

## PERSONAL HYGIENE



**A food handler must understand the importance of maintaining good personal health and hygiene at all times. When working with food, you must also understand the importance of a professional appearance when dealing with customers and the way in which this enhances the image of the company.**

Professional conduct means that since all staff members are representatives of the organisation, they must conduct themselves in a professional manner by:

- Knowing how to interact with customers in a suitable fashion.
- Completing standards of work according to specific standard operating procedures (SOP's).
- Liaising with their colleagues with a view to ensure that work is always carried out at a high standard.
- Ensuring that they are accountable for their behaviour, their appearance and personal hygiene.

Although we can't see it, bacteria are everywhere. We can spread these bacteria onto food, which could cause food poisoning/illness in our customers. If our hands and uniforms are not clean, they can spread bacteria onto the food we are preparing. It is therefore important to keep ourselves and our uniforms always clean, so that our customers return to the store again and again!

Generally, the following requirements as per law, are applicable for an establishment that prepare and serve food:

- Food handlers must wear protective clothing.
- Working clothes and shoes must be stored in lockers when not worn.
- Food handlers must wash hands regularly while preparing and serving food.
- Cuts and bruises should be covered.
- There must be a complete first aid box on the premises and staff should be made aware of it.
- Food handlers must not spit or smoke while on duty.
- If a food handler is sick they must inform the person in charge.

Staff involved in food preparation are called "Food Handlers". **As per R. 638 the definition of a "food handler"** is: a person who in the course of his or her normal routine work on food premises, directly handles or comes into contact with packaged or unpackaged food, food equipment and utensils or food contact surfaces and is therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements.

We can ensure practice of good personal hygiene standards by making sure that we implement and maintain the following:

### Clothing and uniform

A uniform is a dress code prescribed to you by an organisation for the staff. Uniforms should be worn all the time while staff are on duty. It is important that the uniform is worn with pride. This reflects a professional image to the customers and creates confidence in ourselves. The specifications of your uniform and protective clothing can protect you against hot or cold spills, objects, chemicals and bacterial contamination.

When you arrive at work in your own clothes, your clothes can harbour a lot of bacteria. These bacteria can come from different places – your home, car, taxi, the streets, touching trolleys/baskets, handling money and other people you may have encountered on your way to work. Street or outdoor clothing should not be worn in the service areas but should be stored in a locker.

It is important that as soon as you arrive at work, you change out of your personal clothes into your uniform.



- Put on a clean uniform and clean protective clothing which includes a clean apron and sleeve guards if you are wearing a long-sleeve top. Make sure your clothes are free from stains and neatly pressed.
- If trousers are part of your uniform, make sure you wear socks that match your uniform, for example: black socks with black shoes.
- If a skirt is part of your uniform, make sure you wear pantyhose that match your uniform. You should keep a spare pair of pantyhose in case of a ladder or tear while you are at work. Knee-highs are not appropriate because they can easily be seen under your skirt whilst you work.
- Socks and pantyhose must be washed daily. Pantyhose may not be laddered and must match the uniform, no designs allowed, must be plain.
- Cover your hair completely with a mop cap to prevent hair falling into food.
- If applicable, cover facial hair with a beard guard.
- Only wear closed shoes.
- Check that the hand wash basin is equipped with the soap, sanitizer, air dryer and paper towels as required.
- Wash and sanitize your hands.
- Traditional bracelets (Isiphandla) and/or strings must be covered with a wrist guard when staff are handling food. No plastic wrap is allowed to cover traditional bracelets or strings as it is not food safe and dangerous if it were to be caught in moving machinery.
- You must always wear a name badge while you are working as customers are usually more comfortable if they can use your name to approach you with any questions or requests. They will also be able to remember your name should they need to speak to you again. Always ensure your name badge is worn straight.
- Do not carry excess items in your pockets or store in the production area such as pens, tissues or money as this can look untidy and unprofessional.

