

# THE CENTRAL KITCHEN



A publication of the Central Michigan District Health Department

## Employee Illness Guidelines

Allowing ill employees to work in your restaurant presents a serious risk to your customers. It is extremely important, therefore, to know when to “restrict” the job duties of ill employees, or when to actually “exclude” them from the workplace. The following are general guidelines. For more detailed information, contact your local health department.

### Restrict:

- ❖ When minor symptoms are present such as sore throat with fever, a wound on the hand or arm that can be easily bandaged, etc.
- ❖ Restricted employees must **NOT** handle food or clean equipment, host, or wait tables.
- ❖ Possible duties: trash removal, mop floors, office work, landscaping, computer training.

### Exclude:

- ❖ Employees with diarrhea, vomiting, jaundice.
- ❖ Employees diagnosed with a “Big Five” (Salmonella, Shigella, E. coli, Hepatitis A, Norovirus) or other highly contagious illness.
- ❖ Any ill employee if primarily serving a high risk population.

Some illnesses require health department approval before returning to work. But in general, ill employees must not return to work until symptom-free for at least 24 hours or have a note from a doctor. This poster is available from the health department and should be displayed in the employee break area as a guide.

Food Employee Foodborne Illness Guidelines			
Illness Symptoms Action Guidance (Food Code Sections 2-201.12, and 2-201.13)			
Symptoms	Action	Return to Work Criteria for Food Employees	Local Health Department Approval
Vomiting	Exclude from retail food establishment	Symptom free for at least 24 hours or provide medical documentation that states the symptoms is from a non-infectious condition	No. If not diagnosed as one of the Big Five
Diarrhea	Exclude from retail food establishment	Symptom free for at least 24 hours or provide medical documentation that states the symptoms is from a non-infectious condition	No. If not diagnosed as one of the Big Five
Jaundice	Excludes from retail food establishments all manager, Non-Food Handler	Medical documentation that food employee is free of Hepatitis A virus or other focal-ovary transmitted infection	Yes
Sore Throat with Fever	Exclude from retail food establishment	Medical documentation stating received antibiotic therapy for 24 hours, was negative throat culture, or is free from infection from Streptococcus pyogenes	No
Unhealed Wound or Plaster/Cast	Exclude from retail food establishment	Wound is fully healed, covered, and properly covered	No

**The Big Five are 1. Salmonella, 2. Shigella, 3. E. coli, 4. Hepatitis A, and 5. Norovirus. Employees with any of these illnesses must be excluded from work at a food establishment, and food handlers must be excluded from the food establishment.**

**Criteria for Exclusion from Work:** Any food employee diagnosed with an illness due to the Big Five must report the diagnosis to the manager. The food employer must be excluded from working in the retail food establishment and the law requires the manager to notify the local health department immediately. Before a food employee is allowed to return to work, check with the local health department.

www.michigan.gov/mda

## Allergen Awareness

Speaking of posters, this poster is **required** to be displayed in your kitchen or break area. As of January 17, 2017 it is a **Core** violation if the poster is not displayed or if the certified manager has not completed additional allergen awareness training as required by the amended Food Law. Posters are available from your local health department or from the MDARD website. On-line allergen training is available at a minimal cost from various vendors. Course offering information is accessible from the MDARD website or from your local health department Sanitarian.

**Food Allergy Awareness** Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

**The Eight Major Food Allergens**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milk</li> <li>Eggs</li> <li>Fish</li> <li>Crustacean</li> <li>Shellfish</li> <li>Wheat</li> <li>Soybeans</li> <li>Peanuts</li> <li>Tree Nuts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of consciousness</li> <li>• Shortness of breath</li> <li>• Itching or tingling in or around the mouth, face, scalp, hands, and feet</li> <li>• Hives (welts)</li> <li>• Wheezing or difficulty breathing</li> <li>• Swelling of the face, eyelids, tongue, lips, hands, or feet</li> <li>• Tightening of the throat (difficulty swallowing)</li> <li>• Sudden onset of vomiting, cramps, or diarrhea</li> </ul>
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**If a customer informs you of a food allergy:**

- Refer the food allergy concern to the Person in Charge (PIC).
- Review the food allergy with the customer and check the ingredient labels.
- Respond to the guest's request and inform them of your findings.
- Remember to check the food preparation procedures for ANY possible cross contamination, which could include trying the item in question in the same grease as an item that contains an allergen.
- If a food item is returned to the kitchen due to an allergen, DO NOT attempt to remove the allergen and send the food back. Trace amounts of allergen can trigger an allergic reaction.

