Did You Know … ?

There are 48 million people in the United States who get food poisoning each year. As a result, more than 128,000 people are hospitalized, and many people die. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have identified the Top 5 Risk Factors contributing to foodborne illnesses:

# 1 Improper Hot/Cold Holding Temperatures of Potentially Hazardous Foods
Food poisoning cases commonly occur when potentially hazardous foods are not held at proper temperatures. Keep hot foods at 135°F or above and cold foods below 41°F.

# 2 Improper Cooking Temperatures
The Food and Drug Administration establishes minimum internal temperatures for cooked foods. Temperatures should be measured with a probe thermometer in the thickest part of meats, or the center of other dishes, avoiding bones and container sides.

# 3 Contaminated Utensils and Equipment
Contaminated utensils and equipment can lead to cross-contamination of food. In order to prevent the spread of pathogens, all utensils and equipment shall be properly cleaned and sanitized at least once every 4 hours or more frequently as needed.

# 4 Poor Employee Health and Hygiene
Food workers can be a significant source of harmful microorganisms. Good employee hygiene, such as proper hand washing, is essential to prevent direct and indirect contamination of food, utensils, and other food-related equipment. The person in charge should never allow sick employees to work in the kitchen.

# 5 Food from Unsafe Sources
All foods distributed in restaurants and permitted facilities must be obtained from approved sources that comply with applicable laws and regulations.