Let’s start an Employee Health Policy!

To start an employee health policy (EHP), you must have a training meeting with your employees, one at a time or as a group, and review some very specific information.

There are three forms which are used to explain the employee health policy (EHP). Two of the forms are for employees and managers and the third form is for managers only.

**Form #1** is titled “What is foodborne illness?”
**Form #2** is called the Employee Agreement.
**Form #3** is called the Manager’s Decision Guide.

You will use forms #1 and #2 when training your employees. Make enough copies for each employee to have his/her own to review.

Form #1 – What is foodborne illness? You must make the following important points:
1) Foodborne illness can make customers sick and that can have an effect on the restaurant’s business.
2) The BIG SIX foodborne illnesses are highly contagious and can cause severe illness.
3) It is important for employees and managers to recognize the symptoms of the BIG SIX foodborne illnesses.

Form #2 – Employee Agreement; you must make the following important points:
1) The employee agrees to report to a manager if:
   a. the employee experiences symptoms of a foodborne illness;
   b. a doctor tells the employee he/she is sick with a foodborne illness;
   c. the employee is exposed to a foodborne illness through contact with other people.

Make the Employee Health Policy part of the training for all new employees. During inspections, the area health department inspector will ask for evidence that you are doing the training.

There are two ways to show that employees have received the Employee Health Policy information:
1) employee signature on the Employee Agreement or
2) a sign-in sheet from a group training meeting.

If you have any questions about the Employee Health Policy, you may contact Fairfax County Health Department or get more information from our website, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health.
Form #1  What is foodborne illness?

People can become sick from eating contaminated food. This is called foodborne illness. *Contaminated* means there are bacteria and viruses on the food which can make people sick. Sometimes the food in a restaurant can become contaminated because of the way an employee handles the food. If a customer becomes sick from eating contaminated food in a restaurant, there may be serious results. For example:

**Employee**
- Contaminates the food by not washing his/her hands properly;

**Customer**
- Gets sick
- Tells friends, relatives, neighbors not to eat at restaurant
- Complains to the health department
- Could take the restaurant to court

**Restaurant**
- Loses business
- Could go out of business

**Employee**
- Could be out of a job

The most common foodborne illnesses in the United States are:
1. E.Coli 2. Salmonella Typhii 3. Shigella

These illnesses are referred to as the **Big Six**. Often these illnesses have similar symptoms. It is important that an employee recognize the symptoms of foodborne illness:
1) vomiting
2) diarrhea
3) jaundice
4) sore throat with fever
5) skin infection such as open sores

CALL YOUR MANAGER
Form #2  EMPLOYEE ILLNESS REPORTING AGREEMENT

You play an important role in providing safe food to the general public. As a food handler, you have a responsibility to report the symptoms and conditions listed below.

I agree to report to the person in charge the following symptoms of foodborne illness:

1. Vomiting
2. Diarrhea
3. Jaundice – yellow skin or eye color
4. Sore throat with fever
5. Infected wounds

I agree to report to the person in charge if a doctor says that I have one of the following infections:

1. E.coli
2. Salmonella Typhii
3. Non-typhoidal Salmonella (NTS)
4. Shigella
5. Hepatitis A
6. Norovirus

I agree to report to the person in charge if I am exposed to foodborne illness in the following ways:

1. I am exposed to a confirmed outbreak of foodborne illness;
2. Someone who lives in my house is diagnosed with a foodborne illness;
3. Someone who lives in my house attends an event or works in a place which has a confirmed outbreak of foodborne illness.

Employee Acknowledgement

I understand that if I fail to meet the terms of this agreement, action could be taken by the food establishment or Fairfax County Health Department that may affect my employment.

Employee Name (please print)________________________________________________
Employee Signature_____________________________________ Date_______________
Signature of Person in Charge______________________________ Date______________
Let’s Start an Employee Health Policy!

Form #3 – Manager’s Decision Guide – for managers;

Important points:
1) The manager must make a decision if an employee tells the manager he/she is sick with symptoms of foodborne illness.

2) There are four (4) blue boxes at the top of the page with a question in each box.
   a. Manager must ask all four questions.
   b. Lines lead from the blue boxes to Yes or No answer boxes.
   c. If the answer to the question in the blue box is “Yes”, the manager must make a decision whether to let the employee come to work.
   d. The “Yes” box has a line that leads to the decision the manager must make depending on the question that was asked.
      i. The decision boxes are red, yellow and green. Red means the employee must be EXCLUDED – he/she cannot come to work
      ii. Yellow means the employee must be RESTRICTED – he/she can come to work but they cannot do anything that gets them close to food or food-contact surfaces – no food preparation, no dishwashing, for example. They probably will not work in the kitchen at all. If your restaurant is not large enough for an employee to do other things than prepare food, you may decide to tell the employee to stay home.
   e. If the answer to the question in the blue box is “No”, all lines lead to a green decision box. The employee may come to work as usual. However, the manager should take the time to review the symptoms of foodborne illness again with the employee.

3) The large blue box at the bottom of the page has one more important piece of information in it. If an employee is told by a doctor that he/she is sick from E. coli O157:H7, Shigella, Salmonella Typhi, Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS), Norovirus, or Hepatitis A, you must call the Fairfax County Health Department. There are specific steps to get the employee back to work. The health department will explain those steps.
Employee Illness Decision Guide for PIC/CFM (non-HSP)

Use this flow chart to determine if an employee with an **undiagnosed** illness can spread the illness through food and should be restricted or excluded from work.