**Notify the Person in Charge immediately if a customer has an allergic reaction!**

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Knowing if allergens are present in food may not be as easy as you think. For example, did you know that Caesar Dressing typically contains egg, milk, and fish allergens? Or that a product label identifying “lecithin” as an ingredient means egg and soy allergens are present? Or that products with “albumin” as an ingredient should be avoided by anyone allergic to eggs? At a minimum, food workers need to be able to identify the eight major food allergens and know how to read and interpret food labels.

**Know How to Read a Label!**

## Training Opportunities

Visit the CMDHD website to find the ServSafe Manager Training classes that are scheduled in the six-county district. Also, inexpensive (\$10) Food Worker instruction is offered each month in our local offices to help you train your employees.

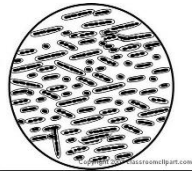
## Towels and Wiping Cloths

A common (yet risky) practice in some restaurants is the misuse of towels and wiping cloths in the kitchen. Some food workers have a habit of hanging a cloth towel on their belt for use in keeping their hands dry, especially during summer months when the kitchen is exceptionally warm. It



is also not uncommon to see cloths used for wiping up food spills carelessly left on food contact surfaces and countertops. Did you know these practices pose a food safety risk?

A study published in *Food Protection Trends* recently documented the presence of bacteria in kitchen cleaning cloths. The intent of the study was to determine the concentrations and types of bacteria that may be present. Researchers looked at kitchen hand towels and tested them to see if they contain pathogenic bacteria. What they found is concerning: Coliform bacteria, which indicate the possible presence of fecal matter, was found on 89% of the towels sampled and E. coli bacteria were found on 25.6% of the towels. The authors concluded that “the moist environment and collected food residuals on the towels create an ideal environment for the growth of bacteria.”



In order to control the risk of bacteria associated with cloths used in the kitchen it is important for wipe cloths to be stored in a sanitizing solution when not in use (not on the countertop). Also, food workers **must not** use cloth towels to wipe their hands. Proper handwashing and a disposable paper towel is the proper hygienic practice for that.



### Scary Fact:

Bacteria multiply every 10-20 minutes in the temperature danger zone (41°F -135°F). If you start with one bacteria, after only 2 hours you will have 64. But after 4 more hours there will be hundreds of thousands!

## Free Health Department Resources

Your local Health Department offers the following resources to restaurant managers at no cost. These materials, plus additional free resources, are also available to download and print at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdard>. Having these resources on display in your food staff area is a great way to help train your team.

- **Posters:** Employee Illness Guidelines, Allergen Awareness
- **Stickers & Signs:** Hand Wash, Dishwashing, Two-Stage Cooling, Smoke-Free Workplace
- **Emergency Action Plan guidebook**
- **Cooking temperature chart**

## The Inspection Report: A Brief Review

**Priority violation:** This means a provision of the Food Code is **not** being done which, if it were, would eliminate, prevent or at least reduce the risk of a food safety hazard to an acceptable level. In other words, a significant risk to food safety is present. *Example: Employees are not washing their hands before working with food (FC 2-301.14).* Most priority violations must be corrected immediately, but definitely no later than 10 days.

**Priority Foundation violation:** This violation refers to an application which supports, facilitates or enables a priority item. The food safety risk is significant, but not always immediate. Management must, however, take specific action to control the identified risk. *Example: Cleaning agent (soap) is not available at the hand wash sink (FC 6-301.11).* Priority foundation violations must be corrected no later than 10 days from the citation. Sometimes though, they must be corrected immediately, as in the example above.

**Core violation:** This category involves lower risk violations of the Food Code. Core violations usually relate to general sanitation, operational controls, facilities or structures, or general maintenance. *Example: A hand wash sign is missing at the hand wash station (FC 6-301.14).* Core violations must be corrected within 90 days.