

## Illness Exclusion

### Why is it important to exclude persons from food work who are ill?

1. It is important that people in a food handling area do not bring harmful bacteria into the workplace and contaminate the food.
2. It is a legal requirement under **The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995** that persons working in a food handling area should report to the proprietor of the business if they are suffering from certain illnesses.
3. The **Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995** require proprietors of food businesses to identify potential food hazards, decide which of these hazards need to be controlled to ensure food safety and then put into place effective control and monitoring procedures to prevent the hazards causing harm to consumers. Excluding people who are ill is an extremely important measure in preventing contamination of food by bacteria and thereby reducing the risk of causing food poisoning.

### Why record illness details?

1. Where someone is accused of committing an offence under the Food Safety Act 1990, the principal defence available to them is one of **due diligence**. This requires that they prove they “**took all reasonable precautions and exercised all due diligence to avoid committing the offence**”. Written records would be considered extremely important when trying to establish a defence in cases where exclusion of staff who were ill was an issue.
2. Even though written records are not necessarily a legal requirement, they clearly demonstrate that measures are in place to ensure staff recognise the importance of leaving a food area when ill in order to prevent things going wrong.

### What type of illness should I look for?

1. Persons suffering from diarrhoea and or vomiting.
2. Persons who have infected wounds, sores or skin infections which would come into contact with the food.

**Note: Staff must know what illnesses to report. It is your duty to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.**

At the end of Food Safety pack we have included a wall chart entitled **Good Hygiene Practice for People Working in Food Handling Areas**. We suggest you put it in a plastic wallet and fix it to the wall in a prominent position to act as a reminder for your staff.

### **Who should I exclude?**

1. Persons who work in food handling areas. This includes preparation, manufacturing and retail.
2. Maintenance workers who repair equipment in food handling areas. This includes both maintenance staff and outside contractors. These persons should be notified of procedures for reporting illness.
3. Visitors who will enter a food handling area, e.g., Environmental Health Officers should be questioned regarding illnesses.

## What should I do when persons working in a food area report sickness and/or diarrhoea?

Please follow the easy to use step by step guide

### Step 1

Persons suffering from diarrhoea/vomiting should report to their Manager/Supervisor and leave the food handling area **immediately**.



### Step 2

Identify any areas they may have contaminated. Clean and sanitise all such surfaces and equipment. Dispose of any contaminated food. Pay particular attention to the toilets, where handles, taps and surfaces should be cleaned and sanitised.



### Step 3

The person should be either sent home or given safe alternative work which does not involve working in an area where open food is handled.



### Step 4

Record the date, name and symptoms in the Illness Exclusion Record, noting whether it was reported by telephone or at work.



### Step 5

If after 24 hours the person **has recovered** and had only one bout of diarrhoea/vomiting they may return to the food handling area and continue working. Go to Step 9.



### Step 6

If after 24 hours if the person **still has** diarrhoea/vomiting they should seek medical advice and continue to be excluded from work.

### Step 7

If one of the following illness listed below are diagnosed by the G.P. **contact the Environmental Health Service Unit immediately** for advice.

The infections are as follows:-

- Salmonella typhi
- Salmonella paratyphi A, B or C
- Escherichia coli (E. coli)
- Hepatitis A



### Step 8

Persons having had diarrhoea/vomiting for over 24 hours and not suffering from the illnesses in Step 7 should be allowed back to work only when they have had no symptoms (i.e. diarrhoea\* and or vomiting) for **48 hours**.



### Step 9

When persons return to work ensure that good personal hygiene practices are followed.



### Step 10

Complete the details on the Illness Exclusion Record.

**\* Note: Where anti-diarrhoeal drugs have been taken the 48 hours starts from the end of the treatment.**

## Illness Exclusion Record

Date Reported	Name	Symptoms	Action taken/notes	Date of return
18/7/01 At work <input type="checkbox"/>  Telephoned <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edna Bucket	Vomiting	Returned to work, supervisor questioned her about symptoms. She was sick in the morning only. advised on personal hygiene.	19/7/01
19/7/01 At work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Telephoned <input type="checkbox"/>	Bob Bottom	Diarrhoea	Diarrhoea in toilets. Cleaning programme straight away. Sent Bob home. 22/7/01 rang in, seen G.P. Still has symptoms. Returned 48 hours after last bout of diarrhoea. Advised on personal hygiene.	25/7/01
31/7/01 At work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Telephoned <input type="checkbox"/>	Tommy Upset	Diarrhoea	Diarrhoea bad, G.P. sampled. 5/8/01 result of sample. E. Coli. 5/8/9/6 rang E.H. Officer for advice. Need 2 negative results from samples. Copies of 2 negative results sent in. Advised on personal hygiene.	19/8/01
At work <input type="checkbox"/>  Telephoned <input type="checkbox"/>				

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