



Cowlitz County Health & Human Services Departments

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FOOD SERVICE INFORMATION

DURING A GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS (GI) OR NOROVIRUS OUTBREAK

Ill Food Service Workers

- The person in charge (PIC) must exclude any food employee from working if any food employee is known to have current symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or jaundice
- The person in charge shall cooperate and comply with orders from the local health officer
- Exclude from work employees that have been ill with Norovirus, for a period of 72 hours after symptoms have ended

Hand Washing for Food Workers

Wash hands:

- At a sink with hot and cold running water, soap and paper towels
- Rinse under clean, running warm water
- Scrub hands for at least 10-15 seconds using soap
- Dry with paper towel
- Turn off faucet handles with paper towel
- Hand washing shall take at least 20 seconds

Times to wash hands:

- After using toilet room and then again upon entering the kitchen area
- After handling raw meat, fish or poultry
- After sneezing and/or coughing
- Before and after food preparation
- After bussing tables or touching dirty dishes and then before unloading clean dishes
- After taking a break, eating or smoking
- After using any chemicals
- After any other contaminating contact
- Hand sanitizers may be used after washing hands, but **not** instead of washing hands

Food Preparation

- Have menus that require less preparation if short of staff
- Food workers must use utensils such as tongs, scoops, deli papers, or single use gloves to keep from touching ready-to-eat foods such as:
 - ❖ Washed produce that is eaten raw such as sliced fruit, salads, garnishes
 - ❖ Bakery or bread items such as cakes, breads, pies, tortilla chips
 - ❖ Food that has already been cooked such as pizza, hamburgers, hotdogs, tacos
 - ❖ Items that will not be cooked such as sandwiches, deli salads, lettuce

- Limit or restrict kitchen staff employees to the kitchen area only
- Limit or restrict access to the ice cube machines and store the ice scoop out of bin in a clean holder
- Discard any food that was exposed to an ill employee

Kitchen Cleaning Procedures

- If using Quat for sanitizing, put up a sign to stop use until outbreak is over
- Post sign at all Quat automatic dispensers
- Clean potentially contaminated surfaces with soap and water then sanitize with bleach solution
- Use bleach at **½ cup bleach in 1 gallon of water** for all surfaces during outbreak
- Leave bleach solution on at least ten minutes, rinse with water, then air dry
- Explain to all staff the hazard of mixing ammonia (Windex or Quat) and bleach – it could create chlorine and/or ammonia gas
- Dishwasher sanitizing – test the chlorine level 50 ppm or temperature gauge >160°F
- Roll cars/service carts sanitized before returning to kitchen area

What to Do If a Kitchen Employee Vomits in the Kitchen Area

Follow instructions on the sheet “How to Sanitize during a Gastrointestinal Illness Outbreak” by:

- Putting on disposable gloves, goggles and a mask
- Mix 2 cups bleach in one gallon of water
- Clean up large particles with paper towels
- Put all debris in a plastic bag
- Sanitize with bleach all items within a 25 foot radius of vomiting incident location
- Discard all exposed/unwrapped foods with a 25-foot radius of incident location
- Dispose of soiled paper towels and gloves in a plastic bag and place in outside garbage if possible
- Wash hands with soap and water
- Notify nursing director or person in charge

Important Rules for Using Gloves

- Wash hands before putting on gloves
- Change gloves that get ripped
- Change gloves that might be contaminated and wash hands
- Never wash or reuse gloves
- Change gloves (and wash hands) between working with raw and ready-to-eat foods
- Throw gloves away after use
- Wash hands after taking off gloves