

Personal Hygiene Standards

Applying Personal Hygiene Standards to Mitigate Risk

Development

To define detail, scope and purpose.

Development

This information can be used to develop food safety and quality programs that meet the requirements of modern Regulatory, Customer and Industry Standards:

- We take the time to explain the expectations and requirements of food safety and quality compliance as these relate to your food safety and quality programs.
- You may choose to use our Premium Resources to build, enhance or upgrade your food safety and quality program.
- We encourage you to share this webpage with any food compliance associates and peers you believe may benefit from our commitment to providing our users with user friendly information and resources to achieve superior Food Compliance Culture.
- We welcome your suggestions for additions of general or specific content through the haccp.com Contact Page.

Key Definitions for Personal Hygiene Standards

- Food Handler: Any person who directly or indirectly handles packaged or unpackaged food, food equipment, utensils or food contact surfaces.
- Hand Sanitiser: A liquid, gel or foam applied to clean hands to reduce the number of microorganisms present, which does not replace hand washing.
- Normal Flora: Normal flora is the assemblage of microorganisms that reside on the surface and in deep layers of skin, in the saliva and oral mucosa, and the gastrointestinal tracts of humans. These may include fungi and bacteria, and they inhabit the human body without causing disease.
- Personal Hygiene: The hygienic measures associated with a person's bodily condition, notably external cleanness, preservation of health, and healthy living. Good personal hygiene ensures that germs found in or on the body are not transferred to food.
- Transient Microorganisms: Microorganisms picked up on the hands through contact with food, surfaces or other sources, which are removed by effective hand washing.

Personal Hygiene Standards Development

When considering the development, documentation, and implementation of Personal Hygiene Standards within food safety and quality management systems, the following information should be considered to ensure effective outcomes:

About Personal Hygiene Standards

Personal Hygiene Standards are a very important factor in preventing contamination during primary production, food handling, production, and distribution. Every food handler has the potential to introduce microorganisms into food, taking into account that microorganisms are all around us, and all over us. People are also quite often the source of food contamination by physical hazards, transporting foreign objects such as hair and jewellery into food.

The objectives of Personal Hygiene Standards are to ensure that those who come directly or indirectly into contact with food are not likely to contaminate food by maintaining an appropriate degree of personal cleanliness and behaving and operating properly. Personnel who have certain illnesses or medical conditions, or those who behave inappropriately can realistically contaminate food and put the consumer at risk.

All food handling staff share the responsibility to ensure that appropriate standards of dress and Personal Hygiene Standards are maintained at all times. All staff in a food manufacturing facility, including those employed on a

contractual basis and those who do not directly handle the product such as maintenance and cleaning staff are responsible either directly or indirectly for the safety of the food. Every staff member has the responsibility to ensure that the food that they prepare and handle is safe and suitable for consumption and free from contamination.

A documented Personal Hygiene Standards Policy should be developed and implemented. This policy should also be used as part of the training program when inducting new staff members. The policy may include the following requirements:

Personal Cleanliness and Attire

Food handlers should maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and, where appropriate, wear suitable protective clothing, head covering, and clean enclosed footwear. Facial hair should be trimmed, fingernails kept short and clean, and hair should be tied back. Cuts and wounds, where personnel are permitted to continue working, should be covered by suitable waterproof dressings.

Uniforms

The use of appropriate uniforms is important to any food business. Uniforms including protective clothing, footwear, and headwear should be provided where applicable to ensure the control of hazards. Best practice for food production relies on uniforms being:

- Suitable for the intended use;
- Constructed of materials and in a manner that does not pose a risk to the safety of the foods being produced;
- Laundered, handling and stored in a manner that does not pose a risk to the safety of the foods being produced;
- Changed into and out of in a designated area that does not pose a risk to the safety of the foods being produced;
- Not a potential source of contamination to the product, so overalls should not have external pockets and should have cuffed sleeves.

Aprons and overalls should be changed daily or more frequently if deemed unhygienic. They should be removed and hung in a designated area whenever the wearer leaves the food production area, in particular when going to the toilet or for a break.

It is important that the laundering, handling, and storage of uniforms is defined within documented procedures to ensure control over related hazards. This may take the form of ensuring uniform suppliers or service providers are included within the approved supplier program, their laundering chemicals are food industry approved, and that their procedures for laundering are suitable and effective.

Headwear



Hair coverings keep hair away from the face and the product.

