



Guidance for starting a new food business

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Starting a new food business

Introduction

The primary aim of this guide is to help people who are thinking about or who are in the process of setting up a new food business, and to give information on how to comply with:

- Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
- Regulation EC No 852/2004

Remember every food business poses different problems depending on the type of food produced. The type of food, how it is handled, treated and stored must all be considered when deciding if there is a risk to safety.

Please contact the Business Support Team prior to starting up your food business if you need further advice or help.

Premises requiring Approval under Regulation EC No 853/2004

If you run or intend to start up a business which makes or handles food of animal origin (other than selling them only to the final consumer) your premises may have to be approved. If this is the case additional rules apply. For example, you will need to put an identification mark on your products, (or a health mark in the case of red meat carcasses). You have to comply with the general hygiene requirements and also with some specific requirements which vary depending on the types of product you make.

If you intend to start up a new food business which comes under this heading then it is important that you discuss it immediately with our Food Safety Officers who will be able to give you some more specific information.

What is a food business?

A Food Business is:

Any undertaking, whether for profit or not and whether public or private, carrying out any of the activities related to any stage of production, processing and distribution of food.

A Food Business operator is:

The natural or legal person responsible for ensuring that the requirements of food law are met within the food business under their control.

Food should not be:

Placed on the market if it is unsafe. Food shall be deemed to be unsafe if it is considered to be:

- (A) Injurious to health;
- (B) Unfit for human consumption.

Food “For Sale” is:

Food located anywhere within a food premises and is intended for sale or is offered as a prize or reward or given away for the purposes of promotion or advertising.

Food Premises Registration

It is a legal requirement for food businesses to register all of their premises with the Local Authority 28 days before they open (or before starting to use new premises).

Food business operators whose establishments are required to be registered should contact the Local Authority.

You must also make the Local Authority aware of any changes to the type or nature of your business. If you have registered your premises already and have not changed the type of work you do, you don't need to register them again.

Once your registration form has been processed you will receive a visit by an Enforcement Officer to check your food handling methods, premises suitability and provisions you have made for food safety.

[Complete an online Food Business Registration Form.](#)

Planning, Building Regulations and Licenses

Planning Permission

If you are starting a food business in a premise which is presently not used for this purpose, or you are changing from one type of food business to another you may need planning permission. Please check with the Planning Service who can be contacted using the details below:

Email: planning@harborough.gov.uk

Telephone: 01858 82 82 82

Building Regulations

If you are building a new food premise or changing an existing building to accommodate a new food business, you will require Building Regulation Approval. The Building Control department can be contacted on:

Email: building.control@harborough.gov.uk

Telephone: 01858 82 82 82

Licensing your food business

The Council is the Licensing Authority for the issue of Premises Licences and Club Certificates for licensable activities and Personal Licences to authorise the sale of alcohol under the Licensing Act 2003. This function sits in the Licensing and Enforcement Team of Regulatory Services.

The Government Department responsible for the Licensing Act 2003 - the Department of Culture media and sport (DCMS) - has provided guidance on the implementation of the Act and there are Regulations which support the Licensing regime. Information contained in the Guidance and regulations is available in the alcohol and entertainment section.

For more information (including the relevant application forms) visit the Licensing advice section on the Harborough District Council website at <http://www.harborough.gov.uk/licences>

There is a two tier licensing system for Licensable activities. The premises at which these activities occur must be covered by a Premises License, a Club Certificate or a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) and if alcohol is to be sold at these premises, it can only be sold under the authority of a person who holds

a Personal Licence. In other words, the premises and the person must both be licensed for alcohol sales.

A Personal Licence is not required for any other licensable activity only the sale of alcohol.

The Licensing Act 2003 covers the following activities:

- The sale by retail of alcohol
- The supply of alcohol on behalf of a registered club
- The provision of regulated entertainment and
- The provision of hot food and or drink after 2300 and before 0500.

Email: licensing@harborough.gov.uk

Telephone: 01858 82 82 82

Smoke free regulations

The law banning smoking in enclosed public places in England came into force on July 1st 2007.

The aim of the smoking law is to protect workers and the general public from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

The law creates three specific offences:

- Failing to display no-smoking signs in premises covered by the law.
- Smoking in a smoke-free place.
- Failing to prevent smoking in a smoke-free place.

There are very few exemptions to the smoking ban. The new law affects most public premises, including restaurants, pubs, bars, shops, cinemas, shopping centres, leisure centres, other enclosed workplaces and public transport.

[Click here for more information and guidance.](#)

Underage sales

It is an offence to sell alcohol to a person under 18.

If an age-restricted product is sold to an underage person, even if they claim it is for an adult, the retailer and the salesperson can be guilty of a criminal offence. Anyone who sells age-restricted products should be fully aware of the age limits, adequately trained and aware of company procedures and policies to ensure that no sale ever takes place to an underage person.

For more information on underage sales contact the [Leicestershire County Council's Trading Standards Team](#).

Employment of young persons

The **Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999** require you to assess the health and safety risks to all your employees and to identify what you need to do to comply with your legal duties to prevent or control those risks and ensure your employees' health and safety. Under the regulations you have particular responsibilities towards young people:

- To assess risks to all young people under 18 years of age, before they start work;
- To ensure your risk assessment takes into account their psychological or physical immaturity, inexperience, and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks;
- To introduce control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

You must also:

- Let the parents/guardians of any children still of compulsory school age know the key findings of the risk assessment and the control measures you have introduced before the child starts work or work experience;
- Address certain specified factors in the risk assessment;
- Take account of the risk assessment in deciding whether the young people should be prohibited from certain work activities, except in specified circumstances.

Children cannot enter full time employment until after the school leaving date.

For further information visit www.gov.uk/child-employment/minimum-ages-children-can-work

Disability considerations

Under the [Disability and the Equality Act 2010](#) you have a legal duty to do what you reasonably can to make your services easier to use by disabled customers. Many of the improvements that can be made will also benefit other customers, such as parents with pushchairs, people carrying heavy shopping and some older people who may not consider themselves as disabled but for whom easier access would be a great benefit.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010

Guide Dogs

Disabled people who use assistance dogs quite often experience discrimination in doing everyday things other people take for granted. This is because shops, restaurants and other businesses sometimes object to it. It is against the law to discriminate in this way.

Because of their training and skills the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health have stated that assistance dogs are exempt from the usual hygiene rules that apply to dogs including those that relate to areas where food is being served.

