

FOOD CODE REQUIREMENT

Food Code reference: 2-402.11 The Food Code requires that food employees wear hair restraints that are designed and worn to effectively keep their hair from contacting exposed food; clean equipment, utensils, and linens; and unwrapped single-service or single-use articles. The purpose of this provision is both to prevent hair from contacting food and food-contact surfaces and to deter food employees from touching their hair.

Frequently Asked Questions

What would be considered an effective hair restraint?

Hair restraints may include items such as hats, hair covering and nets, beard restraints, and clothing that cover body hair. Depending on the hair style, they may also include rubber bands and clips that effectively restrain the hair.

My hair is tied back in a long pony tail. Is this an effective hair restraint?

Proper hair restraint used by an employee must prevent contact with the food product. If there is the potential for the employee's hair coming into contact with the food or being touched by the employee (ie. Brushing off their shoulder, brushing out their face) then it should be held back with clips or inside the restraint.

Do I need to wear a beard net?

Employees that work with food that is not wrapped or in the food preparation areas should cover all facial hair with a beard net.

Does all hair need to be covered or restrained?

No.

The rule requires hair be effectively restrained. For instance, if the hair style (e.g., short hair) effectively keeps hair from contacting food or food-contact surfaces and deters the food employees from touching their hair, a hair restraint is not required.

Are there any food employees who aren't required to restrain their hair?

Yes. This provision does not apply to FOOD EMPLOYEES such as counter staff who only serves beverages and wrapped or packaged foods, hostesses, and wait staff if they present a minimal risk of contaminating exposed food; clean equipment, utensils, and linens; and unwrapped single-service or single-use articles. This exemption would apply to most wait staff, table bussers, bartenders, baristas, grocery checkers and grocery courtesy clerks.

Can customers get sick if hair touches their food?

Although hair in food is a periodic source of customer complaints, it is unlikely that customers will get sick from hair. Pathogenic Staphylococcus bacteria may be present on the hair or scalp, but they are generally not in sufficient numbers to cause foodborne illness. However, hair is an undesirable adulterant and all reasonable steps should be taken to keep it out of food.

City of Jefferson
Environmental Health
Division

Hair Restraints

Why do I have to wear hair restraint?

Hair restraints are important to avoid cross-contamination with food. If hair is found in a food item, it could potentially carry bacteria to the food.

How do I wear a hair restraint?

A hair restraint must cover all head hair.

Cover all facial hair with an approved beard net/ guard.

Bangs or other parts of hair hanging outside of the hair restraint is not recommended.

Are cashiers required to wear a hair restraint?

A person working the cash register may not be required to wear a hair restraint, dependent on their other duties and ensuring their hair does not become a hazard. For example, wait staff often do not have to wear hair restraints, but need to have the hair restrained (like pony tail) so it is not falling into the food.

Who should I call if I have concerns about an establishment?

A citizen can call the City of Jefferson Environmental Health Division with any concerns or questions at 573-634-6410 or visit the website at www.jeffersoncitymo.gov