In many jurisdictions there is no specific legal requirement for staff to use headwear unless they are working for a commercial manufacturer of high-risk products, however, virtually all food manufacturing facilities have internal requirements for personal head coverings. There is a general public perception that headwear should be worn, so it can be advantageous to encourage staff to wear head coverings whilst in the view of the public.

Hair coverings can range from baker-style skull caps to traditional style chef's white toques, and they also include shower cap-style head coverings and snoods for beard hair. It is important to remember that headwear should be kept in the same hygienic state as with the rest of the uniform. An additional advantage of head covering can be the use of different coloured coverings to highlight supervisors and/or first aiders.

Foodservice staff are not necessarily required to wear headwear, but they should observe a well-maintained hairstyle. Longer hair should be tied back to exclude excessive length and to keep it away from the face and product.

Footwear

It is paramount that footwear for food workers also be maintained in a hygienic state. A high hygienic standard for footwear will assist in the maintenance of a clean working environment. Food industry work areas are well known for containing substances that may increase the risk of slippage injuries. It is important to use footwear that is appropriate for the work being undertaken.

Good quality footwear should be:

- Non-Slip;
- Covered;
- Made from durable, non-porous material;
- Oil, acid, and alkali resistant;
- Hard capped for safety.

It most often comes down to managements' decision as to what varieties are suitable to be worn in particular areas; not only for food safety but for workplace health and safety. Consideration to boot washing facilities or a food bath should be considered by plants processing high risk or high care products.

Jewellery

It is generally not acceptable for jewellery to be worn in food production areas. The exception in many cases is a plain wedding band and medic-alert bracelets. Jewellery such as wristwatches, earrings, bracelets, and body piercings pose a threat not only as a physical hazard, but also have the potential for the harbourage of microbial pathogens due to their inability to be hygienically cleaned.

Personal Behaviour

People engaged in food handling activities should refrain from behaviour that could result in contamination of food, for example:

- Smoking;

- Spitting;
- Chewing, eating, or drinking;
- Sneezing or coughing over food;
- Sitting on or leaning against any food contact surfaces.

Personal effects such as jewellery, coats, bags, and lunches should not be brought into food-handling areas.

Pre-employment and Visitor Screening

Before the commencement of any operation within any food business, prospective employees should undergo a minimum of basic medical screening to ensure they are aware of their obligations under relevant legislation and best practice standards.

Such testing may include a questionnaire, or may also include laboratory testing of samples obtained from an individual. Such analytical testing should include screening for pathogens that are noted within relevant legislation and best practice standards commensurate with the scope of the testing methods used.

A health questionnaire is a common tool used to ascertain the appropriate status of a current or prospective employee, visitor, or contractor entering nominated areas of the site. It is also important to note that visitors and contractors could also potentially contaminate products or processes with carried food pathogens. In this case, it may also be beneficial to ensure all visitors and contractors complete a medical screening questionnaire before entering designated areas of the food business.

Personal Health

Working in the food industry can be a very physical job and often work needs to be carried out at disagreeable temperatures for prolonged lengths of time. At the outset, these things must be considered by the employer and employee. Sick employees and poor hygienic practices rank highly in the causes of foodborne disease outbreaks. People known, or suspected, to be suffering from, or to be a carrier of a disease or illness likely to be transmitted through food, should not be allowed to enter any food handling area if there is a likelihood of their contaminating food. The types of diseases involved should be referenced to any applicable food legislation. Any person so affected should immediately report illness or symptoms of illness to the management. Medical examination of a food handler should be carried out if clinically or epidemiologically indicated.

Conditions that should be reported to management so that any need for medical examination and/or possible exclusion from food handling can be considered include:

- Jaundice;
- Diarrhoea;
- Vomiting;
- Fever;
- Sore throat with fever;
- Visibly infected skin lesions, exposed injuries, sores;
- Discharges from the ear, eye, or nose;
- Observed poor hygiene practices which could lead to normal bacterial flora contaminating the product.

Health regulations in many jurisdictions prohibit any person who is infected with a disease that can be transmitted by food to work as a food handler as long as the disease is in a communicable stage. It is the responsibility of the employee to inform the business owner or management of such illness. It is the responsibility of the person in charge to ensure compliance with this requirement and to notify health officials if a disease or outbreak is suspected.

