

**San Antonio Metropolitan Health District**  
**Food and Environmental Health Division**  
**Food Handler Safety Requirements**

**I.**     **Food Borne Illness Protection:**

- a. An employee or volunteer must report to the person in charge if he or she has an illness due to:
  - i. Norovirus
  - ii. Hepatitis A
  - iii. Salmonella typhi
  - iv. Shigella spp:
  - v. shiga toxin-producing E. coli
- b. An employee or volunteer must report to the person in charge if he or she has the following symptoms now or within the last month:
  - i. vomiting
  - ii. diarrhea
  - iii. jaundice
  - iv. sore throat with fever
  - v. a sore containing pus that is open

**II.**     **Good Hygienic Practices:**

- a. **HANDWASHING:** Hands and exposed portions of arms that may contact food must be washed for at least 20 seconds using soap and water, followed by thorough drying of cleaned hands and arms using individual disposable towels, a continuous towel system or a heated air hand-drying device.
- b. **WHEN TO WASH HANDS:** Hands need to be washed after: touching bare human body parts (other than clean hand); using the toilet; caring for or handling animals; coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or a disposable tissue; using tobacco; eating or drinking. During food preparation hands must be washed as often as necessary to remove food debris that can cross contaminate other foods; when switching from raw food to cooked or handling ready-to-eat foods; before putting on gloves; and after engaging in other activities that contaminate hands or gloves.
- c. **HAND SANITIZERS:** Hand sanitizers are to be used after hands have been properly washed and dried prior to handling ready-to-eat foods.
- d. **FINGERNAILS:** Must be kept clean. If fingernail polish is worn gloves must be used before preparing food.
- e. **EATING, DRINKING AND TOBACCO USE:** Eating and drinking must only be done in designated areas to ensure foods are not contaminated. Smoking or the use of smokeless tobacco is not permitted inside any food booth.
- f. **HAIR RESTRAINTS:** While working with foods or drinks hair restraints such as hats or hairnets must be worn at all times.

- III.**     **PREVENTING CROSS CONTAMINATION BY WORKERS:** Food workers are strongly encouraged to only handle ready-to-eat foods using proper utensils, deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single use gloves, or dispensing equipment. If these are not used, food workers must properly wash and dry their hands and follow with a hand sanitizer immediately prior to handling any ready-to-eat foods.

#### **IV. CROSS CONTAMINATION:**

- a. **PREVENTING CONTAMINATION WHEN TASTING:** Workers must not use a utensil more than once to taste food.
- b. **PREVENTING FOOD AND INGREDIENT CONTAMINATION:** At all times, including while being stored, prepared, displayed, served, or transported, food shall be protected from potential contamination.
- c. **PREVENTING CONTAMINATION FROM ICE USED AS A COOLANT:** Ice used to cool foods or canned drinks, cooling coils and tubes of equipment may not be used as food or placed in drinks. Packaged foods may not be stored in direct contact with ice or water unless the packaging will not allow water to penetrate such packaging.
- d. **PREVENTING CONTAMINATION FROM EQUIPMENT, UTENSILS:** Food shall only contact surfaces of equipment that have been properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized. In use food utensils may only be stored: handles up in the food; on a clean portion of the food preparation table or cooking equipment if the equipment is properly cleaned and sanitized; in running water; or in a container of water if the water is maintained at a temperature of at least 135 degrees F.
- e. **PREVENTING CONTAMINATION FROM THE PREMISES:** Food, equipment, single service items such as cups, plates, disposable tableware, napkins, etc. must be stored in a clean dry location, where it is not exposed to splash, dust or other contamination and at least 6 inches above the floor.
- f. **PREVENTING CONTAMINATION FROM CONSUMERS:** Food on display shall be protected from contamination by the use of packaging, counter, service line, salad bar food guards, display cases, or other effective means. Condiments shall be protected from contamination by being kept in: dispensers that are designed to provide protection; protected food displays provided with the proper utensils; original containers designed for dispensing, or individual packages or portions.

#### **V. TIME AND TEMPERATURE CONTROL:**

- a. **REFRIGERATED FOOD:** Refrigerated food **must be held at 41°F. or below.**
- b. **HOT HOLDING:** Food meant to be held hot **must be kept at 135°F. or above.**
- c. **COOKING TEMPERATURES:**
  - i. Raw animal foods such as raw shell eggs for immediate service, fish, meat, pork and exotic animals commercially raised **must be cooked to 145°F. for 15 seconds.**
  - ii. Meat such as ratite (e.g. ostrich), injected meats, ground fish, meat, game animal and exotic animals commercially raised for food **must be cooked to 155° F. for 15 seconds.**
  - iii. Poultry, wild game animals, exotic animals, stuffed fish, stuffed meat, stuffed pasta, stuffed poultry, stuffed ratites, or stuffing containing fish, meat, poultry or ratite **must be cooked to 165° F. for 15 seconds.**
  - iv. Microwaved foods **must be heated to 165° F. and allowed to sit for 2 minutes before serving.**
  - v. Reheating: Potentially hazardous food that is cooked, cooled and reheated for hot holding **must be reheated to 165° F. for 15 seconds.**