

# Time-Stamping

## A Guide for Food Caterers

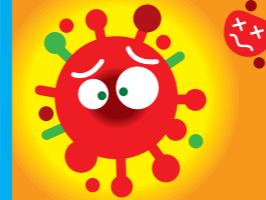


## Importance of Time and Temperature Control

### Temperature Factor

100°C

High temperature:  
Not suitable for  
bacteria to survive

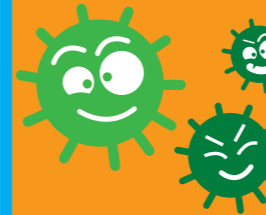


Food poisoning bacteria multiply rapidly in food exposed at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C (temperature danger zone).

**Keep hot food hot above 60°C.**  
**Keep cold food cold below 5°C.**

60°C

Temperature danger zone: Bacteria multiply rapidly



### Time Factor

Food poisoning bacteria take time to multiply to dangerous level and form toxins.

Food left in the temperature danger zone for more than 4 hours should be discarded.

5°C

Low temperature:  
Bacteria grow slowly



## Time-stamping

### What is a time stamp?

An advisory from caterers to inform customers on the time the food is cooked or ready to be eaten, and the time to consume the food by.



### How to do time-stamping?

You are required to provide a time stamp for every catered packed meal and displayed meal (e.g. buffets).

The time stamp should carry your company name and licence number. Please use the following prescribed wordings on your time stamp:

Company name \_\_\_\_\_  
Licence number \_\_\_\_\_

**FOOD READY-TO-EAT ON \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE) AT \_\_\_\_\_ (TIME).**  
**CONSUME BY \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE) AT \_\_\_\_\_ (TIME).**

- The time the food is cooked or ready to be eaten should be the time that the earliest food item is cooked or ready to be eaten for a particular order.
- The "consume by" time should be within 4 hours from the time the earliest food item is cooked or ready to be eaten and kept between 5°C and 60°C. You should not provide food that is kept in this temperature zone for more than 4 hours, as food poisoning bacteria might have grown to dangerous levels.



Packed meal with time stamp



Buffet meal with time stamp

For more details on other requirements on time-stamping, please visit [http://app2.nea.gov.sg/Guidelines\\_FoodHygiene.aspx](http://app2.nea.gov.sg/Guidelines_FoodHygiene.aspx) or contact NEA at 1800-CALL NEA (1800-225 5632).