food code facts

Alaska Food Code Guidance

Food Safety & Sanitation Program

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Food Employee Health

"…food employees share a responsibility for preventing foodborne illness and are obligated to inform the person in charge if they are ill."

Food Code References:
18 AAC 31.220

Most Common Foodborne Illnesses:

Campylobacter is a bacterial pathogen that causes fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps. Eating undercooked chicken is the most common source of this infection.

Salmonella is a bacterium that causes fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps. In persons with poor underlying health or weakened immune systems, it can invade the bloodstream and cause life-threatening infections. The most common sources are raw or undercooked animal products like, meat, poultry, eggs, milk, seafood and dairy products.

E. coli O157:H7 is a bacterial pathogen that causes severe and bloody diarrhea and painful abdominal cramps, without much fever. Severe complications include temporary anemia, profuse bleeding and kidney failure. The most common sources are raw and undercooked ground beef and raw milk.

Calicivirus, or Norwalk-like virus (Norovirus) is an extremely common viral foodborne illness. It causes "stomach flu," or gastroenteritis, usually with more vomiting than diarrhea, that resolves within two days. It is believed that Norwalk-like viruses spread primarily from one infected person to another. Infected kitchen workers can contaminate a salad or sandwich as they prepare it, if they have the virus on their hands. Infected fishermen have contaminated oysters as they harvested them.

Keep your food establishment healthy!

- Employ healthy people.
- Educate employees on what causes health risks.
- Train employees on how to identify health risks.
- Make sure employees know when and how to report illnesses, exposure, symptoms and conditions.
- Train employees to practice good handwashing behavior. This is a must!
- Identify and take appropriate action with employees who exhibit symptoms and conditions that are known to spread foodborne illness.
- Educate food service employees about food policies; consider a written policy.

Report food worker high-risk symptoms (1-87-SAFE-FOOD):

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Jaundice (yellowish skin color and yellowish whites of the eyes)
- Sore throat with fever
- Lesions containing pus and open sores that cannot be covered with a bandage and a single-use glove.

These are the most commonly recognized foodborne infections. They should be reported to the Food Safety and Sanitation Department within 24 hours.

- *Campylobacter* (Fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps)
- *Salmonella* (Fever, diarrhea and abdominal cramps)
- *E. coli* (Diarrhea and painful abdominal cramps)
- Norovirus (Gastroenteritis/"Stomach Flu")
- Hepatitis-A virus (Infectious liver disease)
- *Shigella* (Diarrhea-producing bacteria)

Food workers with high-risk symptoms or conditions

- Exclude food workers symptomatic with diarrhea, vomiting, jaundice, sore throat and fever, or suffering from a disease likely to be transmitted through contamination of food.
- The Food Safety and Sanitation Department should be contacted within 24 hours: 1-87-SAFE-FOOD or (907) 269-7501.
- Food workers with symptoms and conditions (vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) caused by non-infectious conditions, such as Crohn's disease or early stages of a pregnancy, present minimal risks of transmitting foodborne pathogens.

Food Safety and Sanitation Program
Division of Environmental Health
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/eh/fss/index.htm
1-87-SAFE-FOOD or (907) 269-7501

NOTE: This fact sheet is a compilation of major food safety rules regarding the given topic and is not designed to replace reading the Alaska Food Code.

EXCLUSION OR RESTRICTION REQUIREMENTS FOR SYMPTOMATIC EMPLOYEES OR APPLICANTS				
Symptom	**Exclusion or Restriction**		**Removing Exclusion or Restriction***	**Department of Environmental Conservation Approval Needed to Work?**
	Establishments Serving Highly Susceptible Population	**All Other Establishments**		
Vomiting	Exclude	Exclude	When the excluded employee has been asymptomatic for at least 24 hours.	No
Diarrhea	Exclude	Exclude	When the excluded employee has been asymptomatic for at least 24 hours.	No
Jaundice	Exclude if the onset occurred within the last seven days	Exclude if the onset occurred within the last seven days	When approval is obtained from the Department of Health and Social Services.	Yes, unless medical documentation is provided to the operator.
Sore Throat with Fever	Exclude	Restrict	When the employee provides written medical documentation to the operator.	No
Lesion Containing Pus	Restrict	Restrict	When the infected wound or boil is properly covered.	No
* An exclusion or restriction may be removed for any symptom if the excluded or restricted employee provides medical documentation to the operator that the condition is from a non-infectious condition and that the risk of transmitting a pathogenic microorganism is minimal.				