

# Hygiene for kitchen staff

## 1. Basics

The Hungarian physician Ignaz Semmelweis realized in the mid-19th Century that puerperal fever can be avoided by proper hand hygiene. Much older are the health instruction in the Bible, in the book of Leviticus.

The German regulation about Infection Protection in section 8 speaks about "The necessary health qualifications of the staff handling with food" and in which case people are not allowed to work with food § 42 (Tätigkeitsverbot). In § 43 it is demanded, that instruction about this topic is necessary and even a certificate from the Public Health Office (Gesundheitsamt). "The purpose of the law is to prevent communicable diseases at humans, to identify infections early and to prevent their further spread." The focus is on community facilities and public food pantries, see [www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bundesrecht/ifsg/gesamt.pdf](http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bundesrecht/ifsg/gesamt.pdf) .

## 2. Hygiene measures

Essential for hygiene is the reduction of germs, for example, by a diligent hand washing and hand disinfection (keep also the skin protection in mind!), see at <http://www.usb-net.de/resources/sozialwerke/kindergarten/KigaMusterHygieneplan.pdf>. There are different measures for staff in the utility room in the kitchenette, and in cooking in a kitchen. The highest requirements apply to staff in enterprises for the production of food, in community facilities and in the commercial marketing of food. Kitchen staff should pay attention to clean clothing and adequate personal hygiene! If necessary, the provision of work clothing is needed!

During the food preparation there are no bracelets, watches and rings allowed, or they have to be completely covered by waterproof gloves. Otherwise there is a risk of germ transmission, because a disinfecting cleaning under rings and bracelets is not possible! In kitchenettes, where no problematic raw food is processed, the risk of transmission of infection is lower and the measures can be adjusted.

## 3. Activity ban

In food pantries and community institutions (kindergartens, nursing homes) there is an increased potential for the spread of infections and germs. People with diarrhea, influenza and acute skin diseases are excluded from handling food and utensils. If a person has a severe cold, he/she should not work in the cleaning kitchen. People with contagious diseases, such as infectious gastroenteritis (diarrhea), viral hepatitis typhoid, cholera, diphtheria, salmonella, EHEC, tuberculosis, measles or shedders of shigellosis, salmonella, enterohemorrhagic E. coli or cholera germs are not allowed to work in the kitchen.

## 4. Action aids

Bulletins about the topics "Kitchen staff hygiene" and "Activity ban" are available on the USB website. Also helpful is the information sheet "[Food hygiene](#)" and the information sheet "[hygienic kitchen equipment](#)". We suggest to instruct all kitchen helpers and for people who work regularly in the kitchen to get a health certificate. This certificate costs a fee of about 25,- €, and you can get it after a training issued by the Public Health Office. Since 04.08.2011 a follow up training must be done only every second year, and can be carried out by persons with appropriate qualification.

Your manager for occupational health and safety

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