Employee calls manager to report illness, PIC/CFM asks EACH of the following questions:

1. **Does the employee have symptoms of an infected cut or wound?**
   - **YES**
     - EXCLUDE EMPLOYEE FROM WORK
     - If already at work, send home
     - If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end
     - If jaundiced, contact the Health Department
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees
   - **NO**
     - ALLOW WORK WITH RESTRICTIONS
     - Employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single-service items.
     - Must provide a doctor’s note before working regular job duties
     - Reinforce handwashing
     - Educate on symptoms
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

2. **Has the employee been exposed to a confirmed diagnosis of one of the Big Six?**
   - **YES**
     - EXCLUDE EMPLOYEE FROM WORK
     - If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end
     - If jaundiced, contact the Health Department
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees
   - **NO**
     - ALLOW WORK WITH RESTRICTIONS
     - Employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single-service items.
     - Must provide a doctor’s note before working regular job duties
     - Reinforce handwashing
     - Educate on symptoms
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

3. **Does the employee have symptoms of sore-throat with fever?**
   - **YES**
     - EXCLUDE EMPLOYEE FROM WORK
     - If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end
     - If jaundiced, contact the Health Department
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees
   - **NO**
     - ALLOW WORK WITH RESTRICTIONS
     - Employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single-service items.
     - Must provide a doctor’s note before working regular job duties
     - Reinforce handwashing
     - Educate on symptoms
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

4. **Does the employee have vomiting, diarrhea, or jaundice?**
   - **YES**
     - EXCLUDE EMPLOYEE FROM WORK
     - If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end
     - If jaundiced, contact the Health Department
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees
   - **NO**
     - ALLOW WORK WITH RESTRICTIONS
     - Employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens or unwrapped single-service items.
     - Must provide a doctor’s note before working regular job duties
     - Reinforce handwashing
     - Educate on symptoms
     - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

If a food employee reports a **diagnosis** of Norovirus, Hepatitis A virus, *E.coli O157:H7*, *Shigella, Salmonella Typhi* or *Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS)*, immediately exclude the employee and contact the Fairfax County Health Department, Consumer Protection Program at 703-246-2444 for guidance.
Employee Illness Decision Guide for PIC/CFM (HSP)
To be used for employees working with a highly susceptible population, including nursing homes, adult day health care, child day care or elementary school. Use this flow chart to determine if an employee with an undiagnosed illness can spread the illness through food and should be restricted or excluded from work.

Employee calls manager to report illness, PIC/CFM asks EACH of the following questions:

Does the employee have vomiting, diarrhea, or jaundice?

YES
- No food safety risk

NO

Does the employee have symptoms of sore-throat with fever?

YES
- No food safety risk

NO

Has the employee been exposed to a confirmed diagnosis of one of the Big Five?

YES
- ALLOW WORK WITH RESTRICTIONS
  - Employee does not work with exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, linens, or unwrapped single-service items
  - Contact Health Dept. for guidance on return of employee
  - Reinforce handwashing
  - Educate on symptoms
  - Discuss illness reporting policy
  - Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

NO

Does the employee have symptoms of an infected cut or wound?

YES
- Protect the lesion or open wound with an impermeable cover. If the lesion or open wound is located on a hand, use a single-use glove.

NO
- No food safety risk

EXCLUDE EMPLOYEE FROM WORK
- If already at work, send home
- If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end
- If jaundiced, contact the Health Department
- If sore throat with fever, must provide doctor’s note before returning to work
- Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

ALLOW REGULAR WORK
- Educate on symptoms
- Reinforce handwashing
- No bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods
- Discuss illness reporting policy
- Discuss how illness is transmitted through food by ill food employees

If a food employee reports a diagnosis of Norovirus, Hepatitis A virus, E.coli O157:H7, Shigella, Salmonella Typhi or Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS), immediately exclude the employee and contact the Fairfax County Health Department, Consumer Protection Program at 703-246-2444 for guidance.
### Employee Absence/Illness Record

**Instructions:** Use this log to monitor employee absences due to illness. Tracking absences will enable your establishment to better control the spread of foodborne illnesses.

Please review and refer to your establishment’s Employee Health Policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Reported</th>
<th>Employee Name</th>
<th>Vomiting (V), diarrhea (D), jaundice (J), sore throat with fever (ST), infected wounds (IW)?*</th>
<th>Other Symptoms</th>
<th>Date Excluded or Restricted from Work?*</th>
<th>Date Returned to Normal Work Duties?</th>
<th>Consulted with Doctor? Y/N</th>
<th>Diagnosed?** Y/N - If yes, name illness.</th>
<th>Contacted Health Department? Y/N</th>
<th>Restricted Duties</th>
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*If vomiting and diarrhea, exclude from work until 24 hours after symptoms end. If jaundiced, contact the Health Department.

**If a food employee reports a diagnosis of Norovirus, E.coli O157:H7, Shigella, Hepatitis A, Salmonella Typhi or Nontyphoidal Salmonella (NTS), exclude the employee and contact the Health Department at 703-246-2444 for guidance. If undiagnosed, refer to the Employee Illness Decision guide provided to you by the Health Department.

Fairfax County Health Department
Division of Environmental Health
Consumer Protection Program
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