**SPAR personal protective equipment (PPE) consists of:**

- Chef jackets and trousers - this protects your body from any ingredients, products or chemicals that you may use.
- Gumboots and safety shoes - these protect your feet from being injured by anything that may fall on them, as well as prevent you from slipping on wet floors.
- Apron - this protects your body from encountering chemicals and protects your clothes and body from spillages.
- Skull caps or peaks - should be worn over a hair net if hair is protruding or exposed. The purpose would be to prevent hair falling into food or food production.
- Hairnets and beard guards - these prevent hair, hair follicles and skin cells from ending up in the product. Hairnets also prevent your hair from getting caught in the machines.
- Sleeve guards or over sleeves - protect your forearms from hot oil splatters when working with hot oil as well as visible personal clothing.
- Wrist guards - Cover traditional bracelets or strings to ensure no contamination of food.
- Gloves - to be worn to protect hands when dealing with chemicals or when handling food product to prevent bacteria contamination.
- Freezer Gloves - to be used when working in the deepfreeze or in temperature conditions that are 0°C and below to protect hands when handling frozen product.
- Hooded freezer jacket or jumpsuit - to be used when working in the deepfreeze or in temperature conditions that are 0°C and below.





**Please note:** Visitors, contractors, managers and maintenance staff must adhere to all hygiene requirements exercised by personnel on entering any food production area. Department managers/supervisors should explain the hygiene policy to all visitors before entering food production areas. When entering the facility, the visitor must be instructed to wash and sanitize their hands.

### Footwear

Wear comfortable, non-slip shoes. Do not wear damaged or open shoes as these will not give you enough protection. Wear clean socks (men), stocking's or tights (ladies) flesh coloured to maintain the professional appearance. Fashion shoes are usually not appropriate for food handlers. You often are required to move quickly and carry awkward shaped items, if the shoes keep slipping off or are cumbersome then you will be even more tired at the end of your shift – apart from being a safety hazard. Shoes provide protection from dropped objects, spills of hot water or oil and bumps that one may get in working between tables and equipment. Shoes that are too tight will affect your posture and your personal appearance.

Employees should not wear high heels because these will put strain on your back if you are walking or standing during your shift.

- Shoes must be comfortable – low with no heels.
- Shoes must be clean and polished.
- Wear closed shoes – no sandals or slaps allowed!
- Shoes must have non-slip rubber soles.



### Body Hygiene

There is no point in wearing a clean uniform if your body is not clean as well. Some tasks or jobs are physically demanding or take place in hot areas. You should be particularly conscious of body odour if you get hot and sweaty.

Personal hygiene is about keeping your body clean and healthy. This is important because your body carries bacteria on the skin and in body fluids that can be transferred to the things you touch, especially food.

Follow these simple rules on body care:

- Shower, use light deodorant and change your underwear daily.
- Wear a clean uniform every day.
- Wear closed shoes.
- Brush teeth twice daily, use of mouthwash is recommended.
- Do not chew gum or food while on duty and serving customers.
- Have neat and clean fingernails.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water.
- Wash your hair regularly.
- Hair properly covered. Keep your hair tidy – if it is long you must tie it back from your face.
- Keep facial hair neat, trimmed and covered.
- Avoid using strong perfumes.
- Avoid wearing too much makeup.
- Fingernails clean and without nail polish. No false nails.
- No jewellery worn.
- Cuts and wounds protected.
- No evidence of smoking/eating/drinking in food preparation areas.
- Protective clothing worn, and removed when exiting the food preparation area.
- Sleeve guards worn if applicable.
- Glove policy adhered to.



### Nails

Neatly trimmed nails, free from nail polish are the acceptable norm. Very long finger nails are not suitable in food service areas for both hygiene and practical reasons. Carrying food preparation equipment and using knives leads to nails being broken and nail varnish being chipped. Long nails in the production department could bruise or pierce the sensitive product and food particles can get stuck under the nail tip.

- Nails must be kept short, neatly trimmed and clean.
- No false nails may be worn.
- No nail polish may be worn (clear or coloured) as it chips off and can go into the food causing a physical contamination.



### Clean Teeth

If you do not brush your teeth frequently this may result in bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease. As food handlers you are required to talk to your colleagues and serve customers. Badly looked after teeth and bad breath are noticeable and will affect your personal image and in turn the image of the company that you work for.

