



Non-Continuous Cooking

2013 Food Code Defines:

“Non-continuous cooking” means 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.

“Non-continuous cooking” does not include cooking procedures that only involve temporarily interrupting or slowing an otherwise continuous cooking process.

Partially cooking raw animal products creates an opportune environment for the growth of spore forming, disease causing bacteria. Spore forming bacteria often produce toxins and both spores and toxins are incredibly difficult (if not impossible) to remove from food once they are created. This is why we take special care when non-continuous cooking.

Common food items that are cooked using this method include, but are not limited to: Par-cooked (partially cooked) chicken wings and steaks, chicken, and hamburger patties (which use a grill mark, but then are later cooked in the oven).

Non-continuous procedures must be written, include the information below, and be pre-approved by Maricopa County Environmental Services.

- Detailed written procedures of all non-continuous cooking steps must be available at all times. These procedures must also include corrective actions to implement if any of the steps are interrupted or incorrect.
- Initial heating may not exceed 60 minutes.
- After initial heating, foods must be immediately cooled from 135°F to < 70°F within 2 hours and < 41°F in no more than a total of 6 hours.
- Foods must be stored in refrigeration that holds at 41°F or below.
- Partially cooked foods must be CLEARLY LABELED to differentiate from other foods.
- Partially cooked foods must be treated as raw and stored away from ready-to-eat foods to avoid potential cross contamination.
- During the final cook step, food must be cooked to minimum temperatures as specified in the food code. (Fish and pork: 145°F for 15 seconds; ground beef and steak: 155°F for 15 seconds; poultry: 165°F for 15 seconds) - Section 3-401.11
- Foods that have undergone a non-continuous cooking process CANNOT be offered as undercooked with a consumer advisory.
- Temperatures for each step of a non-continuous cooking process (initial heating, cooling, holding, etc.) must be logged, recorded, and maintained. Records must also include corrective actions taken if applicable.