

Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice
Guide No: 2

Document Name	GHP Guide 2 – Personal Hygiene	Document No	FS/GHP/002
Document Owner	Food Safety	Date of Issue	February 2026
Classification	Internal Use	Version No	04

Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

Legal Requirements

The Food Hygiene Regulations stipulate that:

- Every person working in a food handling area must maintain a high degree of personal cleanliness and wear suitable, clean and, where necessary, protective clothing.
- No person suffering from or carrying a disease likely to be transmitted through food is permitted to handle food or enter any food preparation area due to the risk of direct or indirect contamination.

Food Safety Hazards

Poor personal hygiene can result in people contaminating food from their hands, clothing etc, either directly with bacteria and viruses present on the body, or indirectly from one food to another. It is essential that a high level of personal hygiene is maintained by all to ensure the food we serve is safe.

All colleagues must take individual responsibility for their personal cleanliness and hygiene through frequent hand washing, by wearing clean uniforms, adhering to the jewellery policy and ensuring they are fit to work.

Where a client has a particular personal hygiene or uniform policy this must be adhered to, providing it meets legal requirements, and is not at a lower standard than the requirements set out in the Compass personal hygiene good hygiene practice guide and corresponding food safety conversation.

Hands

Hand washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of harmful bacteria and viruses and is a fundamental part of good personal hygiene.

Compass Rules:

- ✓ Everyone must wash their hands:
 - Before starting work and before handling high risk foods,
 - After handling raw food, in particular raw meat and poultry and unwashed fruit and vegetables,
 - After handling raw eggs,
 - After coughing or sneezing into hands or a handkerchief,
 - After touching their face or hair,
 - After using the toilet,
 - After taking a break, eating, smoking or vaping,
 - After handling waste, waste containers or equipment such as roll cages and pallet trucks,
 - After carrying out cleaning tasks or using cleaning products or other chemicals,
 - Before and after changing a plaster or dressing,
 - After wearing rubber gloves or disposable gloves and
 - After handling money.
- ✓ Fingernails must be short and clean; colleagues who prepare or handle open food must not wear nail varnish, false nails or nail extensions.
- ✓ Cuts, scratches, spots or broken skin must be covered with blue waterproof dressings.
- ✓ Skin conditions, such as septic cuts, scratches, boils must be reported before work begins.

Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

- ✓ Wash hand basins must be:
 - Provided with hot and cold, or suitably mixed hot and cold, running water at a temperature which allows for safe hand washing,
 - Provided with antibacterial soap (preferably Epicare 5C or 5AB) and a means for hygienically drying hands, such as clean blue roll in a dispenser,
 - Clean and accessible,
 - Conveniently located where high risk or ready-to-eat foods are prepared or handled,
 - Clearly designated and used only for washing hands,
 - Be provided with a bin located in proximity to the wash hand basin to allow for safe and hygienic disposal of blue roll used to dry hands post hand washing.

Effective handwashing:

- Wet hands with warm water
- Apply Compass approved antibacterial hand soap
- Rub hands together, palm to palm, to make a lather
- Rub the palm of one hand along the back of the other and along the fingers
- Repeat with the other hand
- Put palms together with fingers interlocked and rub in between each of the fingers thoroughly
- Rub around thumbs on each hand and then rub the fingertips of each hand against the palms
- This should take at least 30 seconds to complete
- Thoroughly rinse hands with warm water
- Turn off the tap using additional clean blue roll or a clean paper towel



Gloves

There is no evidence that wearing gloves is a safer method of handling food, when compared to the use of effective hand-washing techniques, as cross-contamination of food can occur whether hands are gloved or bare. Wearing gloves gives a false sense of security as hands feel clean even when gloves are contaminated. Additionally, gloves may have defects, punctures and 'pin holes' that enable bacteria to pass through them.

Compass Rules:

- ✓ Disposable gloves should only be worn for food handling purposes if:
 - There is a specific client policy requirement or
 - When handling high risk foods for vulnerable groups, such as in 'barrier nursing' situations or
 - When preparing allergen free meals for specific customers or
 - To cover a minor cut or skin complaint which is protected by a suitable dressing or
 - Where cut resistant gloves are being worn (disposable gloves must be worn over the cut resistant gloves) or
 - When undertaking a specific task, such as making burger patties, or preparing foods such as beetroot, onions or chillies, that could cause staining of the hands or tainting of other foods.
- ✓ Vinyl or nitrile gloves must be used rather than latex gloves, as latex is a known skin sensitiser.
- ✓ Hands must be washed before putting gloves on and after taking them off.
- ✓ Gloves must be changed between tasks, particularly after handling rubbish or raw food.
- ✓ Disposable gloves must not be re-used and must be immediately disposed of. They must not be placed on a clean work or food preparation surface.

Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

Protective Clothing and Uniform

In most situations appropriate clothing will be provided to employees who are required to wear a uniform. The uniform must be clean and worn in full when on duty. For food preparation employees, the uniform must include a head covering.

Management and waiting staff who are in food preparation areas for short lengths of time and are not involved in food handling duties are not required to wear uniform. Where managers or visitors are accessing food storage, handling, preparation and service areas for extended periods of time, for example to undertake audits, filming etc, they must wear suitable protective clothing, such as a white coat and a hat and/or hairnet.

Compass Rules:

- Uniforms and protective clothing should be regularly laundered and maintained in good repair.
- Where protective clothing is washed at home, this should be done on a hot wash cycle (at least 60°C) and using a biological detergent.
- Uniforms and protective clothing must not be worn away from the workplace, such as on the way to work or on the way home.
- Aprons must be removed when using the toilet.
- Outdoor clothing must not be worn in food preparation areas.
- Footwear must be suitable and must fully cover the foot, have a low heel and a slip resistant sole.
- Safety footwear is required where the colleague's role or the Floor Safety Risk Assessment indicates this is necessary.
- Disposable aprons should be worn when handling raw meat and fish.
- Where chefs are handling waste that may contaminate clothing or are working in external waste areas, uniform should be removed, where practicable, or covered with a disposable apron.

Hair

Compass Rules:

- Hair must be clean and tidy, and long hair must be tied back or up.
- Facial hair must be kept neat and trimmed.
- All colleagues who prepare or handle open food must cover their hair with hat or hairnet.



Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

Jewellery

Jewellery poses a potential risk of food contamination, both microbiological contamination from the bacteria or viruses it harbours, and physical contamination should it fall off into food.

Compass Rules:

- With the exception of plain wedding rings and plain sleeper earrings, the wearing of jewellery is not permitted in food preparation areas.
- For facial jewellery, only jewellery with a screw tight fitting is permitted. All other facial jewellery must be removed prior to entering any food preparation or service area.
- Studs with detachable butterfly clips must not be worn.
- Wrist watches and bracelets are not permitted.
- Religious or medical bracelets that cannot be removed must be fully covered by the uniform.
- For any other examples, contact your HSE Sector lead for guidance.

Make-up, Beauty and Scents

Compass Rules:

- Makeup should be kept to a minimum.
- Fake eyelashes, nail varnish, false nails etc are not permitted in food preparation areas.
- Strong smelling perfume, aftershave, creams and lotions must be avoided as they may taint food.

Eating and Drinking

Compass Rules:

- Hand-to-mouth and hand-to-face contact must be avoided while carrying out food handling activities.
- Drinking water from a cup or bottle is permissible.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.

Smoking and vaping

Compass Rules:

- Smoking and vaping is not permitted in any indoor workplace and is only permitted in designated smoking and vaping areas at break times.
- Where practicable, food handlers should remove or cover their uniform when accessing designated smoking and/or vaping areas.
- Hands must be washed after smoking or vaping, and re-entering food preparation areas.

