

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Division of Food Safety

Bare Hand Contact with RTE Foods at Retail Industry Guidance

Section 5K-4.0050, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food is a major contributing factor to the spread of foodborne illnesses within a population; however, it is allowed under specific circumstances. As outlined in 3-301.11(E) of the 2017 FDA Food Code, food employees may contact ready-to-eat foods with bare hands so long as the following criteria are met:

- The food employees are not serving a highly susceptible population,
- The permitted food establishment has applied for and received prior written approval from the Department,
- Written procedures are maintained in the food establishment and made available to the Department and its inspectors upon request,
- For each bare hand contact procedure, a list of specific foods to be touched by bare hands must be provided,
- Diagrams and other information illustrating handwashing facilities are installed, located, equipped and maintained, and are easily accessible and near where the bare hand contact procedure is taking place,
- A written employee health policy including:
 - Documentation that food employees and conditional employees acknowledge they are required to report information about their health and activities as they relate to gastrointestinal symptoms and diseases that are transmittable through food, and in the event they become ill they must comply with restrictions and exclusions,
 - Documentation specifying the person in charge acknowledges his or her reporting responsibilities as well as managing restrictions and exclusions;
- Documentation that food employees acknowledge that they have received training in:
 - The risks of contacting the specific ready-to-eat foods with bare hands,
 - Proper handwashing,
 - When to wash their hands,
 - Where to wash their hands,
 - Proper fingernail maintenance,
 - Prohibition of jewelry, and
 - Good hygienic practices;
- Documentation that hands are washed before food preparation and as necessary to prevent cross contamination by food employees during all hours of operation when the specific ready-to-eat foods are prepared;



- Documentation that food employees contacting ready-to-eat food with bare hands use two or more of the following control measures to provide additional safeguards to hazards associated with bare hand contact:
 - Double handwashing,
 - Nail brushes,
 - A hand antiseptic after handwashing,
 - Incentive programs such as paid sick leave that assist or encourage food employees not to work when they are ill, or
 - Other control measures approved by the regulatory authority;
- Documentation that corrective action is taken when proper procedures are not followed.

Please submit required materials along with a completed Special Process Approval application to:
RetailHACCPspa@FDACS.gov

1-800 HELP FLA
FDACS.gov