
HOUSE BILL 1698

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Shewmake, Ryu, and Ramel

Prefiled 12/23/21.

1 AN ACT Relating to prohibiting latex gloves in the handling and
2 preparation of food for sale to consumers; and adding a new chapter
3 to Title 69 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** Latex allergies affect an estimated one to
6 six percent of the general population. Individuals who come into
7 contact with latex, such as food service and health care workers, are
8 more likely to develop a latex allergy. Latex allergies may be caused
9 by frequent exposure to latex, inhalation of latex particles,
10 ingesting food prepared by using latex gloves, and contact with
11 mucosal surfaces such as the eyes, nose, and mouth. The most common
12 cause of latex allergy involves touching latex-containing products
13 such as latex gloves. Latex allergies may cause itchy skin, hives, or
14 anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening condition that can cause
15 swelling and severe difficulty breathing.

16 Washington state requires individuals working in food service to
17 use gloves when handling food and requires single-use gloves to be
18 used when preparing ready-to-eat foods and working with raw foods.
19 Nitrile gloves are a durable alternative to latex and are more
20 resistant to puncturing. Other alternatives include polyethylene,
21 which is lightweight and economic, and vinyl.

1 The legislature therefore finds that it is in the interest of
2 public health to reduce latex allergies and reactions to latex by
3 prohibiting the use of latex gloves in handling and preparation of
4 food for sale to consumers.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
6 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
7 otherwise.

8 (1) "Cottage food operation" has the same meaning as defined in
9 RCW 69.22.010.

10 (2) "Food establishment" means the same as in WAC 246-215-01115
11 or successor rules.

12 (3) "Food processing plant" means the same as in WAC
13 246-215-01115 or successor rules.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Beginning January 1, 2024, the use of
15 latex gloves is prohibited in food processing plants, food
16 establishments, and cottage food operations. Types of nonlatex gloves
17 that may be used in food processing plants, food establishments, or
18 cottage food operations include, but are not limited to, nitrile,
19 polyethylene, and vinyl.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act
21 constitute a new chapter in Title 69 RCW.

--- END ---