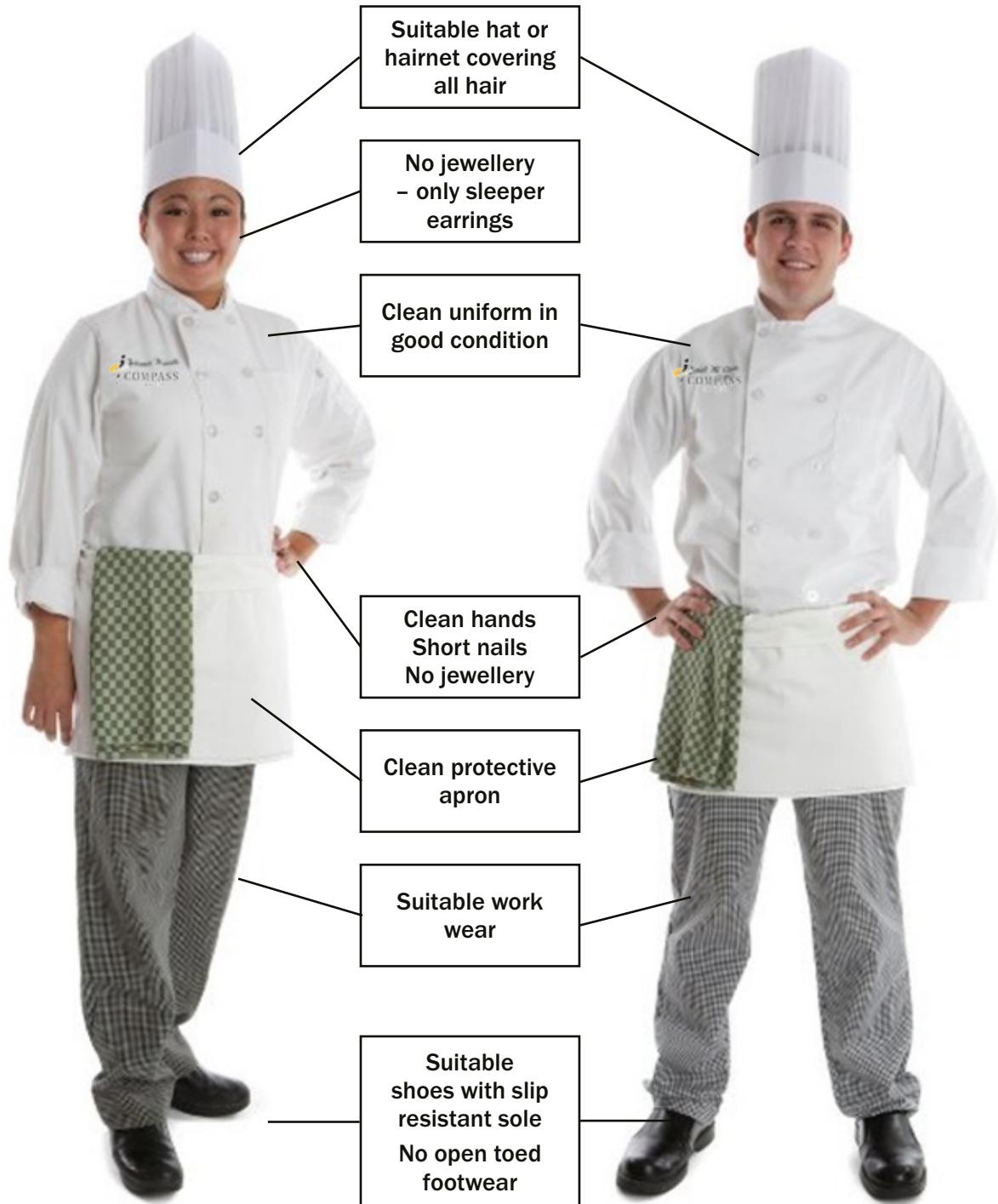
Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality



Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

Fitness to Work

Colleagues or visitors who are carrying an illness that could be transmitted through food, must report this to the Compass Unit Manager or Head Chef immediately and before commencing their work or entering the unit, to prevent contamination of food. This includes infected wounds, skin infections or sores, diarrhoea and/or vomiting

Compass Rules:

- All food handlers and colleagues involved in handling or serving unwrapped food, including drinks, must report signs of illness immediately to their line manager.
- All food handlers and colleagues involved in handling or serving unwrapped food, including drinks, suffering from symptoms of nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea must be excluded from working with or around open food until they are **symptom free for 48 hours**.
- Colleagues must complete and sign the return-to-work form with their line manager before re-commencing food handling duties.

If colleagues become unwell while at work, it is important to ensure that areas that they have come into contact with have been cleaned effectively and any potentially contaminated food is discarded. This will help prevent the spread of infection to other staff or customers.

Checks:

Unit Managers and Head Chefs are responsible for regularly observing the working practices of their colleagues to ensure the above good hygiene practices are effectively followed.

- The relevant responsible persons must complete the **Opening HSE Checklist** to verify that:
 - There is a suitable supply of warm running water to all wash hand basins
 - All wash hand basins are provided with a suitable supply of antibacterial soap and hand drying facilities
 - All colleagues are wearing the correct uniform and/or PPE
 - That any matters identified have been addressed and suitable corrective actions have been put in place
- Managers should observe the hand washing practices of colleagues responsible for preparation, handling and service of food, and of any individuals entering food preparation areas for extended periods of time

Corrective Action

If colleagues are not adhering to good personal hygiene practices, then the following actions should be taken:

- Ensure hands are immediately washed
- Discard any ready-to-eat food believed to have been contaminated
- Retrain relevant colleagues

Personal Hygiene

Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 2



HACCP Chart Reference

Receipt / Storage / Preparation / Cooking /
Service / Bar / Hospitality

Additional Guidance

1. Cross-Contamination
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 4 – Cross-Contamination** for guidance on how to minimise cross-contamination risks
2. Wash Hand Basins / Sinks
 - Refer to **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 14 – Catering Premises and Equipment** for additional guidance on kitchen design and location of wash hand basins and sinks, and maintenance and repair
3. Hot Water Checks
 - Refer to the **Opening HSE Checklist** for daily checks on provision of hot/warm water to wash hand basins