

## PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR FOOD HANDLERS

**'High standards of personal hygiene are essential for food handlers as bacteria and microbes live on all parts of the human body'.**

A high standard of personal hygiene is an important aspect in the production of safe and suitable food.

- Do not wear jewellery on hands and wrists.
- Tie back or cover hair.
- Keep fingernails short, clean and without nail polish.
- Uniforms, smocks or aprons should be worn and laundered daily.
- Cover cuts and sores with a waterproof, brightly coloured plaster.
- Do not prepare food when you are ill.

Whilst handling food, avoid the following:

- Touching parts of your body (face, nose ears and mouth).
- Wiping off sweat.
- Coughing or sneezing.
- Tasting food with your fingers, or utensils that are put back into the food.

### Hand Washing is Vital

Unwashed or poorly washed hands are the most common way to transfer bacteria to food. Hands must always be washed when they are a likely source of contamination. Particularly:

- Before commencing or resuming work.
- After using the toilet.
- After smoking.
- After handling rubbish.
- After blowing your nose.
- After handling raw food.
- Before handling cooked / ready-to-eat food.
- After any cleaning task.
- After touching your hair, scalp or body opening.



### Hand Washing Procedure

Rinse hands under warm water.

1. Apply liquid soap and massage into hands for 20-30 seconds, preferably also using a nail brush to scrub under fingernails.
2. Rinse hands well under warm water.
3. Dry hands thoroughly with disposable paper towels or air blower.

**Do not use cloth towels.**

## When a Food Handler is Sick

Food handlers must tell their supervisor if they have any of the following symptoms whilst at work:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Fever
- Sore throat with a fever

Food handlers must also tell their supervisor if they have:

- Been diagnosed as having or carrying a food borne illness.
- Infections, skin injuries or sores.
- Been otherwise unwell.
- Or suspect they have contaminated food (e.g. jewellery has fallen into food).

## Gloves

It is important to remember that gloves are only a physical barrier between hands and food. Even if a food handler uses gloves and utensils, they must still wash their hands regularly.

Treat gloves as though they are your own hands.

Change gloves:

- Before commencing or resuming work.
- After using the toilet.
- After smoking.
- After handling rubbish.
- After blowing your nose.
- After handling raw food.
- Before handling cooked / ready-to-eat food.
- After any cleaning task.
- After touching your hair, scalp or body opening.

Gloves must not be:

- set aside
- reused
- washed