Exclusion from Work

Any food handler who is suffering from foodborne illness or symptoms including diarrhoea, vomiting, or infected skin lesions must notify their manager and immediately be excluded from work. Any food handler with enteric fever, with a history of enteric fever caused by *Salmonella*, who is a contact with a carrier of enteric fever, or who has returned from a region where there has been an outbreak of enteric fever must not be permitted to handle food until a

medical practitioner is satisfied that the food handler poses no significant risk to food.

Food handlers with any infected, flaking or discharging lesion on an exposed part of their skin including their face, scalp, neck, hands, or lower arms must not be permitted to handle food in high-risk areas until such lesions are fully healed. Food handlers with clean uninfected lesions may handle food provided that the lesion is well covered by a suitable metal detectable, brightly coloured, waterproof medical dressing and glove where the lesion is on their hand. The acceptability of clean uninfected lesions should be verified by a suitable person before the commencement of each shift until fully healed.

Return to Work

Staff or visitors suffering from any gastrointestinal infection including acute vomiting and/or diarrhoea not associated with another condition such as pregnancy should not be permitted to return to work as a food handler until they are symptom-free for the period required by local regulation, commonly at least 48 hours, without antidiarrhoeal drugs. Assessment by a qualified medical practitioner before returning to work can strengthen these outcomes.

Where symptoms of foodborne illness such as acute vomiting or diarrhoea have been present for less than the required period and antidiarrhoeal drugs have been taken, the affected member of staff should be referred to a medical practitioner before returning to work.

In the case where foodborne illness has been confirmed, upon advice by a suitable medical practitioner, staff members may be able to participate within other areas of the business where the risk of contamination is negated. Non-food handlers or administrative staff suffering from the symptoms of foodborne illness should not be permitted to use toilet facilities used by other staff members.

Normal Flora

People normally carry some bacteria on or in their bodies that can cause food-borne diseases. These are called normal flora and most people do not know they are there. For example, large percentages of any given population are carriers of bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. A simple act of touching the nose or blowing the nose is sufficient to contaminate the hands with disease-causing bacteria.

Transient Microorganisms

Transient microorganisms that are found on the body, particularly the hands, are picked up during contact with food, utensils, and other sources that may be contaminated. Hands are an important source of contamination that can contribute to foodborne illness.

Following are some scenarios for foodborne illness resulting from hand to food interaction:

- Hands can become contaminated from catching a sneeze and scratching the face or a cut infected with bacteria;
- Bandages can harbour bacteria and could become incorporated into food;
- Hands contaminated during a visit to the toilet;
- Fingers contaminated from picking the nose, skin lesions, or pimples;
- Blowing into or licking of fingers to help separate the openings of a bag to be used for packaging;
- Untrimmed fingernails were contaminated because they could not be properly cleaned;
- Jewellery that could contaminate or become incorporated in food or hands contaminated from handling pet before coming to work;
- Hands contaminated from handling raw ingredients;
- Hands contaminated while eating;
- Hands contaminated from using common towels, handling soiled clothing, utensils, or equipment.

Hand Washing



Effective hand washing needs warm running water, soap and a thorough lather.

Because hands are so important in the transmission of disease organisms, they must be properly washed and washed often. Effective washing can only be accomplished when jewellery is not worn, fingernails are trimmed and adequate hand-washing facilities are provided and used.

Only designated hand-washing basins must be used for regular and sufficient washing of hands.

The maintenance of specified Water temperatures is of utmost importance for achieving required Food Safety and Quality outcomes. In most water usage scenarios within any Food Business, the temperature of water used for personal hygiene has a direct impact upon the maintenance of suitable microbiological outcomes. Warm potable running hand washing water is generally specified to be provided for use within most food businesses. The focus on the provision of warm water for handwashing not only contributes to higher levels of hygiene but also allows confidence that hand washing is completed to a suitable level of compliance.

Water provided for hand washing should be at a temperature of 43°C (110°F) to 46°C (115°F), through a mixing valve or combination outlet. A self-closing, slow-closing, or metering outlet should provide a flow of water for at least 15 seconds, or longer where local regulation requires, without the need to reactivate the water outlet.

After all, if hand washing water is too cold, people washing their hands may be less likely to complete the required full hand washing process, particularly for the required timeframe for an effective validated hand washing process.

Substances such as hand washing chemicals used as a component of this process must be suitable for use within the appropriate food industry sector, and must not pose any safety risk to the foods being handled or stored within the food business. Hand washing is generally not effective unless a good lather is built up and all portions of the hands and lower arms are vigorously rubbed for 20 to 30 seconds. Lathering twice, and applying a post-wash, leave-on sanitiser can enhance the positive effects of handwashing.