In caring for your teeth, you should:

- Brush your teeth regularly, at least twice a day.
- Floss your teeth daily to remove food trapped between teeth. If this food is not removed it will attract bacteria that cause tooth decay and bad breath.
- Visit your dentist at least once a year.

Smoking can cause bad breath - food handlers that have been smoking must wash their hands immediately upon entering the food preparation area. As the hand encounters the mouth, it can cause transferring of bacteria. Without proper hand washing these bacteria can be transferred onto food product.

### Care of hair, moustaches and beards

Tie your hair up neatly to prevent it from falling into the food that you are handling, and to stop you from pushing it out of your face and constantly touching it. Every time you touch your hair, eyes, ears, nose or mouth your hands pick up bacteria from them and transfer this to the food you are working with. Wear the appropriate hair covering.

With regards to hair covering the regulation R. 638, reads as follows:

9. (1) No person shall be allowed to handle food without wearing suitable protective clothing as specified in sub regulation (2).

(2) The protective clothing, including head covering and footwear, of any person handling food that is not packed so that the food cannot be contaminated must

(a) be clean and neat when such person begins to handle the food;

(b) at all times during the handling of the food be in such a clean condition and of such design and material that it cannot contaminate the food;

(c) be so designed that the food cannot come into direct contact with any part of the body, excluding the hands.

Food handlers are required to wear hair nets to prevent physical and microbiological contamination.

The physical contamination would be if a strand of hair was to fall from the head into the food (beard guards apply for facial hair). Microbiological contamination is that our hair and facial area carries many bacteria, the hair net covering our head by the end of the day will be contaminated with this bacterium as it is collected throughout the day, hence a hair net should be new and fresh each day and made of a disposable fabric. All hair needs to be covered and tucked away.

The SPAR PPE uniform (chef's jackets, chef's beanies and aprons) is made from polycotton which is the least flammable fabric available.

There are, various other fabrics on the market that uniforms and head gear is made from, however we need to pay special attention to where this fabric is being worn by our staff. For example, bonbon is a type of spandex or nylon which is a highly flammable (melting) fabric and not disposable.

Winter beanies are made from acrylic wool, a highly flammable (melting) material. Not disposable.

For food handlers working in production areas in the deli, bakery and butchery, wearing flammable fabrics near stoves, gas burners and ovens is not safe due to burn and cross contamination risks. The butchery department is the department that is most likely to have cross contamination from head gear/beanies as the butchery men carry the meat carcasses on their shoulders which is in direct contact with their PPE clothing. As the meat carcasses are hung in the butchery fridges for storage the food handlers have a high chance of touching the product with the PPE when working in this area.

As the SPAR group we allow head wraps and winter beanies in all other areas of the store including produce receiving, perishables, frontline and grocery shop floor.

- Hair must be kept clean and free from dandruff.
- Hair must be shampooed at least twice a week or daily if long.
- Hair must be kept neat and away from the face.
- All hair must be tucked away neatly under the hair net, no fringe or pony tails can hang out the hair net.



#### **Moustaches and beards**

It is preferable that male food handlers be clean-shaven.

However due to religious reasons some male food handlers will not be able to shave. If this is the case then moustaches and beards need to be kept as short and neat as possible and must be covered with a beard snood.

#### **Wearing jewellery, perfume and cosmetics**

No jewellery should be worn in the food production area. This includes watches, all rings and bangles. Food and cleaning chemicals can damage jewellery. Stones or parts of the jewellery can fall into the food, causing personal loss and can harm the person eating the food. Food particles, dirt and bacteria can accumulate in jewellery and cause bacteria to collect and grow. This in turn can be passed onto food and cause food contamination.

Allergies and skin infections can occur where moisture and food collect under jewellery.

Rings, chains and bracelets can also be a safety hazard as they can become hot and burn your skin or get trapped in machinery, causing a serious injury.

View **Jewellery Policy** under policy section for more details.

### **Cosmetics and perfume**

A food preparation area is not a place for heavy make-up or strong perfume. Perfume can be used to try to disguise the smell of an unwashed body, and the combination can be very unpleasant to a customer.