Care homes and care services

If you are planning on setting up a business that cares for vulnerable people e.g. elderly, toddler and children's groups you will need to register with the [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](http://www.cqc.org.uk) (www.cqc.org.uk) as well as the Local Authority before opening your business.

To contact the CQC online visit
<https://webdataforms.cqc.org.uk/Checkbox/contactus.aspx>

Contact in writing: CQC National Customer Service Centre
 Citygate
 Gallowgate
 Newcastle upon Tyne
 NE1 4PA

You can contact the **National Customer Service Centre:**

Telephone: 03000 616161
Fax: 03000 616171

Opening hours are Monday to Friday, between 8.30am and 5:30pm.

Food Safety Legislation

If you are running or thinking of starting a new food business you have a duty to ensure that all food being produced and sold is both safe and wholesome.

The Food Safety Act 1990, The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013, EC Regulation No 853/2004 specify the standards that you must meet in order to ensure food safety.

The following section gives advice on food safety management documentation, structural requirements, types of equipment, facilities and some food hygiene practices you will need to adopt to comply with the above legislation.

Food Safety management

Before you start thinking about anything else, you need to consider the food you wish to prepare and serve and construct your Food Safety Management System

The law requires all food businesses to have a documented food safety management system in place based on the principle of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points or **HACCP**

HACCP is an internationally recognised system of food safety management. It focuses on identifying the critical points in a process where food safety problems (or hazards) could arise and putting steps in place to prevent things going wrong. Keeping records is an essential part of the HACCP system.

Why do you need a food safety management system? The following points will provide some answers:

- It is legal requirement for all food businesses.
- It helps to prevent problems rather than reacting to them after they have happened.
- If your business is taken to court you may be able to demonstrate that you had exercised diligence through arrangements in place to prevent an offence being committed.
- It helps ensure food is safe for customers to eat.

The seven principles of HACCP

HACCP means Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points. This is a process that helps you look at how you handle food and introduce procedures to make sure the food you produce is safe to eat.

HACCP involves the following seven steps:

1. Identify what could go wrong (the hazards).
2. Identify the most important points where things can go wrong (the Critical Control Points- CCPs).
3. Set critical limits at each CCP (e.g. cooking temperature/time).
4. Set up checks at CCPs to prevent problems occurring (monitoring).
5. Decide what to do if something goes wrong (corrective action).
6. Prove that your HACCP plan is working (verification).
7. Keep records of all the above (documentation).

Your HACCP plan must be kept up to date. You will need to review it from time to time, especially whenever something in your food operation changes.

Remember that, even with a HACCP plan in place, you must comply with all requirements of current food safety legislation.

The type of system you will need depends on the size and type of the business.

For small food businesses the Food Standards Agency has developed a pack "[Safer Food, Better Business](#)". This is an innovative and practical approach to food safety management and there are packs available for both Caterers and Retailers.

If you would like to order a copy of either of these packs call 0845 606 0667 or email foodstandards@ecgroup.uk.com .

For more information and guidance on the pack visit www.food.gov.uk/sfbb

Food Traceability

Under [Article 18 of EC Regulation No 178/2002](#), food businesses are required to:

- Identify their suppliers of food, food-producing animals and any other substance intended or expected to be incorporated into food;
- Identify the businesses to which they have supplied products; and
- Produce this information to the competent authorities on demand.

Food businesses should be able to:

- Identify the name and address of suppliers of food, feed, food-producing animals and ingredients.
- Identify the customers to which you have supplied products.
- Identify the date of delivery or despatch.
- Identify the volume or quantity delivered or dispatched.
- Maintain appropriate records and ensure that such information can be provided to authorities on demand.

Preventing and Responding to food incidents

An incident is when there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety or the quality of food, including when food does not meet legal requirements.

All businesses, irrespective of size, should be taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that the produce they supply meets safety requirement. Actions you can take may include the following:

- Source your raw materials and ingredients from suppliers that have registered with their local enforcement authority.
- Source your raw materials and ingredients from suppliers that have recognised certification or have demonstrated that they are working to good-practice systems and procedures.
- Ask your suppliers if they routinely check that their raw materials and ingredients comply with relevant legislation.

For guidance from the Food Standards Agency visit :
<http://tna.europarchive.org/20110116113217/http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/incidentsprinciples.pdf>

What to do if a food incident occurs?

Businesses are legally required to inform their local authority, port health authority and the Food Standards Agency if there is reason to believe that food or feed is not compliant with food or feed safety requirements.

If in any doubt, contact the Harborough District Councils Food Safety Team or the Food Standards Agency

Businesses must immediately notify the Food Standards Agency if their food is considered injurious to health.

Telephone: 020 7276 8448 (out of hours: 020 7270 8960)

Alternatively, inform the FSA online, using the incident notification report form at:

www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/foodfeedform

Businesses must also notify their local authority

Businesses should immediately withdraw, or if necessary recall, food if they have reason to believe it is unsafe.

If the products do not meet food standards requirements, such as labelling or quality issues, where there is no safety issue, then you might wish to ensure that products are withdrawn, rather than risk prosecution.

- 'Recall' means that food is removed from the market, where the food has reached customers and they are advised, for example by means of public notices and other publicity, to return or destroy food supplied to them. The advice given to the customer will include the reason for the recall.
- 'Withdrawn' means that food is removed from the market up to and including the retail stage, but customers are not asked to return or destroy the product.

E.coli 0157 awareness

Food business operators must put in place food safety management procedures based on the principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point). Where applicable, these must include effective controls to ensure that all ready-to-eat foods are protected against direct or indirect contamination from *E. coli* O157 arising from raw foods.

This contamination can be controlled by:

- Separation, between equipment, materials and staff involved in handling raw food from those involved in handling ready-to-eat food.

Where separation is not physically possible, there are limited circumstances where risks may be reduced through strict and consistent application of cleaning, disinfection and handwashing procedures, which ensure the removal of *E. coli* O157 from surfaces, equipment and hands on **every** occasion before coming into contact with ready-to-eat foods.

These procedures need to ensure that:

- Adequate facilities are provided for handwashing and that staff are trained in handwashing techniques
- Appropriate products are selected for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces and are used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

To view the Food Standards Agency guidance on E.Coli 0157 prevention visit www.food.gov.uk/ecoliguide

Design and layout of food premises

The design and layout of a food premise will vary considerably depending on the:

- Type of food you will be producing, handling or selling
- The amount and type of equipment you will need
- The space that is required.

