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## FOOD EMPLOYEE HEALTH & HYGIENE POLICY

Many foodborne illnesses that cause diarrhea or vomiting are transmitted from food employees to customers. Excluding or restricting ill employees from working with food is one of the critical factors to preventing foodborne illness from occurring in your facility. In certain scenarios, other contagious diseases require special attention at food facilities, such as, novel diseases like Coronavirus or other pandemic illnesses. The other two critical factors of an employee health policy are proper handwashing and no bare hand contact of ready to eat food. To reduce the risks of food-borne illness, this policy has been created. The health and safety of staff and the public is a high priority!

### EMPLOYEE HEALTH

All food employees shall report if they are experiencing any of the following food-borne illness symptoms to their Person in Charge (PIC) prior to coming into work:



- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Vomiting
- Jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes)
- Sore throat with fever
- Lesions (such as boils and infected wounds, regardless of size) containing pus on the fingers, hand or any exposed body part
- Other health symptoms as required by the Department of Health

If any food employee develops any of these symptoms while at work, the employee must notify the PIC immediately.

**Important:** Employees may not return to work for **at least 24 hours** after these symptoms have ended.

Food employees **diagnosed** with the following illnesses must notify their PIC:

- *Salmonella* Typhi or Nontyphoidal *Salmonella*
- *Shigella*
- *Escherichia coli*
- Hepatitis A virus
- Norovirus, or
- Other foodborne illness or communicable disease as required by the Department of Health (such as Coronavirus or other pandemic outbreak)

The Food Employee shall report the onset date of any symptoms or illnesses mentioned above. The Food Employee must be **excluded** from working in the retail food establishment and the law requires the manager to report these **diagnosed** illnesses to the Bethlehem Health Bureau.

In addition to the above conditions, food employees shall notify their PIC if they have been a **close contact or exposed** to the following high-risk conditions:

- Exposure to or suspicion of causing any confirmed outbreak involving the above illnesses
- A member of their household is diagnosed with any of the above illnesses
- A member of their household is attending or working in a setting that is experiencing a confirmed outbreak of the above illnesses

## **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Practicing good personal hygiene habits can help prevent foodborne illness. Handwashing reduces the spread of pathogenic microorganism that are transmitted through food. Food employees with unclean hands and exposed portions of arms and fingernails can contaminate food.

Designated hand sinks must not be blocked and easily accessible. They must be fully equipped with clean, warm running water, soap, paper towels, or other approved means for drying.

**Employees must wash their hands right after doing anything that contaminate hands and:**

- When entering a food preparation area;
- Before putting on clean, single use gloves;
- Before handling clean equipment and serving utensils;
- When changing tasks and switching between handling raw foods and working with ready to eat foods;
- After handling soiled dishes, equipment, or utensils;
- After touching other body parts, such as, face, hair, exposed portions of the arms, etc.
- After using the toilet;
- After coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, using tobacco, eating, or drinking;
- After caring for or handling service animals or aquatic animals such as molluscan shellfish in display tanks.



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## **Proper Handwashing Method:**

Food handlers must wash hands and exposed portions of arms, including surrogate prosthetic devices for hands and arms for at least 20 seconds by the following method:

1. Rinse under clean, warm running water;
2. Apply soap and rub all surfaces of hands and fingers together vigorously with friction for at least 10 to 15 seconds, giving particular attention to the area under the fingernails, between the fingers/fingertips, and surfaces of the hands and exposed portions of arms.
3. Rinse thoroughly with clean, warm running water; and
4. Thoroughly dry the hands and exposed portions of arms with single-use paper towel, a heated hand drying device, or a clean, unused towel.

Avoid recontamination of hands by using a clean barrier, such as a paper towel, when turning off hand sink faucets or touching the handle of a restroom door.

**Important:** Hand antiseptics can **never** replace handwashing. Hand antiseptics should only be used **after** proper handwashing.

## **NO BARE HAND CONTACT**

When hands are heavily contaminated, effective handwashing procedures may not be enough to prevent the transmission of pathogens from the hands to ready-to-eat (RTE) foods. Bare hand contact with a RTE food can result in contamination of food. Therefore, food employees must always use a barrier, such as, spatulas, tongs, spoons, single-use gloves, or deli tissue when handling RTE foods. Proper glove use along with handwashing can be an effective barrier to decrease transfer of bacteria to food.

