

Using Suitable Utensils When Handling Ready-to-Eat Foods

PURPOSE: To prevent foodborne illness due to hand-to-food cross-contamination.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to foodservice employees who prepare, handle, or serve food.

KEYWORDS: Ready-to-Eat Food, Cross-Contamination

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow California Retail Food Code requirements. *Currently the California Retail Food Code does not have a prohibition on bare hand contact with food. However, it is still a recommended practice to limit bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods as much as possible.*
3. Use proper handwashing procedures to wash hands and exposed arms prior to preparing, or handling food or at any time when the hands may have become contaminated.
4. Do not use bare hands to handle ready-to-eat foods at any time unless washing fruits and vegetables.
5. Use suitable utensils when working with ready-to-eat food. Suitable utensils may include:
 - a. Single-use gloves
 - b. Deli tissue
 - c. Foil wrap
 - d. Tongs, spoons, and spatulas
6. Wash hands and change gloves:
 - a. Before beginning food preparation
 - b. Before beginning a new task
 - c. After touching equipment such as refrigerator doors or utensils that have not been cleaned and sanitized
 - d. After contacting chemicals
 - e. When interruptions in food preparation occur, such as when answering the telephone or checking in a delivery
 - f. After touching raw animal products
 - g. After using the restroom

- h. After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms
- i. After coughing or sneezing
- j. When handling money
- k. Anytime a glove is torn, damaged, or soiled
- l. Anytime contamination of a glove might have occurred

MONITORING

A designated foodservice employee will visually observe that gloves or suitable utensils are used and changed at the appropriate times during all hours of operation.

CORRECTIVE ACTION

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Discard ready-to-eat food touched with bare hands.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The foodservice manager will verify that foodservice workers are using suitable utensils by visually monitoring foodservice employees during all hours of operation. The foodservice manager will complete the Food Safety Checklist daily. The designated foodservice employee responsible for monitoring will record any discarded food on the Damaged and Discarded Product Log. The Food Safety Checklist and Damaged and Discarded Food Log are kept on file for a minimum of 1 year.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: _____ **BY:** _____

DATE REVIEWED: _____ **BY:** _____

DATE REVISED: _____ **BY:** _____