The layout, design, construction and size of premises must

- Avoid the accumulation of dirt in places inaccessible to cleaning.
- Allow food to be prepared safely
- Allow effective cleaning

The ideal aim of any kitchen layout is to have everything moving forward in orderly progression from delivery to food preparation, cooking, service and washing up. The layout should be planned with a clear idea of the purpose of every room

Construction materials must not include any substance that may add toxic material to food either by direct contact or vapour.

Design and construction, especially of high level surfaces, should avoid finishes that may lead to shedding of particles such as flaking paint, plaster or fibres.

Structural Requirements

Floors

In rooms where food is prepared, treated or processed:

Floor surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and they must be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials, unless the proprietor of the food business can satisfy the food authority that other materials used are appropriate.

Assuming that they are properly installed, floor surfaces that would comply with this requirement include: Flooring tiles (quarry, ceramic or vinyl), Vinyl safety flooring, Terrazzo, Cast in situ resin flooring.

Floors must be designed to prevent pooling of water in normal use. Where there may be significant spillage onto floors or wet cleaning (hoses) is used, floor drains may be provided. In this case the floor levels must fall towards the drains.

Walls

Wall surfaces must be maintained in a sound condition and they must be easy to clean and, where necessarily, disinfect.

Wall surfaces immediately behind food preparation surfaces or equipment must be able to be disinfected periodically to reduce the risk of food contamination.

This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials and require a smooth surface up to a height appropriate for the operations, unless the proprietor of the food business can satisfy the food authority that other materials used are appropriate.

Assuming that they are properly installed, wall surfaces that would comply with this requirement include:

Washable painted plaster; Epoxy resin and similar coatings; Ceramic tiles; Stainless Steel sheeting; PVC, GRP and other proprietary sheeting. The wall surfaces must be cleanable to a height which might be expected to become soiled with food debris under normal operation.

Ceilings

Ceilings and overhead fixtures must be designed, constructed and finished to prevent the accumulation of dirt and reduce condensation, the growth of undesirable moulds and the shedding of particles.

Ceiling or overhead surfaces that would comply with this requirement, (assuming that they are properly fixed, applied or installed) include:

- Smooth washable painted plaster
- Direct fixed ceiling systems
- Suspended ceilings

Any surface must be capable of being cleaned. The inner surface of a roof structure will provide an acceptable surface provided that it is in a sound state of repair and cleanable. Ceilings must be periodically maintained to remove any mould build up or any other particles or debris that could fall into food.

Windows

Windows and other openings must be constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt and effective cleaning.

Windows should be screened if:

- (a) They open directly into food preparation areas,
and
- (b) They are opened for ventilation during food preparation,

Screening is necessary to prevent a risk of infestation and/or contamination. Where dirt build-up on insect proof screens may present a risk of food contamination, the screens must be designed to be easily removed for cleaning.

Doors

Any door used by staff who handle open food may be a source of contamination, especially if staff are likely to touch the door with their hands. These doors must be capable of disinfection.

Door furniture likely to come into hand contact such as finger plates and handles must also be capable of disinfection. A variety of smooth impervious surfaces are available. A cleanable paint or sealed finish would comply. Unsealed wood does not comply.

Swing doors with kick plates or push plates are preferable to doors with handles.

Surfaces

Surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in contact with food must be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfect. This will require the use of smooth, washable and non-toxic materials.

Other surfaces that do not normally come into direct contact with food but are in close proximity could contaminate food if dirty, for example the outer casings of equipment must also comply.

Surfaces which would comply with this requirement (assuming that they are properly fixed, applied or installed and maintained) include:

- Stainless steel
- Ceramics
- Food grade plastics

Food preparation layout

There must be enough space in storage and food preparation rooms to allow high risk food to be prepared on separate work surfaces and equipment.

If the handling of low and high risk foods happens at different times, the same area may be used provided it is able to be properly cleaned and disinfected between operations.

It is almost inevitable that you will need more space than what you first envisage. Remember it is advisable to have adequate storage space for all food items, all dry goods, all vegetables and all frozen and chilled foods. Consider how many fridges and freezers you need. Do you have adequate space?

Will there be adequate space around any planned hot fat fryers, food slicers etc to allow staff to move around the kitchen safely?

Equipment

All items that come into contact with food, including packaging must:

- Have a durable construction and be resistant to corrosion, especially those that will come into contact with powerful cleaning chemicals.
- Be kept in a good state of repair that enables them to be kept clean and, where necessary, to be disinfected
- Be effectively cleaned and, where necessary disinfected frequently enough to avoid contamination

- Be installed so that the surrounding area can be effectively cleaned
- Be maintained at a high level of efficiency

N.B. Equipment needs to be durable. “Domestic” appliances rarely stand up to the wear and tear of commercial kitchens. Commercial ovens, ranges, fridges and freezers are commonly required.

Washing facilities for food and equipment

Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of work tools and equipment. These facilities must be constructed of materials resistant to corrosion and must be easy to clean and have an adequate supply of hot and coldwater.

Sinks used for washing utensils should not be used for the preparation of vegetables, meat or fish or for hand washing.

Suitable equipment will include:

- Sinks together with detergents and disinfectants for manual equipment cleaning. (Sinks must be large enough to deal with the equipment normally used in the premises).
- Sterilising sinks.
- Automatic spray wash machines (dishwashers).
- Hoses or other equipment for cleaning and disinfection of fixed equipment.

Sinks and draining boards should have a smooth, hard, even surface and are best constructed of non corrosive metal (e.g. stainless steel).

Sinks used for washing up should be small enough to ensure frequent replenishment of hot water but large enough to take the largest dishes comfortably.

Drying of equipment must not cause recontamination, for example from soiled cloths. Space for air drying of equipment is a suitable alternative.

A single mixer tap is acceptable, or water supplied at a regulated temperature from a heating unit.

Where crockery, glass and cutlery are washed by hand, it is good practice to use a food approved detergent and disinfectant. It is good practice in larger operations to use mechanical dish, glass or pot wash.

Wash hand basins

The number of washbasins will depend on the size of the business and the size and layout of the premises.

Wash hand basins within the kitchen should be located close to where food is handled.

Toilet facilities must have their own hand wash facilities.

Wash basins must be used for hand washing only.

Washbasins for cleaning hands must be provided with hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water and a supply of soap or detergent must be provided for cleaning hands.