After washing, hands should be dried thoroughly with single-use disposable paper towels or air is blown dry. Hands should not be dried on a common towel or any towel which can be used repeatedly and by other employees, wiping cloths, aprons, or clothing. Such practices defeat proper handwashing and result in contamination. After drying, an alcohol or chemical hand sanitiser may be applied. Hand sanitisers may not be used solely as a substitute for handwashing. Hand sanitisers and their use raises mixed opinions in the food industry today. Due to the drying nature of them with repeated use, staff hands may become cracked and sore, defeating the purpose of the sanitiser in the first place.

When Should Hands be Washed?

The following list can serve as a guide for when to wash hands, but is not limited to these examples:

- Immediately before engaging in food establishment operations;
- After using the toilet;
- Before handling food, clean food-contact surfaces of equipment or utensils;
- After eating, drinking, using tobacco, coughing, sneezing, touching the mouth, touching the nose, touching the hair, touching or handling money;
- After handling raw meat, poultry, and seafood when cross-contamination can occur;
- After handling waste, dirty dishes, or soiled equipment;

- After handling personal belongings such as street clothing, purses, cosmetics;
- At any other time during the work hours as necessary to keep hands clean;
- After touching any unhygienic item or surface;
- After touching or handling unhygienic equipment before handling hygienic equipment;
- Before returning to work after a break;
- After participating in cleaning duties;
- Before and after wearing gloves, in particular, if they break or tear during use.

Glove Usage



Disposable gloves must be changed regularly and do not replace hand washing.

The use of gloves within any food business should be defined within procedures to ensure their use does not compromise food safety. It must be considered here that the use of gloves does not exclude the risk of contamination, indeed many food manufacturers are moving away from using gloves for food handlers because of the common and unfounded perception that if gloves are worn then hands are clean.

If gloves are to be worn in a facility, a policy should be developed to include:

- When gloves are to be used, for example:
 - Disposable gloves are to be used when handling ready-to-eat foods or foods that require no further processing or cooking;
 - Disposable gloves must be worn by any staff member, regardless of the task being completed, if any part of the hand has a cut covered by a medical plaster or adhesive dressing;
 - Gloves are not required when handling raw food that will be cooked, and when cleaning or handling garbage;
 - Gloves must be worn, regardless of the task, by any staff member known to have a high natural flora of specific foodborne illness bacteria;
 - Gloves used should be constructed of a colour that is contrasting to the products and processes facilitated to ensure the risk of contamination is minimised.
- How gloves are to be used, for example:
 - Hands are washed and sanitised before putting on gloves, and the external surface of the gloves is to be sanitised after they are put on and every 30 minutes thereafter;
 - Used gloves must be disposed of immediately and appropriately, not placed momentarily onto food contact surfaces.
- When gloves are to be changed, for example:
 - Gloves are to be removed and discarded when leaving the work area, going to the toilet, and going on a break;
 - Gloves are always changed when switching from raw food to ready-to-eat food;
 - Gloves are to be changed before starting another job and when they are torn, dirty, or contaminated.
- Where gloves are to be sourced, for example:
 - Disposable vinyl, latex, nitrile, or polyethylene gloves are to be purchased from an approved supplier. Worthy of note is that latex is considered an emerging allergen within the food industry and usage of latex gloves is being seen less and less;

- Gloves must be food-grade quality;
- No other gloves are approved for food handling purposes;
- Employees allergic to latex can wear vinyl or polyethylene food-grade quality gloves where appropriate.

Personal Hygiene Facilities

Personnel hygiene facilities should be available to ensure that an appropriate degree of personal hygiene can be maintained and to avoid contaminating food. Where appropriate, facilities should include:

- Adequate means of hygienically washing and drying hands, including washbasins and a supply of hot and cold or suitably temperature-controlled water;
- Toilets of appropriate hygienic design; and
- Adequate changing facilities for personnel.

Such facilities should be suitably located, designated, and maintained.

Hand Washing Facilities

Hand washing is essential in preventing the contamination of foodstuffs by pathogenic microorganisms. Therefore, sufficient, convenient, and adequate handwashing facilities must be provided within any food business where food handling, processing, or packaging occurs.

The number of hand washing facilities can be determined through consideration of the following:

- Type of food business;
- Food operations conducted within the food business;
- Risk level of the foods and processes involved;
- Size and configuration of the food business; and
- The number of staff.

