



EAST METRO HEALTH DISTRICT

Environmental Health

Food Service Program Review

August 2017

Non-continuous Cook Process (aka, Partial Cooking)

Certified Food Safety Managers Course (ServSafe):

Classes are held at the Gwinnett Environmental Health Dept —

455 Grayson Hwy.
Ste 600
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Class hours are from 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM on day one. The test is given on day two at 8:30 AM. **No one will be admitted late to class or testing.**

If at least 10 people have not registered for the class it, will be cancelled and rescheduled.

Tentative Schedule:

September 11-12
October 16-17
November 6-7
December 4-5

Cost is \$150.00

On-site Food Safety Training:

A food service establishment may schedule an on-site class in food safety at their facility. The instructor is an Environmental Health Specialist. The cost is \$125 for groups of three (3) individuals.



Gwinnett County Environmental Health
455 Grayson Hwy
Suite 600
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Phone: 770-963-5132

Fax: 770-339-4282

Business has been booming! Customers are visiting the restaurant and calling in orders left and right! With so much going on, it's almost impossible to keep up with the demand. So, how do I fix the problem—I half way cook my meats ahead of time so the final cooking time is less when the customer orders it!

Cooking using this method is perfectly fine (that is, as long as it is done in accordance with the Georgia Food Code Rules). This method is called “Non-continuous cooking” (or “partial cooking”). Non-continuous cooking is defined as [511-6-1 .01 (89)]:

“the cooking of food in a food establishment using a process in which the initial heating of the food is intentionally halted so that it may be cooled and held for complete cooking at a later time prior to sale or service.”

Does that make sense? If not, let me try to clarify. Let's say your restaurant is famous for its New York Strip Steaks. You even put some of your famous steaks in other dishes such as salads and fajitas. To keep up with demand, you decide to cook several steaks the night before on the grill. You also cook the steaks to just under medium rare (a warm, red center). Once cooked to medium rare, you then put them in a refrigerator to cool the food back to 41°F or below and to hold until a secondary steak dish (i.e., the steak fajita or steak salad) is ordered. This allows to finish them to them at faster pace on the flat top while achieving those beautiful grill marks the previous night.

Non-continuous cooking shouldn't be confused with cooking a steak on the grill to medium rare and keeping it warm (135°F) for about 30 minutes until a customer orders it to their specified doneness.

See the difference between the two examples? In the first one, the steak is cooked to medium rare (less than the required 155°F), COOLED to 41°F or below, and held until needed at a later time. The cooking process was INTENTIONALLY stopped for a much later time!

Now, you may be asking yourself, does this process actually have any benefits? It seems like about the same amount of time will be needed to fully cook the meat (since you are, once again, starting it from 41°F). Well, there actually is a speed benefit! Remember in the example we talked about earlier where the New York Strip Steak is used in salads or fajitas? Well, when you serve it in those dishes, chances are you will slice or cube the steak before you finish cooking it. When you break the whole steak into smaller pieces, the meat cooks much faster than in its whole form.

As mentioned before, there is an actual “correct” way to perform the general process as required by the Georgia Food Code [511-6-1 .04(5)(d)]. The code requires the following:

1. The initial cooking not exceeding 60 minutes;
2. Immediately cooling the foods from:
 - a. 135°F to 70°F or below within the first 2 hours; and
 - b. From 70°F to 41°F or below within the next 4 hours.
3. After proper cooling, freeze or hold the food at 41°F or below;
4. Upon request of the meat, **COMPLETELY** cook the food to the required time/temperatures.
5. If for some reason the food is not immediately served, hot held, or placed under time only as public health control once the food is **FULLY** cooked, it must be cooled back to 41°F as mentioned in 2a and 2b.
6. **WRITTEN PROCEDURES** must be created and approved by the health department prior to any cooking of food using this method. They must also be **MAINTAINED** on-site. [See next page for template.]





EAST METRO HEALTH DISTRICT

Environmental Health

Non-Continuous Cooking Process (Partial Cooking)

Facility Name: _____

Identify ALL foods that will be partially cooked:

1. Describe the initial heating process. How will it be monitored? What corrective actions will be taken if critical limits are not met? (Note: this process cannot exceed 60 minutes)
2. How will food be cooled after the initial heating and how will this be monitored? What corrective actions will be taken if critical limits are not met? (cooled from 135°F – 70°F or below within the 2 hours; from 70°F – 41°F or below within 4 hours)
3. How/where will be food be held after cooling?
4. Describe how food will be stored and labeled to separate undercooked foods with RTE foods.
5. List final cook temperatures for all food products and indicate how this will be monitored. What corrective actions will be taken if critical limits are not met? (Note: Foods must be FULLY cooked before serving, holding hot, or holding under time only as public health control).
6. Will foods be taken through a second cool step after complete cooking? If so, the foods must be cooled from the same time/temperatures listed in #2 and held under 41°F until used (not to exceeded 7 days with the date of prep serving as day #1).

NOTE: These written procedures must be created and approved by the Health Department prior to implementing a Non-continuous Cooking Process.

NOTE: These written procedures must be maintained on-site, and made readily available to the Health Inspector upon request.

[Template available at www.gnrhealth.com on the Environmental Health Services page.]

There is a downside to using this process: because foods are only “partially cooked”, they are considered raw. This means the pathogen level is still high enough to where cross contamination during preparation and storage is still very much a concern. So, be sure to use separate utensils, containers, and prep surfaces; prep at different times from other foods; and store with raw foods of the same type. Also, because the food was not cooked to a safe level, other more harmful bacteria may start to grown on the foods if it is not cooled properly.

In closing, non-continuous cooking processes can be a useful tool for efficient business operation (although, it requires more regulation from the health department). Keep in mind, this type of cooking method is not required by your local health department. If it is easier to fully cook foods when the customer orders it (even it may mean a slightly longer wait time), by all means, feel free to continue that process! The intent of this article is inform you of your options, and to help keep your business booming and running efficiently within the confines of the Georgia Food Code.

Questions or suggestions for future issues? Email
Jason.Reagan@gnrhealth.com