

FOOD RESCUE

DONATION RECEIVING GUIDE FOR HUNGER RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

Safe Receiving Practices

- ✓ Visually inspect all items and discard anything with damaged packaging, or that shows signs of spoilage.
- ✓ Ensure that the source, condition, and types of food in this donation is documented on a receiving log.
- ✓ Check temperatures of all Time/temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods to ensure they are below 41°F or above 135°F
- ✓ Check labels on baby formula and infant food to ensure it is not expired.
- ✓ Ensure food being donated is transported in a clean vehicle free from sources of contamination

Safe Storage Practices

- ✓ All food must be stored at least 6 inches off the ground and away from walls, vents and cleaning supplies or chemicals.
- ✓ Dry, non-perishable goods are best stored between 50-70°F, out of direct sunlight and in airtight containers if they are not in an original package.
- ✓ Refrigerated foods must be kept below 41°F
- ✓ Raw meats must be stored separate from any ready-to-eat foods.
- ✓ Frozen foods should be kept in original packaging, making sure not to crowd the freezer and allow for air circulation.
- ✓ Monitor foods for freshness and quality using the FIFO Method: “First In, First Out”.



**SNOHOMISH
COUNTY** 
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health Division

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Know your source!

Food from a permitted food service establishment, like a grocery store or restaurant, are prepared and held under regulation whereas food from a private home is not. For this reason, the same foods from different sources may have different conditions for acceptance. See the chart below for more information.

Food Type	Foods are SAFE to offer if:	Foods must be REJECTED If:
Prepared Perishable Food (e.g. soups, casseroles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Below 41°F or above 135°F and donated from a permitted food service establishment or donor kitchen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any food stored between 41°F and 135°F Food that has been improperly cooled* ANY foods prepared in a private home.
Chilled Perishable, Prepackaged food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored at 41°F or below, or frozen solid Any TCS foods not frozen solid must be from a permitted food service establishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any food stored between 41°F and 135°F Packaging is damaged or bulging.
Meat, Poultry, Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frozen solid OR below 41°F only from a permitted food establishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any food stored between 41°F and 135°F Unlabeled packages Signs of temperature abuse (ice crystals or freezer burn)
Fresh Whole Produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored in a cool, dry and clean area Home grown or store bought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant decay is evident.
Fresh Cut Produce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored at 41°F or below From a permitted food establishment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce cut in a home kitchen Produce stored between 41°F and 135°F after being cut Significant decay is evident.
Nonperishable Baked Goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored in a cool, dry and clean area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moldy or stale products.
Nonperishable, Prepackaged Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored in a cool, dry and clean area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home-canned foods Cans and packages that are rusty, severely damaged, bulging or leaking.
Baby Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored according to label 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expired infant formula.

*For information on what is considered properly or improperly cooled, refer to WAC 246-215 or discuss with your notified agency.



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