Make-up and cosmetics are often used to hide bad skin and can also cause bad skin as it clogs the skin and does not allow it to breathe. As a food preparation area is usually a hot and greasy place, the skin needs to be looked after so that it stays clean and free from spots. Bad skin causes people to scratch and itch and they can transfer these bacteria from their face to the food and then to the customers who may become ill.

- Use light perfumes - strong smelling perfumes and colognes should be avoided.
- Make-up must be lightly done.
- Black or brown mascara and a light shade of lipstick is acceptable.

### **Body piercing and tattoos**

Pierced tongues or any other piercings on the face (except for pierced ears) are not allowed. If you have any tattoos, they must be covered either by your uniform or a sleeve guard.

### **Hand washing**



**IMPORTANT! - Washing your hands is one of the most important tasks you need to perform during the day!**



The SPAR standard in the food preparation areas is that hand washing stations need to be accessible and should not be used for any other purpose other than the washing of hands. Access to all hand washing facilities shall always be unobstructed.

Hand washing facilities in each food preparation area must have hot and cold running water and separate dispensers filled with liquid soap and sanitizer. The use of paper towel is preferred for drying hands. The paper towel should be on a stand or wall mounted not just a roll placed on a shelf that could be moved around the department. It would be necessary for each hand basin to have a paper towel unit. This should be checked twice a day. There must be a bin provided which is dedicated for paper towel.

A hand dryer will be accepted, however, it is not the recommended industry norm. Should the store prefer to use a hand dryer then it is important to note that the hand dryer must be properly maintained. The hand dryer needs to be kept clean. The hand dryer must be added to the cleaning schedule and filter cleaned weekly. The hand dryer would also need to be added to your equipment maintenance schedule and receive a service regularly.

The risk with a hand dryer and reasons as to why they are not best practice in industry is due to the machine not being serviced and filter not removed and cleaned, so some bacteria build up inside the machine which is a warm and moist breeding ground for bacteria to then be blown across the service department when used.







It is best practice to have hand washing signs placed in a suitable area near the hand washing sink to remind staff on the importance of hand washing. Any information sheets such as posters and staff notices posted on walls or notice boards in any area of general production should be heat laminated with non-absorbent cleanable protective plastic coating, not attached to notice boards with staples, steel nails, thumb tacks or any other object that could pose a physical contamination risk to food products.

Hands are one of the main carriers of bacteria. This is because we need to use them for almost everything that we do. For this reason, it is very important for you to keep them clean, well looked after and to avoid certain activities.

- You should wash your hands regularly; every 20 minutes is the recommended hand wash frequency.
- Wash and sanitise hands prior to entering a food preparation area.
- Wash and sanitize hands at the beginning of the day's work and after each rest break, after going on a break and eating or drinking.
- Wash hands before and after preparing raw and cooked food.
- In-between handling raw vegetables, fruit, raw meat/poultry or fish, eggs and ready to use food.
- After handling a non-prepacked foodstuff classified with or containing a common allergen.
- After cleaning with cleaning chemicals or cleaning up spills.
- After each visit to the toilet or urinal.
- Immediately after money is handled.
- Immediately after touching a cut or changing a dressing.
- After coughing or sneezing or using a tissue (blowing his/her nose).
- You should avoid touching or scratching any part of your body including areas such as ears, mouth, nose or hair whilst working.
- Wash hands after having touched the face, hair or any other part of the body.
- After handling waste bins or removal of waste from the food preparation area.
- After smoking or any use of tobacco products.



