

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION

## Fact Sheet: Bare Hand Contact

**Did You Know?** In commercially run establishments it is critical that food employees minimize bare hand and arm contact with exposed ready-to-eat foods. Minimizing bare-hand contact with ready-to-eat food provides an additional measure for interrupting disease transmission when used in combination with the exclusion and/or restriction of ill food workers and proper hand washing.



**FACT:** The hazards presented by bare-hand contact are a possible transfer of bacterial, viral, or parasitic pathogens from food employees' hands to the food.

### Recommendations

- Use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, or single-use gloves
- Implement a training program for employees instructing food employees about the hazards of bare hand contact with read-to-eat foods, proper hand washing, and the principles of safe food preparation procedures.
- Ensure food employees wash hands and exposed portions of arms before returning to their workstations.