

REVIEW OF PERSONAL HYGIENE PRACTICES THAT PREVENT CROSS-CONTAMINATION

Objective: *To review personal hygiene procedures essential to preventing cross-contamination.*

It is the responsibility of the manager to properly train, enforce, and model good hygiene practices to prevent the contamination of food and food-contact surfaces.

Begin discussion by reminding employees that humans are the primary source of such foodborne illness-causing microorganisms such as Hepatitis A and *Staphylococcus aureus*. These microorganisms, as well as others, can easily be transferred to food and food-contact surfaces through poor personal hygiene practices and can make customers, family members and *themselves* ill. To prevent this from occurring, you need to make sure your employees understand and practice proper hygiene.

→ Review with your employees the ways they can contaminate food.

Foodhandlers can contaminate food when:

- ♣ They have been diagnosed with a foodborne illness.
- ♣ They show symptoms of gastrointestinal illness.
- ♣ They have an infected lesion.
- ♣ They live with or are exposed to a person who is ill with a foodborne illness.
- ♣ They touch anything that may contaminate their hands.

→ Review with your employees the components of a good personal hygiene program.

Good personal hygiene includes:

- ♣ Hygienic hand practices, such as proper handwashing and use of hand sanitizers and gloves.
- ♣ Maintaining personal cleanliness, such as showering daily and keeping hair clean.
- ♣ Wearing clean and appropriate uniforms and following dress codes. This includes wearing a hair restraint and removing jewelry prior to working.
- ♣ Avoiding unsanitary habits and actions, such as chewing tobacco or gum, smoking, or spitting while around food or food-contact surfaces.

→ Review with your employees your establishment's policies for reporting illness or injury.

Maintaining good health and reporting illness are key to preventing food contamination. Make sure employees know that must report health problems, illnesses or injuries to you as soon as they occur. If the employee's condition could possibly contaminate food or food-contact surfaces they must stop working and see a doctor. Employees with symptoms such as fever, diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, and jaundice must be excluded from the establishment. Any cuts, burns, sores, skin infections, or infected wounds must be covered with a clean bandage when the foodhandler is working with or around food or food-contact surfaces. Bandages on hands and forearms must be further covered by an impermeable cover like a glove.

Objective: To reinforce proper handwashing.

Glo Germ* is a harmless, iridescent liquid that fluoresces in the presence of black light. This exercise will reveal how well a student washes his or her hands.



→ Have students apply some iridescent Glo Germ “germs” to their hands. Have them rub it in well, making sure they get between fingers. Then have the students wash their hands.



→ When the students return, turn off the lights and hold a black light over each of their hands to see how effectively they washed them. Often, the hands will glow around the fingernails, in cracks in the skin, and around watches or other jewelry.



→ Review the importance of handwashing as well as how to properly wash hands.



Optional Exercise:

This exercise shows how easy it is to transfer “microorganisms” from one person or object to another (cross-contamination) and also reinforces good handwashing practices.



→ Place Glo Germ powder on a handout sheet (such as a sign in sheet, a reference page on handwashing, or a homework assignment sheet) and have students pass it around the room without telling them the powder is on the paper.



→ Review the situations when handwashing is needed; then have students wash their hands.



→ Use black light to reveal who scratched their ear, hair, etc., and should have washed their hands.

* Glo Germ can be purchased by contacting The Glo Germ Company at 800-842-6622.