Drying facilities may include:

- Disposable paper
- Roller paper cabinet towels
- Washable fabric 'roller towels' in cabinets
- Warm air dryers

It is good practice to supply warm water for hand washing at about 45°C through a single tap which is preferably not operated by hand. If hand operated taps are in place, it is good practice to use single use paper towels to turn the taps to prevent taps becoming contaminated. It is good practice to use bacterial detergent from a dispenser.

Any towel on which the same part can be used more than once is not recommended.

It is good practice to have signs to identify designated 'Hand Wash Only'.

It is good catering practice to site wash basins by the entrance to kitchens. In larger premises extra wash basins may be needed especially where 'high risk' foods are handled.

Lighting

Adequate natural and/or artificial lighting must be provided to all parts of the premises. Recommended illumination levels range from 150 Lux in store rooms to 500 Lux in food preparation areas. Adequate lighting will ensure that work can be carried out easily and safely. Good lighting will also ensure that cleaning is being carried out properly.

Ventilation System and Temperature

Any growth of mould within the fabric of the building is undesirable. Design, construction, layout, and size of the premises must be planned to avoid the build-up of condensation. An effective ventilation system may help to reduce the build up of such occurrences.

Installing or replacing external fume extraction systems may require Planning Permission. Please check with the Planning Service at www.harborough.gov.uk/planning

You are also advised to consult the Environment Team to ensure the ventilation system will not cause a public health nuisance i.e. noise or odour complaints. The contact email is EnvironmentTeam@harborough.gov.uk

Natural or mechanical ventilation must be provided to ensure that heat and/or humidity do not build up to levels that could compromise the safety of food.

Air mechanically drawn into 'clean' preparation rooms, producing ready to eat food must not be drawn from dirty areas such as waste storage areas or rooms used for 'dirty' processes such as pot wash.

Ventilation systems must be so constructed as to enable filters and other parts requiring cleaning or replacement to be readily accessible.

As a target ambient temperatures should be below 25° C. Natural ventilation in rooms where food is cooked will only be suitable in small premises and where there is low heat input into the room.

Some rooms such as kitchens, especially if large scale cooking is proposed, are likely to require mechanical ventilation. The provision of a new ventilation system will require the services of a professional contractor who will advise on elements of performance and design. If installing a new ventilation system you should also consider the potential **noise impact** on neighbouring properties.

Refuse

Food waste and other refuse must not be allowed to accumulate in food rooms. Systems of operation must ensure that refuse containers in food rooms do not become over full and are regularly emptied and removed from the room.

Lids on refuse containers used for temporary storage of waste in food preparation areas are not required. They are frequently touched by the hands of food handlers and may be a serious source of contamination.

Containers must be constructed of durable material which makes them easy to clean and disinfect.

Any refuse containers used for storage of waste awaiting collection and removal from site should have a lid and be constructed of a durable material which makes them easy to clean and disinfect.

Bins or sack holders used in areas preparing high risk foods must be disinfected more frequently.

Bins must be removed at the end of each trading session from the immediate food preparation area and arrangements made for disposal or collection.

The frequency of collection will depend upon the volume and type of waste.

Liquid food waste such as oil and cleaning chemicals must be disposed of safely.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 you have a duty of care regarding how you dispose of your waste. As commercial refuse is not included in your business rates you must pay for an authorised waste carrier to remove your waste from your premises. It will also be necessary for you to keep details in relation to the type of waste, amount produced and details of the company removing waste.

Refuse generated by your business should not be presented for collection with domestic waste; you will breach your duty of care if you allow this to happen.

Waste Oil

If you produce waste cooking oil as part of your catering business then you must ensure that it is stored properly, that none is allowed to spill and that it is collected by an authorised collector who will take your waste to an authorised site for recovery or disposal.

Waste cooking oil must not be poured down drains or sewers because this inevitably leads to blockages and odour or vermin problems and may also pollute watercourses leading to problems for wildlife. Such action could also result in potential prosecution. Nor should waste cooking oil be disposed of with the rest of the catering or kitchen waste because it may cause spillages leading to odour or pollution problems or waste contractors may refuse to remove it.

Waste cooking oil should not be taken to household recycling centres (also known as Civic Amenity sites) for disposal in engine oil banks.

Harborough Waste Services

The council operates a waste collection service to businesses throughout the area. For more information regarding waste removal

www.harborough.gov.uk/tradewaste, or telephone Freephone 0800 0688225

Drainage

Drains must have sufficient fall to allow all solid and liquid waste to flow away. All appliances connected to the drainage system must be provided with an effective trap. Inspection points must be available, but they must be adequately sealed.

It is recommended that grease traps are installed to prevent the entry of grease into the sewerage system.

Pollution

It is necessary to ensure that your premise is not the cause of a Statutory Nuisance to others in neighbouring properties. This covers matters such as smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, smell, noise or accumulations or deposits that are prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

For more information regarding statutory nuisances please contact the [Environment Team](#).

Tel: 01858 828282

E-mail: Environmentteam@harborough.gov.uk

Pest Proofing

Adequate procedures must be in place to ensure pests are controlled. Pests include animal life unwelcome in food premises, especially insects, birds, rats and mice.

Procedures which should be taken to control pests could include:

- Proofing of entrances and other access points.
- Insect screens.
- Electronic fly killers.
- Good stock rotation of dry goods.
- Regular surveys by competent contractors.
- Baiting with pesticides.

Cleaning

Disinfectants used in food businesses should comply with two officially recognised laboratory standards for their effectiveness against a range of micro-organisms; these are British Standards BS EN 1276:1997 (updated by BS EN 1276:2009) or BS EN 13697:2001.

Cleaning materials must be clearly labelled, stored in suitably robust containers, and stored away from food. Under no circumstances should cleaning materials or other hazardous substances be decanted into food containers.

Cleaning chemicals brought into food rooms for use should be handled carefully to prevent contamination of food.

It is good practice to have a separate cleaning schedule for every piece of equipment and every area of the premises. A cleaning schedule should identify the following:

- The task to be done.
- Frequency of the task.
- Cleaning material and chemicals to be used.
- The method (including details of strip down and reassembly of the equipment).
- Safety Precautions to be taken.
- Who does the job.
- Standard expected.

It is vital the surface contact time for the cleaning chemical is known by all staff undertaking cleaning and adhered to at all times.

Effective applications of cleaning schedules should be monitored by the manager or supervisor.

Maintenance

You must provide and maintain safe premises and make adequate welfare provisions with respect to:

- Cleanliness and lighting;
- Work areas;
- Temperature and ventilation;
- Condition of floors;
- Falls or falling objects;
- Toilets, washing facilities and drinking water;
- Glazing of doors and windows;
- Window cleaning;
- Traffic routes;
- Escalators, doors and gates;
- Clothing accommodation and changing facilities; and

- Facilities to rest and eat meals including facilities for non-smokers.

