



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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### **HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH REMINDS FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS OF LAW PROHIBITING USE OF LATEX GLOVES**

HONOLULU – Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) food safety inspectors will begin stepping up enforcement of a State law that bans the use of latex gloves by Hawaii's food service industry.

Act 180, which took effect Jan. 1, 2017, prohibits the use of latex gloves by personnel working in food establishments. DOH has asked the Hawaii Restaurant Association, Hawaii Food Manufacturers Association, the Hawaii Food Industry Association and the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Associations to remind their members about the latex glove prohibition.

"Enforcing the prohibition will be a routine part of our food safety inspections," said Peter Oshiro, head of the state's food safety program. "Our inspectors and field staff will be checking food establishments to ensure that workers are not using latex gloves, and educating management and staff about the new law."

Non-compliance with the law may result in fines of up to \$10,000 for each offense. Violations of the ban will not affect a food establishment's placard status.

The original measure, SB911 SD2 HD2 CD1, was co-introduced in 2015 by State Sen. Rosalyn Baker and former senator Suzanne Chun-Oakland and signed into law by Gov. David Ige in July 2016. The purpose of the bill is to prevent the occurrence of severe and potentially life threatening allergic reactions such as impaired breathing and anaphylaxis by those who are sensitive to latex. An estimated three million people in the U.S. are allergic to latex, according to the American Latex Allergy Association.

DOH requires all food-handlers who come into contact with ready-to-eat food products to use gloves to prevent the occurrence of food illnesses. Non-latex and nitrile gloves are readily available and currently used by employees in both the food service and health care industries.

DOH's Sanitation Branch protects and promotes the health of Hawaii's residents and visitors through education of food industry workers and regulation of food establishments statewide. The branch conducts routine health inspections of food establishments where food products are prepared, manufactured, distributed or sold.

The branch also investigates the sources of foodborne illnesses and potential adulteration and

is charged with mitigating foodborne outbreaks and/or the prevention of future occurrences. Health inspectors work with business owners, food service workers and the food industry to ensure food preparation practices and sanitary conditions.

For more information on the department's food safety program, go to:  
<http://health.hawaii.gov/san/>.

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