For the most part, the number of hand washing facilities is based on a technical review of proposed plans for new or remodelled food establishments and existing operations coupled with professional judgement as it relates to convenience, accessibility, and suitability. A long-standing operation with insufficient hand washing facilities does not generally constitute a pre-established right for continuance, as the risks arising from a lack of facilities may result in significant public health issues.

Handwashing facilities should be located to be convenient at the entries and within the following areas of the food business:

- Food receipt areas;
- Food storage areas;
- Food preparation areas;
- Food processing areas;
- Foodservice areas;
- Ware washing areas;
- In or adjacent to toilets and other personal hygiene facilities.

In long-established food businesses where handwashing facilities are not convenient, additional hand washing facilities should be fitted.

Handwashing facilities should be used for handwashing purposes only. The use of the handwashing facilities for storage purposes, dump sinks, utensils and equipment washing, food preparation, or any other purpose makes the facility inconvenient for handwashing purposes and therefore can contribute to public health risk. Restricting easy access to handwashing facilities by placing equipment, containers, or other items in front of the hand washing facility, even temporarily, constitutes risk based on the unavailability of access.

Handwashing facilities should be adequate for hand washing. Adequacy often relates to the following design requirements:

- Provided with hot and cold or controlled temperature water through a mixing valve or combination outlet;

- Self-closing, slow-closing, or metering faucets shall provide a continuous flow of water for at least 15 seconds, or longer where local regulation requires, without reactivating the outlet; and
- Steam mixing valves should not be used.

In addition, handwashing facilities should be provided with a continuous supply of:

- Hand soap or similar hand cleanser; and
- Individual disposable sanitary paper towels; or
- A continuous towel system supplied with a clean towel or another suitable drying device.

Handwashing facilities are also commonly fitted with chemical hand sanitiser solutions to support pathogen reduction on the surfaces of hands.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Development requirements concerning their items.

References

The following official references support the development, documentation and implementation of Personal Hygiene Standards:

- World Health Organization, Food safety fact sheet;
- Codex Alimentarius codes of practice, including the General Principles of Food Hygiene.

Personal Hygiene Standards Development Key Points

- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be developed to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- The Senior Management of your business facilitate a commitment to ensuring adequate resources to the development of your Personal Hygiene Standards program;
- Should you require additional resources for the development of Personal Hygiene Standards program elements, please discuss this with the relevant Senior Management representative;
- A properly developed Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly-developed Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Documentation

To establish the developed detail in a viewable format to facilitate information.

Documentation

Document: A document provides guidance and/or direction for performing work, making decisions, or rendering judgements that affect the safety or quality of the products or services that customers receive.

Documented policies, procedures, work instructions, and schedules form the basis of any food safety and quality management system. The following document formats may be considered to ensure ongoing compliance with specified requirements for Personal Hygiene Standards:

- Personal Hygiene Standards policy;
- Personal Hygiene Standards development procedures;
- Personal Hygiene Standards implementation procedures and work instructions;
- Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring procedures;
- Personal Hygiene Standards corrective and preventative action procedures;
- Personal Hygiene Standards verification schedule;
- Personal Hygiene Standards verification procedures;

- Personal Hygiene Standards validation schedule;
- Personal Hygiene Standards validation procedures;
- Personal Hygiene Standards health declaration forms;
- Illness reporting and exclusion register;
- Hand washing procedures and signage;
- Personal Hygiene Standards training procedures.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Documentation requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Personal Hygiene Standards Templates section of haccp.com for examples of Personal Hygiene Standards documentation, record, and resource formats commonly applied within food safety and quality systems.

Personal Hygiene Standards Documentation Key Points

- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be documented to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- All documented Personal Hygiene Standards program elements must be controlled to ensure compliance;
- Key documented Personal Hygiene Standards program elements should be available to your business team at all times to ensure they can facilitate required tasks;
- A properly documented Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly documented Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Implementation

To facilitate the application of the documentation.

Implementation

Implementation: Implementation is the application of documented food safety and quality system elements into the actual business operation.

The implementation of Personal Hygiene Standards within any food business requires genuine commitment from senior management, staff, and visitors to ensure the nominated goals of implementation are achievable on an ongoing basis. It is a step that requires significant planning and consideration of general and specific food business circumstances to ensure the outcomes of Personal Hygiene Standards do not negatively impact the safety and quality of the food items dispatched from the business.

Implementation of Personal Hygiene Standards must include a clear definition of responsibilities and authorities for all levels of participation by senior management, staff, and visitors to the site.

