

Standard Operating Procedure for Hand-washing

Wisconsin Food Code Fact Sheet #2

Chapter 3-301.11

Preventing Contamination from Hands

(A) FOOD EMPLOYEES shall wash their hands as specified under 3-301.11.

- *Except when washing fruits and vegetables as specified under 3-302.15.*
- When acceptable ill worker exclusion 2-201.12 and hand-washing programs are instituted.

(B) The person in charge shall ensure that, "Employees are effectively cleaning their hands, by routinely monitoring the employees' hand-washing."

**FOOD EMPLOYEES may not contact exposed, READY-TO-EAT FOOD with their bare hands and shall use suitable UTENSILS such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, SINGLE-USE gloves or dispensing EQUIPMENT.

Interpretation

The Departments recognize that there may be situations where the no bare hand contact rule may be impractical. In these situations, the operator may request exemption from this rule. This procedure spells out the conditions required to be met before a local or State Environmental Health Specialist may grant a ruling of comparable compliance.

Procedure Guidelines

The following conditions MUST be met before an exclusion can be granted.

1. Provide written instructions, such as an employee manual, for all food handlers to inform them of the exclusions and restrictions requirements of **Chapter 2-201.12** (see attached). Include specific examples of how employees exhibiting symptoms, or diagnosed with infectious agents, will be excluded or restricted.
2. Provide written instructions, such as an employee manual, regarding hand washing prior to handling ready-to-eat products. The instructions are to include:
 - Locations of hand wash sinks. Sinks are to be conveniently located with easy and unrestricted access, in compliance with **Chapter 2-301.15. [where]**
 - Specific instructions identifying when employees are required to wash hands, and the exclusion of ill workers. Including prior to handling ready-to-eat products and requirements identified in

Chapter 2-301.14. [when]

- Specific cleaning procedures in compliance with **Chapter 2-301.12**, including identifying cleaning compounds. **[how]**
- The signatures of each employee acknowledging they have been properly trained, understand, and agree to comply with these requirements.

3. Provide written justification for this request, i.e., why is bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods necessary? (Inconvenience, or the expense of providing disposable single use gloves, is not valid).
4. Create a written plan to identify and isolate potential cross contamination of ready to eat foods. For example, the duties of the sandwich maker should ever overlap with the duties of the cashier. The person handling the raw meat at the grill station should not be the person assembling the finished platter. If it is not possible to isolate such duties, explain how safeguards to prevent cross contamination from hand contact will be put in place.
5. Proper signs reminding employees when and how to wash their hands shall be prominently displayed.
6. All employees handling food, including persons washing utensils and dishes, shall be able to demonstrate proper hand-washing techniques, and shall be able to explain when and why they should wash their hands¹.
7. The Person in Charge shall be able to describe the relationship between the prevention of food borne disease and the personal hygiene of a FOOD EMPLOYEE; furthermore, they shall actively monitor the activities of their employees to ensure compliance with these protocols.

The regulatory authority may rescind approval of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Hand-Washing Program if the regulatory authority finds the food establishment fails to enforce proper hand-washing

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¹The Department recognizes this may not be possible for all employees, such as those who speak no English, the developmentally disabled, etc. An exception will be made in those cases, provided these employees are properly utilizing hand wash facilities.