



# FOOD EMPLOYEE HEALTH GUIDELINES

The Kansas City Food Code requires the Person-In-Charge (PIC) of a food establishment to:

1. Recognize diseases that are transmitted by foods
2. Inform employees of reporting requirements
3. Restrict or exclude infected workers
4. Notify the Health Department when an employee is diagnosed with a “Big Five” illness

## Recognize diseases transmitted by foods

There are nearly 300 organisms associated with foodborne illness. Section 2-201.11 of the Kansas City Food Code identifies some of the more symptoms of illnesses that can be easily spread by foods, including:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Jaundice
- Discharges from the eyes, nose & mouth
- Fever
- Infected wounds or boils
- Sore throat with fever

## The “Big Five” illnesses

The Food Code singles out five foodborne illnesses that are both highly infectious (it may take only a few organisms to infect a person) and highly virulent (a person can become severely ill once infected). The “Big Five” are:

- Norovirus
- Hepatitis A virus
- *Shigella* spp
- Enterohemorrhagic or Shig Toxin-Producing *Escherichia Coli*
- *Salmonella* typhi

## Inform employees of reporting requirements

Employers must inform employees of the employees' legal responsibility to report:

- Present or past illnesses with the “Big Five”; or
- When they have symptoms of other illnesses that can be readily spread via food

Sample forms that can be used to inform employees of these requirements are available from the Health Department. Food employees are then responsible for informing their employers of these health conditions. Managers should inquire about the health of current employees and new employees (after a conditional offer of employment).

## Restrict or exclude infected workers

The Food Code requires the Person-In-Charge to prevent food contamination by employees with certain medical conditions through:

- Restriction of work; or
- Exclusion from work

Restriction means preventing an employee from working with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils and lines, and unwrapped single service and single use articles.

Exclusion means the employee is not allowed in any part of the food establishment.

Detailed guidance on “Exclusion & Restrictions” is provided in section 2-201.12 of the Food Code. Copies of the Food Code may be purchased from the Health Department for \$15.00.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires employers to accommodate affected individuals by identifying, when reasonably possible, alternative work responsibilities that fulfill the intent of restriction or exclusion. The ADA does not require an employer to keep an employee on-site if there is a risk of transmitting illness to other employees or the public.

Additional information about the ADA is available by calling the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission toll free at 800-669-4000.

*NOTE: This document is for educational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for the Kansas City Food Code.*