**How to wash your hands properly:**

<p><b>STEP 1</b></p> 	<p>Use a liquid soap that is kept in a clean soap dispenser, preferably mounted on the wall. Hot and cold water must be available at the hand washing basin. Use water as hot as possible.</p>	<p><b>STEP 2</b></p> 	<p>Roll up sleeves of your uniform so that they do not get wet. You will be washing your hands and your arms to below the elbow. Do not close the tap until you have rinsed your hands. Wet your hands and lower arms and lather soap in the palm of both hands and rub over the hand, wrist and forearms (all the way up to the elbow) as well as between the fingers. It is recommended to wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds (sing Happy Birthday to yourself) or as per manufacturer's instructions/chemical company training guidelines.</p>
<p><b>STEP 3</b></p> 	<p>Lather soap in the palm of both hands. Rub soap on the back of the hands. Wash the wrist and forearms (all the way up to the elbow) and wash between the fingers.</p>	<p><b>STEP 4</b></p> 	<p>Rinse the hands and forearms thoroughly with clean running water from the tap (as hot as possible). Shake off excess water. Dry the hands and forearms using paper towel or a wall mounted airdrying machine.</p>
<p><b>STEP 5</b></p> 	<p>When using paper towel to dry your hands, the tap should be closed with the paper towel in hand to prevent contamination from the tap back onto your washed hands. Never use an apron, drying cloth or wiping cloth as these contain bacteria and will leave your freshly washed hands contaminated. It's recommended that foot or elbow operated taps are installed when hand dryers are used.</p>	<p><b>STEP 6</b></p> 	<p>Spray sanitizer over your hands and arms. Allow to air dry.</p> <p>When to sanitize your hands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- After washing hands</li> <li>- Every ½ hour while working with food.</li> </ul> <p>Keep the sanitizer bottle near to your work station, but make sure the bottle itself is clean!</p>

Research has shown that the use or presence of a nail brush is problematic as the food safety rules around the nail brush have not been adhered to. The nail brush is being used for incorrect purposes such as personal grooming of hair, facial hair or polishing of shoes. This creates an even greater food safety risk to the business.

SPAR's best practice is to remove the nail brush from the departments and to wash hands as per the hand washing procedure listed.

In a food preparation area, it is a Health Legislation requirement that a hand-wash basin is provided as staff are not allowed to use food preparation basins for washing their hands. This is because bacteria on hands can contaminate the food that is being prepared.

You should follow these simple rules to reduce the possibility of transferring bacteria to food. For example:

- Never lick your fingers to assist with the opening of a plastic bag to taste food product and never touch your nose, mouth or hair when working with food.
- Never pick your nose or wipe noses on your sleeves.
- Never blow or breathe on glassware to polish them.
- If you need to taste food in preparation, always use a clean spoon to taste food and wash it in between each tasting.
- Never smoke or spit in the food handling areas.

#### **Gloves and sleeve guards for food handlers**

Are gloves a complete solution and guarantee of food safety?

No, gloves very often give us a false sense of security. Food handlers cannot feel if their hands are dirty, as large amounts of bacteria build up on the surface. Gloves are often worn too long and while the food handler handles various products and touches more surfaces, resulting in a build-up of surface bacteria.

Between the warm skin and the glove, heat increases, hands sweat and provide the perfect incubator for bacterial growth. These bacteria accumulate and if the glove is punctured, torn or removed carelessly there is a greater risk of the food becoming contaminated with a "generous dose" of bacteria, much more than would be present on a recently washed and sanitized hand.

#### **The use of gloves in food preparation and serving areas (out of the sight of customers)**

**Preparation areas:** Food handlers believe that the use of gloves allows them not to have to wash their hands as stipulated under the hand washing section of this manual. This is not correct and even if gloves are used, food handlers still must wash and sanitize their hands every 20 minutes.

If gloves are used continuously and not cleaned, gloves can also carry many bacteria that can be passed onto food.

Best practice at SPAR would be that **no** gloves are to be worn during preparation of food production.

**Serving areas: Our customers prefer to be served by food handlers who are wearing a glove/s.** Therefore, when serving customers, **it will be required that the hand/s that is in direct contact with the product must wear a glove.** It is not always necessary to have both hands gloved, situation dependant. The glove must be used on a clean sanitized hand and for a single use of product, should the product have to come into contact with a hand. The food handler, however does have several options available when preparing, handling or serving foods without bare hands coming into contact with the product e.g. tongs, forks and spoons, deli wrap paper, waxed paper, napkins and clean spatulas.

