



## **BARE HAND CONTACT OF READY-TO-EAT FOODS**

### **What is Bare Hand Contact?**

Bare Hand Contact is handling of ready-to-eat foods without any barriers such as gloves or utensils between the employees' hands and the food items. "Ready-to-eat food" means food that is in a form that is edible without additional preparation to achieve food safety. Ready-to-eat foods are not allowed to be handled using bare hand contact, unless proper documentation and procedures have prior approval by Metro Health.

### **What are Examples of Ready-to-Eat Foods?**

- Raw or partially cooked animal such as sushi or oysters
- Cooked or prepared foods
- Raw fruits and vegetable that are washed
- Baked goods such as tortillas or bread
- Spices and seasonings

### **How can Ready-to-Eat foods be handled properly?**

Ready-to-eat foods can be handled using a barrier, such as:

- Deli tissue
- Spatulas
- Tongs
- Single-use gloves
- Dispensing equipment.

### **What establishments are NOT allowed to practice bare hand contact procedures:**

Establishments that serve highly susceptible populations are NOT allowed to handle foods with bare hands, which include:

- Health care facilities
- Child care facilities
- Assisted living facilities

## **Requirements for an establishment to conduct Bare Hand Contact of Ready-to-Eat Food:**

**\*As required in Texas Food Establishment Rules §228.65**

- Obtain approval from regulatory authority, by submitting a written plan to Metro Health.
- Metro Health will make final approval.
- Written procedures should be maintained in food establishment and made available upon request.

**Written Procedures for Bare Hand Contact of Ready to Eat Foods must include:**

- A written employee health policy that details how the establishment will comply with §228.35, 228.36 and 228.37 of the Texas Food Establishment Rules.
- List of specific ready-to-eat foods and additives that will be touched by bare hands.
- Two (2) barriers that will be used as safeguards before touching foods with bare hands. The double barriers can include double hand washing, and/or use of hand sanitizer, and/or use of nail brush.
- Signatures of employees' acknowledgement should be listed and updated.
- Corrective action that will be assessed when employees are found to not be following procedures, as stated on "Bare Hand Contact Of Ready-To-Eat Foods" Documentation.

### **What is Corrective Action?**

If proper handling of ready-to-eat foods is not followed, the following corrective actions will be taken:

- Discard the food or
- Re-heat the food thoroughly to the required reheating temperature of 165°F;
- Employees will be re-trained as necessary to include the required double barrier method.
- The person in charge will make the required documentation in the compliance log.

The person in charge will take immediate action when an employee is found in violation of the Bare Hand Contact policy. This can be done either orally or in writing and may include re-training for those employees that continue to violate the policy.



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
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## **Written Employee Health Policy**

The Bare Hand Contact plan created for, or created by an establishment must include a written employee health policy that details how they will meet the requirements as identified in §§228.35, 228.36 and 228.37 of the Texas Food Establishment Rules. Although the information below highlights the sections, it does not cover all of the requirements of an employee health policy.

### **§228.35 Responsibilities and Reporting Symptoms and Diagnosis**

1. Employees must report to their employer information about their health as it relates to diseases that are transmissible through food.
  - a. Symptoms
  - b. Health practitioner diagnosed illness
  - c. Previous illness diagnosed by a health practitioner
  - d. Exposure to or the source of a confirmed disease outbreak
  - e. Exposure by attending or working in a setting of a confirmed outbreak
2. The person in charge must notify the regulatory authority when a food employee:
  - a. Is jaundiced
  - b. Has an illness diagnosed by a health practitioner

### **§228.36 Conditions of Exclusions and Restrictions**

1. The person in charge must exclude or restrict a food employee when:
  - a. Symptoms are from a non-infectious condition
2. Exclude a food employee when:
  - a. Jaundiced
  - b. Diagnosed with an infectious disease

### **§228.37 Managing Exclusions and Restrictions**

1. The person in charge must adhere to conditions when removing, adjusting, or retaining the exclusion or restriction of a food employee
  - a. Re-instate a food employee after meeting required conditions
  - b. Restrict a food employee who meets required conditions
  - c. Retain exclusions of a food employee as conditions require

Regulatory Authority Approval By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**CORRECTIVE ACTION:**

**\*Corrective action log shall be included with the written plan\***

The person in charge will take immediate action when an employee is found in violation of the BARE HAND CONTACT policy. This will be done either orally or in writing and may include re-training for those employees that continue to violate the policy. The person in charge will document who, what, when, where and how corrective actions were made in the compliance log.

DATE	NAME	WHAT - WHERE - HOW

Regulatory Authority Approval By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