Electrical systems must be installed and maintained in a safe condition. There are similar requirements for gas systems and appliances, including LPG. No set inspection of gas systems is specified but it is good practice to have such systems inspected for safety annually.

Temperature Requirements

Specific temperature requirements are set out in the [The Food Safety and Hygiene \(England\) Regulations 2013](#).

Good temperature control plays a very important role in preventing food poisoning. High risk foods such as cooked products containing meat, fish, eggs, etc., should be kept at low refrigeration temperatures **below 8°C** or **above 63°C** following thorough cooking. As a general rule of thumb food may not be stored at a temperature above 8° c if it is likely to support the growth of pathogenic organisms or the formation of toxins. Cooked food to be sold hot should be kept at or above 63°C, subject to certain exemptions.

It is recommended that you have a system for checking the temperatures of refrigerators and freezers every day to ensure that food is stored at the correct temperatures. It is recommended that a record be kept of the temperatures.

Labelling and Composition

There are different standards that need to be adhered to depending on whether you will be catering or a food retailer. Nevertheless, you have to ensure that the food you sell is properly labelled and that the food you are using or selling is within its use by dates. In addition the food that you sell must not contain any harmful levels of additives such as artificial colours or preservatives. Similarly, if your food contains ingredients that are irradiated, or genetically modified (GM), you must declare this on the food label, on the menu, or on a notice visible to your customers.

Businesses that are planning to manufacture food to be sold to food retailers **MUST** ensure that their food is labelled in accordance with the FOOD LABELLING REGULATIONS. For more information on Food Standards please contact the [Leicestershire Trading Standards Department](#).

Telephone: 0116 305 8000

To access guidance on the Food Standards Agency website [click here](#)

Below are brief checklists giving guidance to retailers and caterers.

Food Retailers

- Use By / Best before dates followed.
- If food is packed and supplied for sale elsewhere it needs to be properly labelled using food grade packaging.
- Pre-packed foods brought in must be properly labelled in English.
- You must describe food accurately on menus, blackboards and adverts. For example, if it is advertised as a fillet steak the product must be a fillet steak and not a cheaper cut.

Caterers

- Use By / Best before dates followed.
- If food is packed and supplied for sale elsewhere it needs to be properly labelled using food grade packaging.
- Dishes on menu must be described accurately.
- Any description of food/ advertisement must not mislead the customer.
- Food that you sell must not contain any harmful levels of additives such as artificial colours or preservatives.
- Claims in the menus must be genuine e.g. GM free, vegetarian.

Allergen Information Requirements

Since December 2014, the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation No. 1169/2011 requires food businesses to provide allergy information on food sold unpackaged, in for example catering outlets, deli counters, bakeries and sandwich bars.

See guidance on the Food Standards Agency website for your responsibilities regarding allergen information.

See link below:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf>

Staff Issues

Changing Facilities

Provision must be made to allow food handlers to change and to store their street clothes and personal effects away from open foods. Depending upon the size of the operation and numbers of employees, a changing area away from foods and lockable secure cupboards may be adequate to meet this requirement

Protective Clothing

Clothing must be clean and should be changed regularly to maintain hygienic standards to protect the food from risk of contamination.

It is good practice for ALL visitors to the kitchen (including maintenance personnel) to wear protective clothing and hats if they present a risk of contamination.

Standards of clothing may differ depending upon the duties carried out. The following would fulfil the requirement:

Personnel preparing open food- clean coat, tunic uniform or similar, plus head covering. Safety shoes should be considered.

Storeman/Driver- Clean coat or over-garment.

Waiters/ waitresses/ bar staff- clean clothing, tunic or uniform.

Staff who prepare 'high risk' food should not travel to their place of work in their protective clothing. They should also remove protective clothing if they leave the premises for other reasons.

Illness Policy

No person, known or suspected to be suffering from, or to be a carrier of, a disease likely to be transmitted through food or while suffering, for example with infected wounds, skin infections, sores or with diarrhoea, shall not be permitted to work in any food area in any capacity in which there is a likelihood of directly or indirectly contaminating food.

When you become aware that you or a member of staff is suffering from one of the conditions listed, you have the legal responsibility to take the necessary action. This may involve exclusion from work altogether, or exclusion from certain jobs.

As a rule, a person who works in a food establishment should not return to work for 48 hours after symptoms have ceased.

Any person working in a food handling area must report certain illnesses or conditions to the proprietor where there is a likelihood of them directly or indirectly contaminating the food. They must immediately report if they:

- Know or suspect that they are suffering from or are a carrier of a disease likely to be transmitted through food.
- Are suffering from an infected wound, a skin infection, sores, diarrhoea or any other condition which involves stomach upset or vomiting.

[Click here](#) for the Food Standards Agency publication: '**Food Handlers: Fitness to Work**' for Regulatory Guidance and Best Practice Advice For Food Business Operators.

Personal Hygiene

Persons working in food handling areas must also practice good hygiene. They must for example:

- Have clean hands if they are handling food.
- Not smoke or spit in the food handling area.
- Not eat or drink whilst handling food.
- Have clean hair tied back and covered.
- Cover wounds likely to cause risk of contamination of foods (on hands or other exposed parts of the body) with waterproof dressings. It is good practice to use brightly coloured wound dressings that are easy to spot if they come off.
- Not wear jewellery or false nails or nail varnish that may present a risk of contamination.

Sanitary Accommodation

You will need to provide adequate provision of lavatories for catering staff. Lavatories must not lead directly into rooms in which food is handled.

A wash hand basin, with hot water, soap and drying facilities should be provided close to the wc. Toilets must have either natural or mechanical ventilation to prevent (as far as possible) aerosols and offensive odours from permeating food rooms.

Guidelines on the number of toilets needed are given in British Standards BS 6465-1:2006

Under the [Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#) (as amended), as an employer, you must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide adequate and appropriate welfare facilities for staff whilst they are at work. These facilities include: toilets, washing (with hot and cold water), rest and changing facilities, and somewhere clean to eat and drink and take breaks. You also have to provide free drinking water that is safe and easily accessible.