Some ready-to-eat (RTE) foods include:

- Food and drink garnishes
- Salads
- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Pizza
- Sandwiches
- Cheese
- Beverages, ice
- Cookies and pastries



## **Follow these guidelines for using disposable, single use gloves:**

- Always wash hands properly before donning gloves;
- Change disposable gloves between handling raw products and RTE food products;
- Do not wash or re-use gloves;
- Discard torn or damaged disposable gloves;
- Cover an infected cut, burn, or boil with a waterproof covering and a disposable glove;
- Wear single-use gloves over artificial nails, nail polish or uncleanable orthopedic device;
- Wash hands and change gloves **anytime they may be contaminated.**

## **Additional Food Worker Policies**

All employees must maintain good hygienic practices, including:

- Arrive to work showered and in clean clothing or uniform.
- Eating food and smoking in designated areas only.
- Storing drinks in clean, closed containers that do not contaminate hands (example: cups with lids and straws).
- Storing drinks below and separate from food, prep surfaces, utensils, etc.
- Wearing hair restraints and clean outer clothing.
- Keeping fingernails trimmed and clean.
- Removing all jewelry from hands and wrists, only a plain metal ring is permitted.
- Removing aprons before entering the restroom or leaving the food prep area.
- Not using cloth towels or aprons for wiping hands.

## **TRAINING**

To start and utilize an Employee Health & Hygiene Policy, you must have a training meeting with your employees, one at a time or as a group, and review the information in the policy. Make the Employee Health & Hygiene Policy part of the training for all new employees.

The Employee Illness Reporting Agreement should be included in the training for all employees. The purpose of the Employee Illness Reporting Agreement (Form #1) is to ensure that all food employees notify the Owner/General Manager, or other “person-in-charge” (PIC) when an employee experience any of the conditions listed so that appropriate steps are taken to preclude transmission of foodborne illness or other communicable diseases.

## **FOOD EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

All food employees shall follow the reporting requirements specified above involving symptoms, diagnosis and high risk conditions. All food employees subject to the required work restrictions or exclusions that are imposed upon them as specified in the Pennsylvania Chapter 46 (Food Code), the regulatory authority or PIC, and shall comply with these requirements. Food employees must follow the personal hygiene practices outlined in this policy at all times.

## **PERSON IN CHARGE (PIC) RESPONSIBILITY**

Management and the PIC are responsible to inform employees and conditional employees of the Employee Health & Hygiene Policy and to train them on symptoms and illnesses.

The PIC shall take appropriate action as specified in the Pennsylvania Chapter 46, Food Code, Section 2-201.11 - 2-201.13 (Employee Health) to exclude, restrict and/or monitor food employees who have reported any of the aforementioned conditions. The PIC shall ensure these actions are followed and only release the ill food employee once evidence, as specified in the food code, is presented demonstrating the person is free of the disease causing agent or the condition has otherwise resolved. The PIC shall cooperate with the regulatory authority during all aspects of an outbreak investigation and adhere to all recommendations provided to stop the outbreak from continuing. **Please note:** The ADA requires that all medical information about a particular employee be stored separately from the employee's personnel file, thus limiting access to this **confidential information**.

The attached Employee Handwashing Training Record, Form #1 (Employee Illness Reporting Agreement) and Employee Absence/Illness Record may all be used as a supplement to this policy. The last page of this document is a sign (Employees: You Are Responsible!) that can be posted in your food facility for your employees to view.







The PIC will continue to promote and reinforce awareness of this policy to all food employees on a regular basis to ensure it is being followed.



Bethlehem Health Bureau  
10 East Church Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
610-865-7083  
Updated: April 2024

# Employee Handwashing Training Record

**Instructions:** This log can be stored as a record to provide information on which employee has been trained on proper handwashing. Each employee should be able to give the manager a demonstration on how hands should be washed. Both the employee and the manager will initial that this training was completed.

