

FOOD HANDLER ILLNESS RESOURCE GUIDE



Background

A sick employee who handles food can increase the risk of a foodborne illness outbreak. This risk can be reduced by restricting their tasks or excluding them from coming to work, along with proper return-to-work practices.

Responsibilities

Person in Charge in the Store: The person in charge in the store should know the appropriate action to take if certain symptoms, illnesses, or conditions are reported by an employee who handles food. They should also know the appropriate time before the employee can return to work.

The person in charge will exclude and/or restrict the employee from work at the appropriate times and notify the appropriate persons. The person in charge is responsible for maintaining records and logs of food handler symptoms and illnesses reported, as well as a return to work date.

Store Personnel: Employees who handle food should know the symptoms, illnesses, or conditions that should be reported to the person in charge. Employees should not work when they are sick, and should return to work following the return-to-work policy.

How to Prep

Managers should be trained and aware of the procedures below.

A Food Handler Health log should be available. This log should be used to record the nature of all employee illnesses and symptoms including: name / illness / date of illness onset / symptoms / diagnosis by medical professional / date returned to work / a record of any illness reported to the health department.

Procedure

All employees should inform their manager if they have any of the following symptoms or illnesses:

Symptoms:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Sore throat with fever
- Jaundice (yellow color to the eyes and skin)
- Infected wound

Food Borne Illnesses:

- Shiga toxin producing *E. coli*
- *Shigella* spp.
- Hepatitis A virus
- *Salmonella typhi* bacteria
- Norovirus
- *Nontyphoidal Salmonella*

The person in charge in the store will enter the information onto the Food Handler Illness Log if any of the above symptoms or the listed food borne illnesses are reported. The Person in Charge will notify the local health department if an employee reports that a physician has diagnosed him or her with one of the above six food borne illnesses, or those identified by your local jurisdiction.

The person in charge will **exclude** an employee from work if he or she has vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, Hepatitis A, *Salmonella*, symptomatic *Shigella*, symptomatic *E coli*, and symptomatic Norovirus. A written clearance from a physician is required before they can return to work.

The person in charge will **restrict** an employee from working with food when they have a sore throat with a fever, an infected wound (if not covered with a bandage and glove), asymptomatic *Shigella*, asymptomatic *E. Coli*, and asymptomatic Norovirus

*Follow local jurisdiction regulations or brand standards if they differ.

Additional Information

Employees directly involved in the preparation of food should practice proper personal hygiene and adhere to this policy.

The person in charge is responsible for telling regulatory officials if an employee reports a diagnosis with a listed pathogen. This reporting requirement is an important component of any food safety program.

References

- 2017 U.S. FDA Food Code, Section 2-201.11

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