

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR ELIMINATING BARE HAND CONTACT WHEN HANDLING REDUCED OXYGEN PACKAGED (ROP) AND READY-TO-EAT (RTE) FOODS

PURPOSE: To prevent foodborne illness due to hand-to-food cross-contamination.

SCOPE: This procedure applies to foodservice employees who prepare, handle, or serve Reduced Oxygen Packaged (ROP) and Ready-To-Eat (RTE) food.

KEY WORDS: Ready-to-Eat Food (RTE), Reduced Oxygen Packaging (ROP), and Cross-Contamination

1. **READY-TO-EAT FOOD** means food that:

- Is in a form that is edible without additional preparation to achieve food safety
- A raw or partially cooked animal food specifically ordered by a customer, and the customer is advised of the hazard.
- Ready-to-Eat Food includes but is not limited to:
 - Raw animal food that is cooked as required in Cooking and Reheating SOPs.
 - Raw fruits and vegetables which are thoroughly washed to remove soil and other contaminants.
 - Fruits and vegetables which are cooked and held for hot holding, as required in Cooking and Reheating SOPs.
 - All potentially hazardous food that is cooked as required in the Cooking and Reheating SOP, and cooled as required in the Cooling SOP.
 - Plant food for which further washing, cooking, or other processing is not required for food safety, and from which rinds, peels, husks, or shells, if naturally present are removed.
 - Substances derived from plants including but not limited to spices, seasonings, and sugar, that will not be cooked.
 - A bakery item including but not limited to bread, cakes, pies, fillings, or icing for which further cooking is not required for food safety.
 - Commercially processed food for which further cooking is not required for food safety.

2. **REDUCED OXYGEN PACKAGING (ROP)** means the reduction of the amount of oxygen in a package by removing oxygen, displacing oxygen and replacing it with another gas or combination of gases, or otherwise controlling the oxygen content to a level below that normally found in the surrounding 21% oxygen atmosphere.

3. **CROSS-CONTAMINATION** means the passing of bacteria, microorganisms, or other harmful substances indirectly from one surface to another through improper or unsanitary equipment, procedures, or products.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Train foodservice employees on using the procedures in this SOP.
2. Follow all Southern Nevada Health District regulations.
3. Use proper handwashing procedures to wash hands and exposed arms prior to preparing or handling food or at anytime when the hands may have become contaminated. See Washing Hands SOP.

SOP for Eliminating Bare Hand Contact When Handling Reduced Oxygen Packaged (ROP) and Ready-to-Eat Foods, continued

4. Do not use bare hands to handle food that will be placed in ROP at any time (including when washing uncut, whole fruits and vegetables), and do not use bare hands to handle ready-to-eat foods at any time.
5. Use suitable utensils when working with ROP and ready-to-eat food. Suitable utensils may include:
 - Single-use gloves
 - Deli tissue
 - Foil wrap
 - Tongs, spoodles, spoons, spatulas, and other dispensing equipment

MONITORING:

A designated foodservice employee(s) will visually observe that bare hand contact of ROP and ready-to-eat-food is eliminated, and that gloves or suitable utensils are used and changed at the appropriate times during all hours of operation.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

1. Retrain any foodservice employee found not following the procedures in this SOP.
2. Discard ROP and ready-to-eat food touched with bare hands.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING:

The Person in Charge (PIC) will verify that foodservice workers are using suitable utensils or gloves by visually monitoring foodservice employees during all hours of operation.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: _____ **BY:** _____

DATE REVIEWED: _____ **BY:** _____

DATE REVISED: _____ **BY:** _____