and the length of time it has been running high is not known or is over 4 hours then the following steps must be taken:

1. Immediately place a service call with your equipment maintenance provider to ensure the refrigerator is repaired or replaced as soon as possible. Do not use it for storage of food in the meantime.
2. Discard any high-risk or perishable food.
3. Assess low risk food for quality and move it to another refrigerator, use or discard as appropriate.
4. Contact you HSE Manager for advice.
5. Record your actions on the Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record or digital HACCP equivalent.

### Refrigerator Breakdown - Action

If a refrigerator breaks down, check the temperature of a representative sample of foods, i.e. from all areas, such as bottom, middle and top shelf, using a probe thermometer, ensuring that it is cleaned and sanitised between probing different foods. This will determine what steps must be taken:

- If the breakdown is discovered within 4 hours and the food temperature is:
  - At +8°C or below (+5°C in Republic of Ireland), transfer the food to an alternative fridge immediately.
  - Above +8°C (above +5°C in Republic of Ireland), immediately use or transfer any Use By dated foods to an alternative fridge. Do not place items on ambient display (unless suitable for ambient storage). Transfer any other foods to an alternative refrigerator.
- If the breakdown is discovered after longer than 4 hours or an unknown length of time and the food temperature is:
  - At +8°C or below (+5°C in Republic of Ireland), transfer food to an alternative fridge immediately.
  - Above +8°C (above +5°C in Republic of Ireland), discard all Use By dated food (unless suitable for ambient storage). Assess the quality of other foods, and, if acceptable, use immediately or transfer to an alternative fridge. Discard any foods where the quality is not acceptable.



## Corrective Actions for Out-of-Range Freezers

### Compass Guidance

If the freezer operating temperature is between -17°C and -10°C, then the following steps must be taken:

1. Check the below to identify potential reasons the freezer temperature is outside of the required temperature range and make corrections or adjustments where possible:
  - Is the thermometer operating correctly or might it have low battery power or need recalibrating?
  - Has warm food been placed in the freezer?
  - Is the equipment undergoing a defrost cycle?
  - Does the freezer require defrosting?
  - If there is a thermostat, can it be altered?
2. Re-check the temperature every hour until the temperature is consistently below -18°C.
3. If the freezer does not reach -18°C within 2 hours, follow the steps below.
4. Record your actions on the Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record or digital HACCP equivalent.

If the freezer operating temperature is above -10°C, then then the following steps must be taken:

1. Move items that are still frozen solid to an alternative freezer.
2. Use-By dated food (unless suitable for ambient storage) that is no longer frozen solid, but is not above +5°C must be used immediately or defrosted and refrigerated. Other foods that are no longer completely frozen but not above 5°C must be defrosted and cooked within 72 hours.
3. Record your actions on the Refrigerator/Freezer Temperature Record or digital HACCP equivalent.

### Freezer Breakdown - Action

If a freezer breaks down or is accidentally turned off, food can stay frozen for 24 hours as long as the lid or door stays closed. Immediately check the condition of the food. If the food is:

- Still frozen solid, transfer it to an alternative freezer as quickly as possible.
- Fully or partially defrosted but below +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland)
  - Use By dated food (unless suitable for ambient storage) must be fully defrosted and used immediately or transferred to refrigerator and used within 72 hours or follow manufacturer's label instructions where relevant.
  - Defrost other foods fully and apply the appropriate shelf-life.
- Defrosted and above +8°C (+5°C in Republic of Ireland)
  - Discard all food (unless suitable for ambient storage).

### Digital HACCP recording Alerts - Action

If you receive an alert on your tablet or your phone, you must:

- Manually check the temperature of the fridge or freezer and follow the above corrective actions depending on the situation.
- You must action all alerts.
- Remember to regularly check for alerts on your tablet and ensure the correct phone number is attached to the account.

**NOTE:** To help accurately determine the duration of any refrigerator or freezer breakdown, the period should be determined from the last recorded temperature or from an alert on your digital HACCP system.

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**HACCP Chart Reference**

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## Additional Guidance

1. Probe thermometer temperature checks
  - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 9 - Cooking** for guidance on how to use a probe thermometer and for guidance on how to accuracy check probe thermometers
2. Prevention of cross-contamination
  - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 4 - Cross-Contamination** for guidance on how to minimise cross-contamination risks
3. Food date code checks
  - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 5 - Food Labelling & Shelf Life** for further guidance on manufacturers food labelling / in unit food labelling / date codes and date code checks
4. Equipment maintenance & repair
  - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No 14 - Catering Premises and Equipment** for guidance regarding catering equipment service and maintenance