

# FOOD SAFETY NEWS

JULY 2025



## WELCOME TO THE NEXT EDITION OF FOOD SAFETY NEWS.

The aim of the newsletter is to keep proprietors and staff up to date with changes in the industry and provide information on emerging issues. In this edition we look at the importance of keeping food hot in a bain-marie as the colder weather sets in and staying at home if you are feeling unwell.

With the commencement of the 2025/26 Financial Year, fees and charges associated with the Food Program have changed. Please see the link below to view applicable fees and charges for the **2025/26 Financial Year**.

### BAIN-MARIE

A bain-marie, or hot holding unit, should maintain food temperatures at or above 60°C to prevent bacterial growth. If a bain-marie fails to reach this temperature, the "2-hour/4-hour rule" applies, meaning food must be used within those timeframes or discarded.

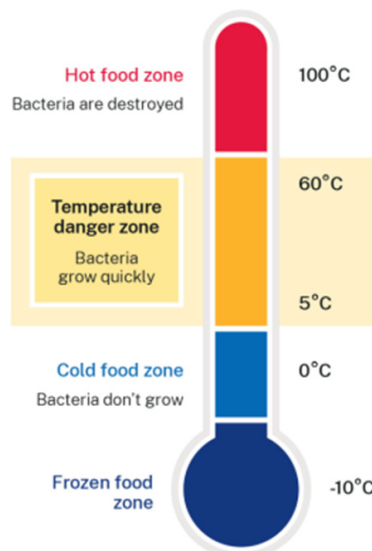
Bain-maries are not designed for reheating food. If attempted, the food typically spends many hours at a perfect temperature for bacterial growth. Food must be freshly cooked or reheated prior to display in a bain-marie.

If the business cannot keep temperature of greater than 60°C, the business must use time as a control (such as the 2-hour/4-hour rule). Records of the times and temperatures that food is displayed must be kept to ensure that the food is safe.

A common mistake is adding food before the bain-marie has reached appropriate temperature. This slows down heating and can result in food being stored at unsafe temperatures.

Tips:

1. For wet heat bain-maries, maintaining the correct water level is essential. If the water level is too low, it can lead to uneven temperatures.
2. During colder months the water in the bain-marie may take longer to reach appropriate temperatures. Food Handlers should ensure the bain-marie is above 60 degrees prior to displaying food.
3. Monitor internal food temperatures with a digital probe thermometer to ensure the colder weather isn't impacting food safety. Adjust unit temperatures if required.



## NOT FEELING WELL (FORGET IT)

Winter is often associated with an increased presence of illnesses, colds and flu. It's crucial that food handlers avoid working with food if they are sick, especially if they have symptoms like vomiting, diarrhoea, or fever. These symptoms can indicate foodborne illnesses that could contaminate food and cause illness in others. A food handler should not return to handling food until symptoms have stopped for at least 48 hours and they have medical clearance.

Here's why:

- **Foodborne illnesses can be easily spread:**  
Some illnesses, like gastroenteritis and hepatitis A, can be transmitted through food.
- **Sick food handlers can contaminate food:**  
Even without direct contact, coughing, sneezing, or having poor hygiene can contaminate food and surfaces.
- **Protecting customers:**  
Food handlers should prioritize the safety of customers by avoiding working when sick.

### Specific symptoms that warrant staying home:

- **Vomiting and diarrhoea:**  
These symptoms are strong indicators of potential foodborne illnesses and should prompt staying home.
- **Fever:**  
A fever can indicate various illnesses that could be transmitted through food.
- **Sore throat with fever:**  
A sore throat with a fever can also be a sign of an illness that could be spread through food.
- **Other illnesses:**  
If you are unsure whether you should work or not, it's best to consult your supervisor or a doctor for guidance



## FREE FOOD HANDLER TRAINING SEMINAR

Council will be holding a training seminar on Tuesday 12th August 2025. If you are a new retail food premises we strongly recommend your attendance, or if you have previously attended our seminars, it's a great opportunity to come along for some refresher training.

**Venue:** Penrith City Council Passadena Room

**Date:** Tuesday, 12th August 2025

**Time:** 5.30pm - 7.30pm

Please register your interest at [foodsafety@penrith.city](mailto:foodsafety@penrith.city) or phone Council's Environmental Health team on 4732 7777 as places are limited.



For more information go to [penrith.city](https://penrith.city) or phone 4732 7777