<b>Example</b>	When serving bread rolls in the bakery, if the right hand was to pick up the bread roll and place into the merchandising bag being held in the left hand – only the right hand would need to have a glove on.
<b>Example</b>	When slicing deli meats in HMR, the product is placed behind a safety guard which is pushed by the right hand (right hand is not in direct contact with the product - no glove), however the meat is caught by the left hand and laid out neatly on the fresh wrap, therefore the left hand is in direct contact with the product and must wear a clean glove on a clean sanitized hand.
<b>Example</b>	When serving hot food from the HMR counter, it is required that each hot food product being merchandised should have its own clean and sanitized spoon/ladle/tong/fork to serve with. Therefore, the food handler's hands will not be in direct contact with the food product and the food handler does not need to wear gloves on either hand.

View **Glove Policy** under policy section for more details.

#### **The use of gloves when preparing sushi:**

Gloves do not need to be worn when rolling sushi. Sushi food handlers need to ensure all the best practices of hand washing are in place, a hand wash basin is available in the sushi production unit or production area, hands are washed every 20 minutes with food safe hand wash and sanitized. It is very difficult, bordering impossible, to roll sushi with gloves on as the gloves hinder the process.

#### **Sleeve guards**

Clean sleeve guards must be issued daily, and the same rules apply as gloves. Sleeve guards must be worn to cover any clothing (personal clothing) extending beyond the chef's jacket sleeve or SPAR issued uniform and may be used to cover plaster/s, a bandage or jewellery e.g. traditional or medical bracelets including string.

Sleeve guards, following use, must be disposed of daily.

Note: In Summary:

- Do not wear gloves when preparing food
- Do wear gloves when serving customers

#### **Facilities**

A store must have a separate changing area for male and female staff and these changing areas must have facilities for storage of the clothes of workers. The staff facilities of a rest room area/locker/doors should not open directly into the processing area and should always be closed. In stores which provide a rest room facility separate from the main staff facilities i.e. bakery night shift provides a urinal or latrine it must be via a properly ventilated lobby and the door must be equipped with a durable self-closing device.

Sufficient lockers must be provided for the number of staff on duty at any given time. The locker area should be cleaned and free of food, clothes and shoes – clothes and shoes should be kept in the locker when not in use. The lockers should be cleaned regularly and reflect on a cleaning schedule and regular pest control checks should be done and treatments conducted when required with a minimum timeframe of at least twice a year.



Staff male and female toilets must be provided and be sufficiently equipped according to the latest regulation on the number of toilets, urinals and hand washing basins per population of staff employed in the stores. These toilet facilities must be provided with hand washing facilities, must have hot and cold running water, filled soap and sanitizer dispensers, hand dryer or paper towel. The basin area must always be kept clean.

The staff toilets must be cleaned and sanitized daily, with the area and equipment included on a cleaning schedule and always have toilet paper readily available. Disposable bins should be available with a fitted lid for the disposal of litter and sanitary bins should be available in the female facility. Doors, toilets, toilet seats, cisterns and urinals should be fitted and in a well maintained condition. No litter should be present.

A first aid box must be available and complete with the necessary items to ensure proper wound and infection control. Any cuts, scolds, burns or similar conditions on the hands or forearms, should be covered with dressings with sealed edges until the condition is healed. The dressings should be waterproof and coloured, so they can be seen easily should they become dislodged. Gloves must be worn over all dressings should the affected staff member perform any task considered as “food handling”.

The first aid box should be suitably placed and always available to staff during food production. All incidents to be recorded and checked.

When you are sick, the bacteria your body carries are increased and can be harmful to others. In the work place this would be your colleagues and customers. This can cause illness and disease. It is therefore essential that you maintain good personal hygiene, but this is especially important when you are working with food, to avoid transferring bacteria that causes vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

If you have recently been sick with an illness such as a cold, vomiting or diarrhoea you must ensure that you wash your hands properly, especially after you have been to the toilet or blown your nose.

If you are getting sick, you will probably have certain symptoms such as a sore throat, coughing, runny nose or aching body. When you are sick you are infectious and dangerous to other people. Diseases like tuberculosis, colds, influenza, mumps and diarrhoea are very infectious diseases that are passed onto other people by the bacteria being released into the air when you cough or sneeze.

