

NO BARE HAND CONTACT

Cross contamination between ready-to-eat food and unwashed or poorly washed hands causes foodborne illnesses. Avoid contaminating food by providing a barrier between your hands and the food.

BARE HAND CONTACT WITH READY TO EAT FOODS IS PROHIBITED

What are ready-to-eat foods? These are foods that will be consumed without further washing or cooking.

Examples of ready-to eat foods include, but are not limited to the following:

- prepared fresh fruits and vegetables served raw
- salads and salad ingredients
- cold meats and sandwiches
- shredded cheese
- bread, toast, rolls, baked goods and sandwich buns
- garnishes such as lettuce, parsley, lemon wedges, potato chips or pickles
- fruits or vegetables for mixed drinks
- ice
- any food that will not be thoroughly cooked or reheated after it is prepared



What are options to prevent hand contamination of food?

Single-use gloves, deli paper, tongs, spatulas, and other utensils, or toothpicks are options as alternatives to bare hand contact.

Hands must still be washed in addition to using gloves, deli paper, or utensils.

Bare hand contact is allowed only when washing raw fruits and vegetables.

Minimize bare hand contact with food that is not in the ready-to-eat form. It is recommended to try alternatives to bare hand contact first.

Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods is prohibited unless you have received prior approval from the LaSalle County Health Department. If you are requesting to have bare hand contact with ready to eat foods a written application with specific procedures, policies, and documentation must be submitted.



(Note- Bare Hand Contact is not allowed in establishments serving highly susceptible populations such as nursing homes, hospitals and childcare centers.)

To request approval your application must include:

Obtain written approval from the Department by submitting the required application and policies to LaSalle County Health Department.

Written procedures must be maintained onsite and available upon request. The procedures should include:

- A listing of the specific RTE foods that are touched by bare hands.
- Diagrams showing the properly equipped handwashing facilities that are in close proximity and easily accessible to where the bare hand contact procedure is conducted.

Written employee health policy maintained on site and available upon request. The Policy shall include:

- Documentation that food employees and conditional employees acknowledge they are required to report information about their health and activities as they relate to gastro-intestinal (GI) symptoms and diseases that are transmissible through food.

Maintain documentation that food employees have received training in:

- The risks of contacting the specific food items with bare hands
- Proper handwashing
- When to wash their hands
- Where to wash their hands
- Proper fingernail maintenance
- Prohibition of jewelry
- Good hygienic practices
- Maintain documentation that hands are washed before food preparation and as necessary to prevent cross contamination during all hours of operation when the specific RTE food items are prepared

Maintain documentation that food employees contacting RTE food with bare hands use **two or more** of the following **control measures**:

- Double handwashing
- Nail brushes
- Hand antiseptic after handwashing (FDA Approved)
- Incentive programs such as paid sick leave to encourage food employees not to work when they are ill
- Maintain documentation that corrective actions are taken when the previous control measures are not followed