Foodservice Employee Health Handbook

Employee Health & Hygiene
Objectives

- Define Foodborne Illness & Outbreak
- Discuss Risk Factors
- Employee Health
- Management Responsibility
- Employee Responsibility
- Exclusions and Restrictions
What is Foodborne Illness?

- Foodborne illness (sometimes called "foodborne disease," "foodborne infection," or "food poisoning") - is caused by consuming contaminated foods or beverages.

- Each year, 1 in 6 Americans gets sick with foodborne illness.

[www.adph.org/epi](http://www.adph.org/epi)
What is a Foodborne Outbreak?

A Foodborne Outbreak (FBO) is defined as –

two or more persons from different households who experience similar illness symptoms resulting from the ingestion of a common food.
Who is affected by foodborne illness?

- Everyone is at risk for foodborne illness.

- Highly susceptible populations (HSP) are more likely to experience a severe case.

- Highly susceptible populations include:
  - Immunocompromised individuals
  - Preschool-age children
  - Elderly
  - Sick
  - Confined to facilities that provide custodial care
How can foodborne illnesses be reduced?

- Five broad Categories directly relate to food safety concerns
  - termed by FDA as “Foodborne Illness Risk Factors”
5 Foodborne Illness Risk Factors

- Food from Unsafe Sources
- Inadequate Cooking
- Improper Holding Temperatures
- Contaminated Equipment
- Poor Employee Health & Hygiene
CDC - 2011

Top five pathogens contributing to domestically acquired foodborne illnesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pathogen</th>
<th>Estimated number of illnesses</th>
<th>%</th>
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<td>Norovirus</td>
<td>5,461,731</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td><em>Salmonella</em></td>
<td>1,027,561</td>
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<td><em>Clostridium perfringens</em></td>
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<td><em>Campylobacter spp.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Staphylococcus aureus</em></td>
<td>241,148</td>
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</table>
Employee Health & Hygiene

“The three-legged stool”

I. Employee Health
II. No Bare hand contact with ready to eat food
III. Handwashing
I. Employee Health

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), FDA, and ADPH cite five highly infective pathogens that can easily be transmitted by food workers and cause severe illness.

These five foodborne pathogens are known as the “Big 5”
I. Employee Health

The “Big 5” are:

- Escherichia coli (E. coli) 0157:H7
- Hepatitis A virus
- Norovirus
- Salmonella Typhi
- Shigella
I. Employee Health

- Reportable Symptoms:
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Jaundice (yellow skin or eyes)
  - Sore throat with fever
  - Infected cuts and burns with pus on hands or wrists
I. Employee Health

- What should a food employee do when they have symptoms of vomiting or diarrhea?
I. Employee Health

If before work:

- Notify the manager by telephone.
- Do not return to work until 24 hours symptom free without taking medications.
I. Employee Health

- If at work:
  - Stop work immediately.
  - Report to management.
  - Go home and do not return until 24 hours symptom free without taking medication.
II. No Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Food

- What is RTE food?
  - Foods that do not require a kill step (cooking) to render it safe before being consumed.
  - Examples of RTE food: sandwiches, salads, fruit, etc.
II. No Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Food

How do I handle RTE Foods?

- Scoops
- Spatulas
- Tongs
- Deli-Tissue
- Single-use gloves
- Dispensing Equipment
II. No Bare Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Food

What are the instructions for the use of single-use gloves?

- Always wash hands before donning gloves.
- Change disposable gloves between handling raw products and RTE products.
- Do not wash or reuse disposable gloves.
- Discard torn or damaged disposable gloves.
- Cover an infected lesion with pus (cut, burn, or boil) with a waterproof covering and disposal glove.
- Wear disposable gloves over artificial nails, nail polish, or uncleanable orthopedic support devices.
III. Handwashing

Why is handwashing important?

Handwashing reduces the spread of pathogenic microorganisms that are transmitted through food.
III. Handwashing

What handwashing steps do food employees need to follow?

- Rinse hands under clean, warm running water.
- Apply soap and rub all surfaces for at least 10 - 15 seconds.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean, warm running water.
- Thoroughly dry the hands with single-use paper toweling, an air-hand drying device or a clean unused towel from a continuous towel system.
- 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.
III. Handwashing

- When should food employees wash their hands?
  - Employees should wash hands immediately after engaging in activities that contaminate the hands.
  - Enter a food preparation area.
  - Before putting on clean, single-use gloves for working with food.
  - Before engaging in food preparation.
  - Before handling clean equipment and serving utensils.
  - After handling soiled dishes, equipment, or utensils.
III. Handwashing

- When to wash hands continued…
  - Changing tasks and switching between handling raw foods and working with RTE foods.
  - After touching bare human body parts, - hair, face, 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 in display tanks.
Management Responsibilities

- Train employees on:
  - Causes of foodborne illness.
  - Relationship between the food employee’s job task, personal hygiene, and foodborne illness.
  - Specific symptoms, diagnoses, and exposures that must be reported to managers.
Management Responsibilities

- Require the employee to stop work immediately and leave the food establishment when a food employee reports illness symptoms.
Employee Responsibilities

- Food Service Employees share the responsibility with management for preventing foodborne illness.

- Report to management immediately:
  - Symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, sore throat with fever
  - Diagnosis or Exposure with a Big 5 pathogen
  - Exposed infected wound or cut on the hands or arms
Employee Responsibilities

- Food employees can help prevent foodborne illness by:
  - Not touching RTE food with bare hands
  - Washing hands frequently, especially whenever they are soiled or have touched contaminated items
  - Not working when ill
Exclusions and Restrictions

What is “exclusion”?  
Exclusion means an employee is not permitted to work in or enter a food establishment as a food employee.

What is “restriction”?
Restriction means an employee’s activities are limited to prevent the risk of transmitting a disease that is transmissible through food.
Exclusions and Restrictions

Who can exclude or restrict a food employee?

- The manager of an establishment has the authority to exclude or restrict a food employee from a food establishment to prevent the transmission of disease.

- ADPH also has the authority to exclude or restrict a food employee who is suspected of being at risk of transmitting foodborne illness.
Exclusions and Restrictions

When is exclusion or a Restriction initiated?

- Exclusion or Restrictions are based on the level of risk for transmitting disease through food.
- The appropriate action also depends on whether or not the establishment is one that serves highly susceptible populations (HSP).
- If an employee is restricted or excluded in one food establishment, they may not work as an unrestricted employees elsewhere.
Exclusions and Restrictions

- Who can lift the exclusion and restrictions?

  - In most cases, the manager.
  - In some cases, an approval from ADPH and a medical practitioner is required.
  - Each of the Big 5 foodborne pathogens has unique characteristics that affects when a food employee can return to work.
Great Resource!

Foodservice Employee Health Handbook (FEHH)

Alabama Department of Public Health
Bureau of Environmental Services and
Bureau of Communicable Disease,
Epidemiology Division