

AMY'S FOOD SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

July 2025



UPCOMING SERVSAFE® CLASSES

July 14th – Louisville

August 5th – Louisville

August 18th – Louisville

September 8th – Louisville

September 23rd – Louisville

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Golftoberfest – Monday

October 6th Persimmon Ridge

Golf Club. Register at

www.kyra.org under the
events tab!

AMY'S FOOD SAFETY SCOOP

The Link Between Foodborne Illness Outbreaks and Employee Health

Unfortunately, food establishments are often at the center of U.S. foodborne illness outbreaks. One study conducted by the CDC found that 40% of all U.S. foodborne illness outbreaks could be tracked back to sick foodservice workers.

In many cases, a single sick food handler working while ill or infectious was enough to trigger an outbreak. Not only do foodborne illnesses pose a serious public health risk, but restaurants linked to outbreaks can suffer reputational damage, legal consequences, and significant financial losses.

To curb the spread of foodborne illnesses, the FDA has included explicit health policy specifications for employees and employers in its 2022 Food Code.

While each business should have an internal sick policy written up in accordance with its jurisdiction, there are certain illnesses that pose a greater risk to public safety. In section 2-201 of the 2022 Food Code, the FDA has listed restriction and exclusion requirements for foodservice leaders based on symptoms and /or diagnoses presented by the ill worker.

These include:

- Symptomatic employees with vomiting or diarrhea (except when the symptom is from a noninfectious condition)
- Jaundiced employees or those diagnosed with Hepatitis A infection
- Employees diagnosed or reported previous illness with Typhoid Fever
- Employees diagnosed with an asymptomatic infection from Norovirus
- Employees diagnosed with *Shigella* spp. Infection and asymptomatic



- Employees diagnosed with STEC and asymptomatic
- Employees diagnosed with nontyphoidal Salmonella and asymptomatic
- Symptomatic employees with sore throat with fever
- Symptomatic employees with uncovered infected wound or pustular boil
- Employees exposed to foodborne pathogen and work in food establishments serving highly susceptible populations

The Employee Health Policy Tool encourages practices that help prevent the transmission of foodborne viruses and bacteria in food establishments from ill employees. Here's how it works:

Users click to identify as either a "Person-in-Charge" (manager, supervisor, or other leadership role) or an "Employee"

Person in Charge will be asked to choose among several reporting options based on whether the employee is displaying symptoms, has received a medical diagnosis, or has been exposed to an illness.

- Based on their choice, leaders will be directed to a list of symptoms, diagnoses, or exposures
- Each option will list specific instructions for employee exclusions, restrictions, requirements to return to work, and state whether health department approval is needed.

Employees will be asked to select from a list of general symptoms.

- If symptoms are not considered foodborne illness related, employees will be told to inform their manager or supervisor, follow internal policies, and follow their state/local/tribal/territorial health department requirements.
- If symptoms are or may be related to a foodborne illness, employees are told to stop working immediately, not report to work, and let their manager or supervisor know right away.

Visit foodsafetyfocus.com and click on "view blogs" to access and Utilize the Employee Health Policy tool.

Learn more about **Employee Health** and other risk factors to your food by signing up for a ServSafe® manager class with the Kentucky Restaurant Association.



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