You must wash your hands thoroughly every time you sneeze or blow your nose into a handkerchief or tissue. If you have any infectious diseases, you should report these to your supervisor immediately and you should see a doctor who may block you off from work. Staff should always be “fit for work”.

**Fit for work means:**

Staff should not be suffering from, or carrying an illness or disease that could be passed on to customers through the food they are preparing.

Always report illness to your employer, never arrive at work sick, you are liable to pass illness on to other employees and customers through contact with food by your hands, coughing and sneezing. Notification should be given so the employer can make arrangements for other staff members to fill in for you in your absence.

- All illness must be reported to your supervisor immediately.
- Reporting of illness and infection helps to control contagious diseases between workers.
- Helps to control contamination of customer food and drink.
- Food handlers are not allowed to work with food or handle eating utensils when ill.





## IMPORTANT!

No one must be allowed to handle food or enter a food preparation area if they:

- Are suffering from, or carrying a disease likely to be transmitted through food, e.g. Hepatitis A
- Have infected wounds, skin infections or abscesses
- Have cuts, unless properly covered
- Have diarrhoea

Staff who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting should not return to work until they are free of symptoms for 48 hours.



### Cuts, grazes and wounds

Cuts, burns, grazes, sores and visibly infected skin lesions can also transfer bacteria to food and other surfaces. Open sores or cuts also look very unpleasant to customers.

Cuts and sores should be covered with a brightly coloured, clean, waterproof plaster or dressing, and this must be covered by a clean disposable glove. This is to prevent the plaster or dressing from falling into food. The staff member can continue to work as long as they sanitize the glove regularly.

View **Plaster and Wound Policy** under the policy section for more details. **Complete the Plaster Policy Form.**

### Health Risks and Contagious illnesses

Influenza, Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Hepatitis A, Jaundice, Tuberculosis, and Diarrhoea are contagious diseases and you should not report to work in any of these conditions. Certain strains of Chicken Pox can be a serious health risk to any colleagues or customer that you may encounter who is pregnant. Any discharge from eyes, ears or nose would also be classified as a health risk. Diarrhoea is a potential health risk, especially if you are a food handler, as E. coli bacteria (found in the human intestine) can be transferred from the toilet to the food being prepared.

Staff who are carrying a health risk or infectious illness must report this to their manager, and only return to food handling once they have been cleared by a Medical Practitioner.

### Headaches and migraines

These are not serious conditions and can be alleviated with the use of over the counter painkillers. A headache or a migraine is not an infectious disease that can be transferred to others.

The regulation stipulates : *Food, facility or a container may not be handled by a person who has reported or who is suspected of suffering from or being a carrier of a disease or condition in its contagious stage likely to be transmitted through food, which includes jaundice, diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, sore throat with fever and discharges from the ear, eye or nose. A person may only resume handling food, a facility or a container if the person submits a certificate by a medical practitioner stating that the person is fit to handle food.*

### NOTE

If staff are not “fit for work” they should be removed from the area of food preparation to another area or sent home. Any unwrapped food which they may have handled should be discarded.

View **Medical Fitness and Reporting of Illness Policy** under policy section for more details.

---

### **Smoking**

Never smoke in food service or food preparation areas because:

- Cigarette ash and butts can contaminate the food.
- People touch their lips while smoking and they can transfer harmful bacteria to food.
- Smoking sometimes causes coughing and this sprays droplets of saliva around the preparation area which can result in food contamination.
- Cigarette butts contaminated with saliva are placed on working surfaces and can contaminate food.
- An unpleasant environment may be created for non-smokers.
- Current legislation forbids smoking in public areas – designated smoking areas are the only places you may smoke.

### **Food Handler Training and Supervision**

All food handlers should receive training in personal hygiene before starting employment in the workplace; this can be done inhouse or is available through SPAR.

All food handlers must receive refresher annual food safety training. Routine assessments are required to determine the impact of the training and arrange follow-up training where applicable. Required training for food handlers must ensure that any person working on the food premises is suitably qualified or adequately trained in the principles and practices of food safety and hygiene.

Our preferred chemical service providers are also able to offer some personal hygiene training and training on the proper use of hand soaps and sanitizers.