The following table shows the minimum number of toilets and washbasins that should be provided in a workplace (INDG293):

Table 1 – Number of toilets and wash hand basins for mixed use (or women only)

Number of people at work	Number of toilets required	Number of wash hand basins required
1-5	1	1
6-25	2	2
26-50	3	3
51-75	4	4
76-100	5	5

Table 2 – Toilets used by men only

Number of men at work	Number of toilets required	Number of urinals required
1-15	1	1
16-30	2	2
31-45	2	2
46-60	3	3
61-75	3	3
76-90	4	4
91-100	4	4

Other Facilities

This section applies to all premises

Drinking water

An adequate supply of wholesome, accessible, drinking water must be provided, with drinking cups or similar.

Accommodation for clothing and facilities for changing

Adequate, suitable and secure space must be provided to store workers' own clothing and any special clothing which is necessary for their job. Adequate changing facilities must also be provided where people have to change. This area must be clean, warm, dry and ventilated and private, as well as being readily accessible from workrooms, washing and eating facilities.

Facilities for rest and to eat meals

Rest facilities must be suitable, sufficient, and readily accessible. They must be of a suitable size, and have sufficient seats with backrests and tables for the number of workers likely to use them at any time. They must include suitable facilities to eat meals where it is reasonable that meals may be regularly eaten in the workplace. Suitable facilities, including the facility to lie down, should be provided for pregnant women and nursing mothers, so that they are near sanitary facilities.

Qualifications and Training

The legislation requires those within a food business to have the necessary knowledge to ensure that they do not compromise the safety of food whilst carrying out their duties, whether through the direct handling of food or the management of the business and its food safety management procedure. Compliance cannot be demonstrated simply by having attended a formal training course or the production of a certificate; managers and staff must actively put their knowledge of food hygiene into practice in the workplace, regardless of how this has been gained. Enforcers will therefore make judgements on compliance based on evidence obtained from:

- Questioning managers and staff
- Observing work practices
- Any relevant documentation

To find a course near you, [click here](#).

**Training courses should be Accredited by CIEH
(Chartered Institute of Environmental Health)**

Other Catering Establishments

Mobile Vehicles, Stalls or Temporary Premises

Structures such as marquees, stalls and vans come under this category and are subject to the same hygiene requirements as other food businesses.

- Mobile Vehicles must not be sited close to sources of contamination or pests.
- If the premises cannot be proofed against pest access, then food must not be stored in the temporary premises unless it is in a storage unit or container that itself prevents access of pests
- Surfaces in contact with food must be in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfect. This will require the use of smooth, washable, non toxic materials,
- Food contact surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected frequently.
- Equipment should be clean and free from contamination before the start of a work session.
- Solid waste must be removed frequently from food preparation and storage areas. It must be stored in lidded containers whilst awaiting collection from the site.
- There must be a basin or basins used for hand wash only, provided with hot and cold water or water at a suitable temperature, soap or detergent and a means of hand drying.
- A wholesome supply of hot and cold water must be available for washing tools and equipment together with a supply of detergent. Adequate provision must be made for the cleaning of food stuffs.
- It is good practice to use separate sinks for food washing. Where this is not possible, the sink should be cleaned between different activities.
- Temporary facilities will ideally be connected to a potable supply, preferably the mains water supply. Where this is not practicable, tanked supplies or water bowsers may be used but these must be of a potable standard.

Mobile food businesses may require a **Street Trading Licence** before you are allowed to trade. For an application form you can contact the Licensing team. [Click here for more information](#)

Catering from domestic premises

It is possible to run a small food business from domestic premises, but you will have to make sure that your kitchen, and any other rooms used, meet the requirements of food hygiene regulations.

If they do, you will need to register as a Food Premises with Harborough District Council at least 28 days before you start your business. You can download a food premises registration form below. Once we have received your completed registration form you will be contacted by an Environmental Health Officer who will arrange to visit your home.

If a home-based business is going to operate successfully and safely then you will need to take account the following points:

1. **Planning permission:** You may need planning permission to run a business from home, so take advice from the Council's Planning Department.
2. **Business rate:** You may have to pay increased rates if you use part of your property for a business. You should take advice from the Council's [Business Rates Department](#).
- 3.
4. **Insurance:** Just in case things go wrong, you are strongly advised to take out insurance to cover claims against you. You should consult your Solicitor about this.
5. **Restrictive covenants:** Especially in older properties, you may find that the deeds contain clauses that prevent you from carrying put certain activities and running a food business may be one of them. You should consult your Solicitor about this.
6. **Mortgage instructions:** If you have a mortgage on your property, you should contact your lender to talk to them about your intentions.
7. **The Law:** The laws on food safety apply just the same to a business run from home as they do all other commercial premises. You will be liable to periodic inspections by officers from Harborough District Council and you may face legal action if you are found to be breaking food hygiene laws. This also applies if you use a kitchen somewhere else to prepare food (e.g. village hall kitchen) and the kitchen or your own hygienic practices, fail to meet the proper standards.
8. **Your kitchen:** In general, it is recommend that any business which intends to prepare food in anything more than very small quantities should be operating from properly designed and equipped commercial premises and not from an ordinary domestic kitchen.

We advise that the following matters should be attended to prior to commencing your business from home.

- Your kitchen and any associated food stores and vehicles are required to comply with the provisions of the [Food Safety Act 1990](#), the The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 and [Regulation \(EC\) No 852/2004](#). This is difficult to achieve in domestic kitchens because they are primarily not equipped for commercial food operations and may also be occasions be use for practices such as feeding pets, washing dirty clothes etc that would be considered to be unacceptable in any commercial food premises. The control and prevention of contamination of foodstuffs is therefore much more difficult to achieve.
- Operating anything other than a very simple, low capacity food business from home should therefore only be seen as a short term arrangement and consideration must be given to acquiring commercial premises if it is your intention to expand your business.

- The kitchen must be thoroughly cleaned and any surfaces with which food comes into contact with must be disinfected prior to being used.
- Suitable and sufficient storage including refrigerated storage must be provided. Food stored in refrigerators must not exceed 8°C and must not be exposed to a risk of contamination i.e. cooked foods must be stored above raw foods.

- All surfaces in food preparation areas must be smooth, washable, easy to keep clean and in a good state of repair. Suitable finishes include :
 1. **Walls**- painted plaster, ceramic tiles, plastic or steel sheet cladding
 2. **Floors**- Vinyl, ceramic non slip tiles, non slip laminate, painted concrete
 3. **Work surfaces**- domestic grade work tops, stainless steel
 4. **Ceilings**- painted plaster
 5. **Light fittings**- fluorescent tubes with shatter resistant covers, easy to clean light fittings

- Food hygiene regulations require that there are adequate facilities for the washing of hands suitably located. In practice in a domestic premises it may be acceptable to have a wash hand basin located close to but not in the food preparation area, so that a utility room or downstairs cloakroom may be considered satisfactory. This will depend on each individual case taking into account the premises layout and the type of food being produced.