When implementing Personal Hygiene Standards within food safety and quality system, you may wish to consider the following requirements before completion:

- Communication and display of the Personal Hygiene Standards policy;
- Completion of Verification and Validation of Personal Hygiene Standards development procedures;
- Availability of Personal Hygiene Standards implementation procedures and work instructions;
- Availability of Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring procedures and record templates where applicable;
- Availability of Personal Hygiene Standards corrective and preventative action procedures and record templates where applicable;
- Availability of the Personal Hygiene Standards verification schedule;
- Availability of Personal Hygiene Standards verification procedures;

- Availability of the Personal Hygiene Standards validation schedule;
- Availability of Personal Hygiene Standards validation procedures;
- Completion of Personal Hygiene Standards training procedures;
- Completion of product design and development requirements related to Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Completion of process design and development requirements related to Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Completion of training for team members who have responsibilities and involvement within Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Completion of competency approval for team members who have responsibilities and involvement within Personal Hygiene Standards.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Implementation requirements concerning their items.

Personal Hygiene Standards Implementation Key Points

- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be Implemented to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- Your Personal Hygiene Standards program must be fully implemented as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures, and Work Instructions;
- The implementation of Personal Hygiene Standards requires a commitment to the provision of resources by the Senior Management of your business;
- A properly implemented Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly implemented Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Monitoring

To review, confirm and document evidence of the implementation against documented limits.

Monitoring

Monitoring: Monitoring is the act of reviewing and confirming measurable parameters of a defined process or product status.

Monitoring requirements within food industry sectors are generally identified against limits of acceptability defined within HACCP plans, implementation procedures, and work instructions. Monitoring usually includes some element of record-keeping, which may be maintained manually or through digital systems. It is important to consider that advancements in technology have spawned many systems and processes which are self-monitored and/or self-adjusted when variances are identified. Regardless of the system used, the goal of any monitoring activity is to provide sufficient evidence that any limit of acceptability has been met.

Traditional Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring requirements include manual recording and the application of corrective actions when the results of monitoring are found to be outside acceptable limits. Corrective Actions should also generally be strongly linked to the monitoring process to ensure full traceability of the applied actions.

Common monitoring activities and record formats may apply to Personal Hygiene Standards:

- Personal Hygiene Monitoring Records: Adherence to the Personal Hygiene Standards Policy should be monitored at least daily by shift supervisors and managers. Records of related activities should be maintained to provide evidence of the outcomes;
- Hand Washing Records: Checks that hand washing facilities are stocked and functional, and that hand wash water temperature is within the specified range;
- Uniform, Jewellery and Glove Checks: Checks that uniforms, headwear, footwear and glove use conform to the policy before entry to production areas;

- Health Declaration and Return-to-Work Records: Records of health declarations, reported illness, exclusion from work and clearance to return to work.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Monitoring requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Personal Hygiene Standards Templates section of haccp.com for examples of Personal Hygiene Standards documentation, record, and resource formats commonly applied within food safety and quality systems.

Personal Hygiene Standards Monitoring Key Points

- Monitoring provides real-time confirmation and evidence that your risk-based FS&Q Controls are effectively implemented;
- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be monitored to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- Monitoring of Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Nominated monitoring records for Personal Hygiene Standards must be maintained as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures, and Work Instructions;
- A properly monitored Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly monitored Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Corrective Action and Preventative Action

To apply "real time" interventions to documented monitoring limits.

Corrective Action and Preventative Action

Corrective Action: Corrective action is mandatory action to be taken when a deviation to the Quality System occurs, particularly concerning a Critical Control Point.

Preventative Action: At any step in the process where a hazard has been identified, preventative action must be put into place to prevent re-occurrence.

Corrective Action and Preventative Action are implemented to ensure that any identified non-conformance issues are documented, investigated, and rectified within appropriate time-frames. Corrective action is any action applied to regain control over a product, process, policy, or procedure that has been identified as being non-conforming or outside nominated limits of acceptability. Preventative action is any action applied to prevent any identified non-conformance from reoccurring.

The outcomes of corrective and preventative actions should result in regained process control after effective application. Specified corrective actions are commonly linked to the HACCP Plans and the food business certification process.

