

SANDWICH PREPARATION, STORAGE, & DELIVERY

Know the Drill, Always Chill

TWO-HOUR RULE: Except for two **total** hours, deli meat must always be kept at or below 40° F (refrigerator temperature). The **two-hour period is cumulative** and includes **all** the time the food has been above 40° F, including during purchase, delivery, preparation, and transportation. This is called the Two-Hour Rule. Deli meat **must never** be in temperatures above 80° F. Sources: USDA, FDA, CDC.

Purpose of this Document

This document establishes standards for The Sandwich Project (TSP) in food safety and handling.

Preparing to Make Sandwiches

- Take a cooler and ice packs to the store for meat and cheese transport. Then, go directly home. Refrigerate the meat and cheese immediately.
- **Purchase the same quality ingredients that you would feed your own family!** However, **do not** use over-the-counter deli sliced meats - use packaged meat only.
- Check expiration dates before you buy meat, cheese, and bread. The “use by” date must be at least 7 days before you drop off sandwiches at a host home. Always buy products with the latest expiration dates.
- Keep **opened** meat packages for no longer than 3 days in the refrigerator. Avoid overpacking your refrigerator.

- Even if packages are sealed and **unopened** and the expiration period has not expired, do not use them after 2 weeks from the purchase date.

Making Sandwiches

- Do not make sandwiches before Tuesday evening to ensure that food is delivered fresh and safe on Thursdays. Sandwiches must always be delivered to a host home within 24 hours of preparation.
- Clean and cover all counters for sandwich preparation.
- Do not leave open containers of peanut butter or other nut/shellfish products near deli ingredients. Use separate knives for the jelly and the peanut butter.
- Tie longer hair in a ponytail or cover hair.
- Wear gloves. Wash your hands before you put on your gloves. Change gloves if you touch anything other than food ingredients.
- **Do not** overfill your refrigerator. Allow cold air to circulate around refrigerated foods to keep them properly chilled.
- To prevent bacterial growth, keep meat and cheese refrigerated, taking only one package of meat and one package of cheese from the refrigerator at a time. Make one loaf of sandwiches at a time. **Immediately** return the completed loaf to the refrigerator before starting another loaf. If you are working with others, some people should make sandwiches while others pack sandwiches, take finished loaves to the refrigerator, and get additional meat/cheese from the refrigerator as needed.

Transporting Sandwiches

- **For delivery, use a cooler with ice packs** and fill coolers as much as possible so air does not circulate. Use enough ice packs to keep sandwiches “refrigerator cold” and transport them directly to a nearby host home.
- **You must never put warm sandwiches into a cooler! Coolers and ice packs do not make sandwiches cold.** If you need more storage space for sandwiches, use your freezer.
- At the host home, make sure you use the **correct label**: Deli or PB&J. Use only TSP-issued labels.

Be aware that sandwich recipients may be children, elderly, or immunocompromised. Perishable food can make people sick even if it does not look, smell or taste spoiled. If you suspect any food has not been handled as outlined above, remember... **WHEN IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT!**

References

[USDA: Safe Handling of Take-Out Foods](#)

[FDA: Are You Storing Food Safely?](#)

Additional Information

Website: thesandwichproject.org

Email: info@thesandwichproject.org