- All possible sources of contamination must be removed from the kitchen prior to it being used for food preparation. Pets must be excluded from the kitchen and normal routine activities such as washing clothes must not be carried out at such times. Persons must not smoke in the kitchen and at any other times when handling foods.

- It is extremely important when transporting food that is protected from any risk of contamination and is maintained at a temperature which is less than 8°C in order to control the growth of food poisoning bacteria. For short journeys the use of a cool box with an adequate number of ice packs may be sufficient to fulfill this requirement but the food business operator must monitor the temperature throughout the process.
- All high risk food items, such as those containing meat, cheese, eggs, fish must be stored at a temperature that ensures their food safety. Refrigerators must be capable of maintaining suitable temperatures.
- It is a legal requirement for food proprietors carry out 'hazard analysis' of their business to highlight where the potential risks are likely to occur and more importantly how to control them. It is a requirement to document this process. The amount of documentation needed will depend on the nature of the business. [The Food Standards Agency](#) has developed a pack (Safer Food Better Business) to enable small businesses to meet this requirement, which you can download from the Food Standards Agency website.
- Food business operators are required by law to ensure that food handlers are suitably trained in food safety matters which are relevant to their work. This requirement is to ensure that the food they prepare is safe. This requirement can be met in a number of ways, one of which is a recognised food hygiene course. For a small business producing low risk foods a level 2 qualification may be suitable. Details of food hygiene courses can be obtained from the [Chartered Institute of Environmental Health](#).

Advice regarding the labeling requirements for food products can be obtained from Leicestershire County Council Trading Standards. (Tel 08454 040506) or from the [Food Standards Agency](#)

Buying an existing business

The following points are a guide to those people thinking of buying an existing food business.

- Do not assume that it meets legal requirements.
- Ask to see a copy of the last food hygiene inspection report.
- Ask if there are any legal notices outstanding. Food safety notices are served on the proprietor of the business so will not show up on a property search.
- Remember if you want to make any alterations you should check whether they need planning permission and/or building regulations approval.
- Are the layout and equipment suitable for the type of business you want to run?
- Take legal advice.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Every employer has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees, customers, and visitors and on site contractors. This may impact on the design, construction and operation of food premises and you should therefore assess the risk.

Items which you would need to consider include:

- Describing how you will manage health and safety in your business will let your staff and others know about your commitment to health and safety. This will be your health and safety policy. It should clearly say who does what, when and how. NB – if you have fewer than 5 employees you do not have to write down your health and safety policy.
- You must control the health and safety risks in your workplace. To do this you need to think about what, in your business, might cause harm to people and decide whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm. This is known as a risk assessment.
- Everyone who works for you needs to know how to work safely and without risks to health. You must provide clear instructions and information, and adequate training, for your employees.
- You must provide the right workplace facilities for everyone in your workplace, including people with disabilities.
- You must have first-aid arrangements in your workplace. You are responsible for making sure your employees receive immediate attention if they are taken ill or are injured at work. Accidents and illness can happen at any time and first aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries from becoming major ones.
- Under health and safety law, you must report and keep a record of certain injuries, incidents and cases of work-related disease. You can find out which ones must be reported and how to report them at website (www.hse.gov.uk/riddor).

Please visit www.hse.gov.uk for more information regarding health and safety requirements. A useful guidance document for new businesses is 'Health and safety made simple: The basics for your business', which can be found at the Health and Safety Executive website (www.hse.gov.uk), link for the document is <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg449.pdf>

Fire Safety

You need to ensure that your food business complies with all the requirements laid down in the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order](#).

You must carry out a fire risk assessment at your premises and take reasonable fire safety precautions to help protect you, your staff and customers in the event of a fire. The precautions you will need to take will depend on factors such as the size of your premises or the number of employees.

To assist you in the preparation of your Fire Risk Assessment, Guides are available on the [Department of Communities and Local Government](#) site under Fire & Resilience. Alternatively they can be purchased from leading book stores. For additional information please contact Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

First Aid and Accidents

It is a legal requirement to provide first-aid equipment, trained employees and facilities relative to your size and risks to cover your employees.

Some accidents will require reporting under the RIDDOR regulations. See www.hse.gov.uk/RIDDOR for details. All accidents must be recorded in the company's accident book.

These accident books should be reviewed regularly by senior management to ascertain the nature of incidents which have occurred in the workplace. This review should be in addition to an individual investigation of the circumstances surrounding each incident.

Near-misses should also be reported so that action can be taken to investigate the causes and to prevent recurrence.

Being visited by the Environmental Health Officer

What Will The Officer Do When They Visit?

The Environmental Health officer will look at how you operate your business to identify potential hazards, and to make sure that your business is following the law.

When an Environmental Health officer visits you, they will be following the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement on local authority food law

enforcement, and the Food Law Code of Practice. The Framework Agreement sets standards for how local authorities carry out their enforcement duties.

You can expect the Environmental Health officer to show you identification when they arrive and be polite throughout the visit. They will tell you about any hazards they have identified and advise you about how they can be avoided.

If an Environmental Health officer advises you to do something, they will tell you whether you need to do it to comply with the law, or whether it would simply be good practice.

If you are asked to take any action as a result of the inspection, you will be given the reasons in writing. If the Environmental Health officer decides that you are breaking the law, they will tell you what that law is.

The Environmental Health officer will give you a reasonable amount of time to make changes, except where there is an immediate risk to public health. Details of how you may wish to appeal against their actions will be shown in the letter which will be sent to you following the inspection.

Your Premises will be given a hygiene rating

The food safety officer inspecting a business checks how well the business is meeting the law by looking at:

- how hygienically the food is handled – how it is prepared, cooked, reheated, cooled and stored
- the condition of the structure of the buildings – the cleanliness, layout, lighting, ventilation and other facilities
- how the business manages and records what it does to make sure food is safe

At the end of the inspection, the business is given one of the six ratings. The top rating of '5' means that the business was found to have 'very good' hygiene standards. Any business should be able to reach this top rating.

The food safety officer will explain to the person who owns or manages the business what improvements are needed and how they can achieve the top rating of '5'. The local authority will check that these improvements are made.

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme has been designed to make sure that the ratings given to businesses are fair.