		Employee Name	Date Trained	Demonstration Completed Correctly? Y/N	Employee Signature	Manager Initials
Start with warm or hot water. ↓	 1					
Use soap and make a lather. ↓	 2					
Rub & scrub for <b>20 seconds</b> (palms, back of hands, between fingers, under nails). ↓	 3					
Rinse well. ↓	 4					
Dry hands completely. ↓	 5					
Use a paper towel to shut off the faucet.	 6					



# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

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BUREAU OF HEALTH

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## Form #1 Employee Illness Reporting Agreement

You play an important role in providing safe food to the public. The purpose of this agreement is to ensure that food service employees notify the person in charge when they experience any of the following conditions.

**I agree to report to the person in charge if I ever have any of the following:**

- **Symptoms of:**
  - Diarrhea
  - Vomiting
  - Jaundice (yellow skin or eye color)
  - Sore throat with fever
  - Lesions containing pus on the hand, wrist, or any exposed body part, such as boils and infected wounds, no matter how small they are
  - Persistent coughing, sneezing, or runny nose that causes discharges from the eyes, nose, or mouth
  - Other health symptoms as required by the Department of Health
- **Medical diagnosis of:**
  - Salmonella
  - Ill with typhoid fever (Salmonella Typhi)
    - Even if previously diagnosed with this illness within the past three months
  - Shigellosis (Shigella spp.)
  - Enterohemorrhagic or Shiga Toxin-producing Escherichia coli infection (E. coli O157:H7)
  - Hepatitis A virus
  - Norovirus
  - Other enteric bacterial pathogens, such as Campylobacter, etc.
  - Other contagious disease as required by the Department of Health
- **High-risk condition of:**
  - Close contact or exposure to a confirmed outbreak of foodborne illness
  - Exposure to a household member diagnosed with a foodborne illness
  - Close contact or exposure to any other disease as required by the Department of Health

### **Employee Acknowledgement:**

I understand that if I fail to meet the terms of this agreement, action could be taken by the food establishment

**Applicant or Food Employee Name (please print)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant or Food Employee Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Person in Charge** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Employee Absence/Illness Record

**Instructions:** Use this log to monitor employee absences due to illness. Tracking absences will enable your establishment to better control the spread of foodborne illnesses. Please review and refer to your establishment's Employee Health Policy.

		<i>Symptoms Reported to Manager by Employee:</i>		<i>Manager/Employee Response:</i>					
Date Reported	Employee Name	Vomiting(V) * Diarrhea (D) * Jaundice (J) * Sore Throat w/ Fever (ST) Infected Wounds (IW)	** Other Symptoms or exposure to others (close-contact)	Date Excluded or Restricted from Work?*	Date Returned to Normal Work Duties?	Consulted with Doctor? Y/N	Diagnosed? *** Y/N - If yes, name illness.	Contacted Health Department? Y/N	Restricted Duties
		__V __D __J __ST __IW							
		__V __D __J __ST __IW							
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\* If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end. If jaundiced, contact the Bethlehem Health Bureau.

\*\* Other symptoms include any symptoms required to be monitored by the Department of Health (such as fever, coughing, etc., during a pandemic or outbreak)

\*\*\* If a food employee reports a diagnosis of Norovirus, *E.coli* O157:H7, *Shigella*, Hepatitis A, *Salmonella* Typhi or Nontyphoidal *Salmonella* (NTS), or any other disease of concern (ex: Coronavirus), exclude the employee and contact the Bethlehem Health Bureau at 610-865-7083 for guidance. If undiagnosed, see the Employee Illness Decision guide provided to you by the Bethlehem Health Bureau.

**NOTE: This log must be kept in a private, secure location. Only the Person in Charge may have access to these records. The ADA requires that all medical information about a particular employee be stored separately from the employee's personnel file, thus limiting access to this confidential information.**





# **Employees: You Are Responsible!**

GermS can be passed to others during food handling. Protect consumers and prevent foodborne illness by letting your supervisor know when you are sick!

## **REPORT YOUR ILLNESS!**

### **CALL YOUR MANAGER IF...**

➤ **You have the these symptoms:**

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Jaundice
- Sore Throat with fever
- Skin infection such as open sores

➤ **You have been diagnosed with:**

- E.Coli
- Hepatitis A
- Shigella
- Salmonella Typhi or Nontyphoidal Salmonella
- Norovirus

➤ **You have been exposed to:**

- A confirmed outbreak of foodborne illness or other disease
- Someone who lives in your home that has been diagnosed
- Someone who lives in your home that has attended an event or works in a place with a confirmed outbreak.



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