Below are Corrective Action and Preventative Action examples which may be associated with Personal Hygiene Standards related non-conformance:

- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards policy;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards development procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards implementation procedures and work instructions;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards corrective and preventative action procedures;
- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards verification schedule;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards verification procedures;
- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards validation schedule;

- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards validation procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards training procedures;
- Re-training in Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Exclusion of unwell staff or visitors from food handling areas until cleared to return;
- Retraining in hand washing and glove procedures;
- Review of management review activities to include Personal Hygiene Standards as an agenda item;
- Initiation of product hold procedures where safety or quality may be compromised;
- Initiation of a product recall or product recall procedures where investigations show that there is a substantial safety and/or quality risk to a released product;
- Contacting stakeholders including customers regarding any confirmed or potential Personal Hygiene Standards concerns involving their product;
- If an area of the policy is repeatedly not conformed to, the HACCP team and the relevant managers should review the policy and adjust the policy or application as appropriate. An example of this could be where employees or visitors are observed stepping over or around a footbath. A resolution could be to enlarge the footbath or block off other access routes;
- If staff are observed not to be following the policy, immediate reminders and formal retraining should be given. Retraining may be given one on one in particular cases and refresher training should be given to all staff on a minimum annual basis.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Corrective Action requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Corrective Action and Preventative Action section of haccp.com for examples of best practice applications for this food safety and quality system element.

Personal Hygiene Standards Corrective Action and Preventative Action Key Points

- The implementation of Corrective Action and Preventative Action provides confidence that your FS&Q Program is effectively implemented and that FS&Q criteria are being met;
- Where deviations or variations are observed, Corrective Action and Preventative Actions must be facilitated to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- Corrective Action and Preventative Action of Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Records of Corrective Action and Preventative Action for Personal Hygiene Standards must be maintained per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Proper application of Corrective Action and Preventative Action for your Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- Poor application of Corrective Action and Preventative Action for your Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Verification

To review and confirm documented monitoring and corrective actions against documented parameters.

Verification

Verification: The act of reviewing, inspecting, testing, checking, auditing, or otherwise establishing and documenting whether items, processes, services, or documents conform to specified requirements.

Verification is the detailed review of all food safety and quality system elements to confirm that they are effectively developed, documented, implemented, monitored, and reviewed. All food safety and quality system elements, including documented policies, procedures, training, HACCP plans, and their operational applications must be verified on an ongoing scheduled basis. The verification process commonly includes a defined schedule for which

verification activities are required, how often they are conducted, who is responsible, and detailed documented procedures for each nominated verification activity.

The general goal of an established verification process is to ensure any systemic non-conformance issues are identified and rectified within an appropriate time frame. When non-conformance issues are identified through the verification process, Corrective Actions and Preventative Actions should be implemented to ensure they do not impact the effectiveness of the food safety and quality system.

The following examples of verification activities may apply to Personal Hygiene Standards:

- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards policy;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards development procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards implementation procedures and work instructions;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards monitoring records;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards corrective and preventative action procedures;
- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards verification schedule;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards verification procedures;
- Review of the Personal Hygiene Standards validation schedule;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards validation procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards training procedures;
- Review of Personal Hygiene Standards performance since the last review and historically;
- Scheduled hygiene audits of personal hygiene practices, uniforms and hand washing facilities;
- Hand swab or ATP testing to verify the effectiveness of hand washing;
- Review of illness reporting, exclusion and return-to-work records;
- Analytical testing of product or process to ensure the effectiveness of Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Inclusion of Personal Hygiene Standards as an agenda item within the Management Review Process.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Verification requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Verification Activities section of haccp.com for examples of best practice applications for this food safety and quality system element.

Personal Hygiene Standards Verification Key Points

- Your verification program provides evidence that your FS&Q Controls have worked;
- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be verified to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- The verification of Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Nominated verification records for Personal Hygiene Standards must be maintained as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- A properly verified Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly verified Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Validation

To confirm the documented monitoring or procedural limits.

Validation

Validation: The process of gathering evidence to provide a scientific basis for the documented act of demonstrating that a procedure, process, and activity will consistently lead to the expected results. It often includes the qualification of systems and equipment.

Validation is the provision of evidence to support the limits of control or acceptability for food safety or quality parameters nominated within systemic elements. Limits of control or acceptability are commonly included within documented food safety and quality systems elements such as procedures, HACCP plans, and specifications.

Common sources of validation include regulatory and legislative standards, finished product specifications and customer requirements, industry codes of practice and guidelines, verified and validated research, historical product, and process control outcomes, and analytical testing.