A business will be given one of these hygiene ratings:



You will be given the appropriate window sticker following the visit by the Environmental Health Officer. You should display the certificate and window sticker so that the public can see.

For more information on the **Food Hygiene Rating System** [click here](#)

New Food Business – Key Points

Planning a New Food Business

Consult with Local Authority Environmental Health

The first step in planning a new food business is to consult the Commercial Services Section with whom you will be able to discuss your plans and they will be able to provide advice, or if necessary an advisory visit. It is important to keep the Business Compliance Team updated with any progress you make.

Planning Permission & Building Regulations

If you are starting a food business in premises which are presently not used for this purpose, or you are changing from one type of food business to another or you are thinking about replacing an external fume extraction system or building an external smoking shelter you may need planning permission.

If you are building a new food premises or changing an existing building to accommodate a new food business you may require Building Regulations Approval.

Appropriate Layout, Design, Construction & Size

You must ensure that the layout, design, construction and size of your food premises:

- Avoids the accumulation of dirt in places inaccessible to cleaning
- Allow food to be prepared safely
- Allow effective cleaning

Adequate Procedures must be in place to ensure pests are controlled.

Provision must be made to allow food handlers to change and to store their street clothes and personal effects away from open foods.

Under the **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990** you have a **DUTY OF CARE** regarding how you dispose of your waste. As commercial refuse is not included in your business rates you must pay for an authorised waste carrier to remove your waste from your premises.

Waste cooking oil **must not** be poured down drains or sewers nor should waste cooking oil be disposed of with the rest of the catering or kitchen waste. Consider installing grease traps.

Disability Considerations

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 you have a legal duty to do what you reasonably can to make your services easier to use by disabled customers

Pollution

It is necessary to ensure that your premise is not the cause of a Statutory Nuisance to others in neighbouring properties. This covers matters such as smoke, fumes, gases, dust, steam, smell, noise or accumulations or deposits that are prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

Licensing Your Food Premises

If you intend to carry out licensable activities at your premises you will need to have an authorisation under the Licensing Act 2003.

These can be through a Premises Licence, club premises certificate or temporary event notice. If you sell alcohol under a premises licence, you will need to appoint a designated premises supervisor who has a personal licence.

Registration of Food Business

It is a legal requirement that Food Business Operators register their establishment with Harborough District Council at **least 28 days** before commencing food operations.

Please remember that it is an offence not to register a food operation with the appropriate local authority

Disclaimer

This is not a comprehensive list of requirements.

Individual businesses are responsible for checking how the law applies to them in practice.

Food Safety Management

Food Safety Management System

Before you start thinking about anything else, you will need to consider the food that you are going to serve and construct your Food Safety Management System. All food businesses are required by law to have a **documented** food safety management system in place based on the principle of **Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point** (HACCP).

Almost all businesses will need to put into place these procedures but the type of system you will need depends on the size of your business.

For small food businesses the Food Standards Agency has developed a pack “Safer Food, Better Business”. This is an innovative and practical approach to food safety management and there are packs available for both [Caterers](#) and [Retailers](#).

To download a pack visit www.food.gov.uk/sfbb

Qualifications and Training

The legislation requires those within a food business to have the necessary knowledge to ensure that they do not compromise the safety of food whilst carrying out their duties, whether through the direct handling of food or the management of the business and its food safety management procedure.

Compliance cannot be demonstrated simply by having attended a formal training course or the production of a certificate; managers and staff must actively put their knowledge of food hygiene into practice in the workplace, regardless of how this has been gained.

Traceability

Under Article 18 of EC Regulation No 178/2002, food businesses are required to:

- Identify their suppliers of food, food-producing animals and any other substance intended or expected to be incorporated into food;
- Identify the businesses to which they have supplied products; and
- Produce this information to the competent authorities on demand.

Preventing and responding to food incidents

All businesses, irrespective of size, should be taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that the produce they supply meets safety requirements. Nevertheless, businesses are legally required to inform their local authority if there is reason to believe that food is not compliant with food safety requirements. Businesses should immediately withdraw, or if necessary recall, food if they have reason to believe it is unsafe.

Labelling and Composition of Foods

There are different standards that need to be adhered to depending on whether you will be catering or a food retailer. Nevertheless, you have to ensure that the food you sell is properly labelled and that the food you are using or selling is within its use by dates. In addition the food that you sell must not contain any harmful levels of additives such as artificial colours or preservatives. Similarly, if your food contains ingredients that are irradiated, or genetically modified (GM), you must declare this on the food label, on the menu, or on a notice visible to your customers.

Illness

No person, known or suspected to be suffering from, or to be a carrier of, a disease likely to be transmitted through food or while suffering, for example with infected wounds, skin infections, sores or with diarrhoea, shall be permitted to work in any food area in any capacity in which there is a likelihood of directly or indirectly contaminating food

Allergens

It's very important for all caterers to be aware about food allergy and to take it seriously. This is because when someone eats a food they are allergic to, even the tiniest amount can cause a very severe reaction called anaphylaxis, which can be life threatening.

Caterers can take some simple steps to try and reduce the chances of food being contaminated with allergens through correct storage, effective cleaning and hand washing, segregation of areas & equipment and training.

More information on allergens and cooking for customers with food allergies can be found on the Food Standards Agency Website at:

Disclaimer

This is not a comprehensive list of requirements.

Individual businesses are responsible for checking how the law applies to them in practice.

Useful Contacts

Harborough District Council

Address: The Symington Building
Adam and Eve Street
Market Harborough
Leicestershire
LE16 7AG

Telephone: 01858 82 82 82

Fax: 01858 82 10 00

Useful email contacts

Environmental Health environmentteam@harborough.gov.uk

Food Safety foodandsafety@harborough.gov.uk

Licensing licensing@harborough.gov.uk

Building Control building.control@harborough.gov.uk

Planning planning@harborough.gov.uk

Health and Safety Executive

Website: www.hse.gov.uk

Telephone: 01519 514 000

Food Standards Agency

Website: www.food.gov.uk

Email: helpline@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 02072 768 829

Better Business for All

Better Business for All provides a single point of access into the regulatory system enabling local businesses to obtain the advice and guidance they need from regulatory services in one place.

Website: www.llep.org.uk/betterbusinessforall

Telephone: 08713 843 185

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS)

Address: Leicester Road
Anstey Firth
Glenfield
Leicester
LE3 8HD

Telephone: 01162 872 241

Fax: 01162 311 180

Email: info@lfrs.org