

SALSA Requirement: “Protective clothing shall be suitable for the food being handled, shall not pose a contamination risk to the product and shall be subject to appropriate exchange, laundering and condition monitoring procedures. Disposable protective clothing, if used, shall be subject to adequate control to avoid product contamination.”

Why?

Protective clothing can contaminate food and food production areas, the contamination might come from direct contact with dirty clothing or by foreign bodies becoming detached from damaged clothing and falling into the product. Controlling protective clothing helps to reduce this risk.

Tools

- 🔍 Protective clothing procedure
- 🔍 Laundry contract

Tips

- 🔍 Avoid clothing with external pockets or buttons as these can be a contamination risk.
- 🔍 If clothing becomes excessively soiled, a change of clothing during a shift may be required.

What do I need to do?

- Select protective clothing suitable for the products you are manufacturing.
 - For example, protective clothing for high risk/high care staff must be capable of being easily removed prior to going to the toilet or using staff facilities, so it may be easier to provide white coats rather than short jackets and trousers.
- Condition/Style of protective clothing:
 - Clothing must be kept in a clean condition and in good repair.
 - You should regularly check that protective clothing remains in good condition, perhaps as part of a weekly/monthly Housekeeping check, see 1.3.2.
 - For handlers of ready-to-eat (RTE) foods, protective clothing must be changed daily or more frequently, or if soiling presents a possible risk of contamination.
- Use of protective clothing:
 - Should be removed before visiting toilet, amenity & external areas though some businesses may use a coverall rather than removal of protective clothing. Where not removed, controls shall be in place to ensure product safety is not compromised before returning to the food handling area.
- Control the laundering of protective clothing:
 - It is preferable to use an appropriate contract laundry service who understand the controls needed for food companies.
 - Alternatively, launder on the premises following a written set of instructions, including the minimum temperature to be reached (at least 60°C) to ensure clothing is sufficiently cleaned and to avoid (cross) contamination.
 - Laundering off the premises by staff in the home is not ideal, especially for handlers of ready-to-eat foods, but if necessary, written instructions should be provided, including:
 - Minimum temperature to be reached (at least 60°C)
 - Segregation from other laundry

1.2.1 Protective Clothing

- a system in place to check clothing cleanliness on return.
- Use unscented detergent appropriate for food environments to avoid tainting food.
- Where you choose to use disposable gloves and protective clothing:
 - Items must be single use and their issue controlled either through an issue log or through staff training.
 - In the case of disposable gloves, hand washing guidelines will still apply.
 - Must be changed if damaged, after work breaks, after going to the toilet and after re-entering processing/production areas.
 - Must be stored & disposed of where they cannot present a contamination risk.
- Where you use non-disposable rubber gloves, they:
 - Must be checked before use, and kept in a clean, undamaged condition.
 - Must be stored where they cannot present a contamination risk.

Need more help?

- See **Tools & Tips** for 1.2.2 Changing Facilities
- **SALSA Guidance Notes** for 1.2.3 High Risk/High Care products - requirements for clothing
- See **Glossary of Terms** for definition of High Risk/High Care