The general goal of an established validation process is to ensure any systemic non-conformance issues are identified and rectified within an appropriate time frame. When non-conformance issues are identified through the verification process, Corrective Actions and Preventative Actions should be implemented to ensure they do not impact the effectiveness of the food safety and quality system.

Validation activities are commonly defined within the verification schedules and procedures of established food safety and quality management systems.

The following examples may apply to validation of the limits of control or acceptability for Personal Hygiene Standards:

- Confirmation of nominated food safety and food quality control limits for Personal Hygiene Standards. These limits may apply to regulatory, industry, customer, or finished product specifications;
- Confirmation that the hand washing procedure effectively reduces hand contamination, for example through hand swab or ATP testing;
- Confirmation that exclusion and return-to-work periods align with regulatory and health authority requirements;
- Confirmation of analytical testing methods being used to confirm the effectiveness of Personal Hygiene Standards and ensure the accuracy of outcomes. If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Validation requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Validation Activities section of haccp.com for examples of best practice applications for this food safety and quality system element.

Personal Hygiene Standards Validation Key Points

- Your validation program provides evidence that your FS&Q Controls will work;
- Personal Hygiene Standards programs must be validated to meet relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- The validation of Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Nominated validation records and supporting documentation for Personal Hygiene Standards must be maintained as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- A properly validated Personal Hygiene Standards program will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- A poorly validated Personal Hygiene Standards program will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.

Training, Competency and Resources

Skills, knowledge and competency requirements to facilitate development, documentation, implementation, monitoring, corrective action, verification and validation of every Food Safety and Quality System Element.

Skills and Knowledge

Skills and Knowledge: Skills and knowledge are attributes of human interactions commonly linked to competency within any specified job-related task.

Training and competency requirements for Personal Hygiene Standards must be ongoing, including regularly scheduled reviews to ensure the effectiveness of training and competency outcomes. Once a policy for Personal Hygiene Standards has been developed, it is essential that training is given to all the staff, and that all staff members adhere to the policy, in particular, senior management who must lead by example.

Team members who have defined responsibilities regarding Personal Hygiene Standards should have knowledge including:

- Basic Personal Hygiene Standards requirements;
- Correct hand washing technique and when hands must be washed;
- Symptoms of foodborne illness and reporting obligations;
- Positive outcomes of Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Negative outcomes of a lack of Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Current Personal Hygiene Standards procedures, methods, and techniques;
- General operational, corporate, and social awareness regarding Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Regulatory, industry, and customer requirements regarding Personal Hygiene Standards.

Team members who have defined responsibilities regarding Personal Hygiene Standards should have skills including:

- Competency regarding basic Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Effective application of current Personal Hygiene Standards procedures, methods, and techniques;
- The basic development, documentation, and implementation of HACCP and Prerequisite Programs within the food industry sector.

Team members who have defined responsibilities regarding Personal Hygiene Standards should have access to resources including:

- Personal Hygiene Standards training;
- Personal Hygiene Standards associations and events;
- Regulatory standards, industry and customer information and updates regarding Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Incidents within the food industry sector regarding Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Commitment to Personal Hygiene Standards by senior management;
- Suitably qualified food industry professionals with verified experience in Personal Hygiene Standards;
- Effective communication systems including email, internet, and phone through which Personal Hygiene Standards information can be sent and received within suitable timeframes.

If your food business supplies foodstuffs manufactured to a customer's specifications, it is important to consider any specific Personal Hygiene Standards Training, Competency, and Resources requirements concerning their items.

You may wish to visit the Training, Competency, and Resources section of haccp.com for examples of best practice applications for this food safety and quality system element.

Personal Hygiene Standards Training, Skills, and Knowledge Key Points

- Your Training, Skills, and Knowledge program ensures all participating personnel, visitors, and contractors have the required skills and knowledge to effectively facilitate the requirements of your FS&Q Program;
- Training, Skills and Knowledge programs for Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated to meet relevant

Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;

- Training, Skills and Knowledge programs for Personal Hygiene Standards must be facilitated as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures, and Work Instructions;
- Training, Skills, and Knowledge records for Personal Hygiene Standards must be maintained as per relevant documented Policies, Procedures and Work Instructions;
- Properly applied Training, Skills and Knowledge programs for Personal Hygiene Standards will provide a strong framework for your business to maintain compliance with relevant Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements;
- Poorly applied Training, Skills, and Knowledge programs for Personal Hygiene Standards will not fully support your business and may contribute to significant non-compliance against Regulatory, Industry, and Customer standards and requirements.



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