

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
**HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION**

## Fact Sheet: Food Thermometers

Did You Know? Using a food thermometer is the only **RELIABLE** way to ensure safety and to determine desired doneness of meat, poultry, and egg products. To be safe, these foods must be cooked to a minimum internal temperature to destroy any harmful microorganisms that may be in the food.



**FACT:** You cannot tell by touching or looking at food if it is done, you must use a thermometer.

**FACT:** Thermometers placed inside (“warmest location”) refrigeration units are the only way to ensure the unit is functioning at 41° F or below.

**FACT:** Minimum cooking temperatures: **Pork:** 145° F; **Chicken:** 165° F; **Eggs:** 155° F; **Ground meats:** 155° F; **Fish:** 145° F; **Steak:** 155° F; **Stuffed fish:** 165° F; **Stuffed pasta:** 165° F; **Reheated foods:** 155° F

### Recommendations

- All refrigeration units must have a thermometer present in the warmest location of the unit.
- Ensure that temperatures are taken when hot food is placed on the line for hot holding, hot foods must be held at 140° F or higher.
- Ensure that temperatures are taken when cold food is placed on the line for cold holding, cold food must be held at 41° F or below.

For more information, please contact the  
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