

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

Fact Sheet: Hair Restraints

All Food Handlers are required to wear effective hair restraints that cover all exposed body hair. Examples include caps, hats, nets, scarves, beard restraints and other reasonable forms of hair containment. They must be designed and worn effectively to keep hair from contacting and contaminating exposed food, clean equipment, utensils, unwrapped single service items and single use articles. Outer garments are just as important as hair restraints. They should be free of soil and visible dirt and changed daily or as often as necessary.



FACT: Hairnets serve two purposes. The first is to keep hair from contacting exposed food, clean and sanitized equipment, utensils and linens, or unwrapped single-service articles. The second purpose is to keep worker's hands out of their hair.

FACT: It is impossible to completely remove bacteria from hair. Even recently washed, hair contains bacteria.

Recommendations

- Beard restraints are used to contain facial hair and must be worn along with the traditional hairnet.
- Allow only authorized workers in food preparation and ware washing areas.
- Don't allow unauthorized individuals such as small children or friends of workers into areas where they can contaminate food or food-contact surfaces.