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COVID-19

# Deliveries, Collections & Takeaways

*The independent caterer's guide  
to safe trading through the  
Covid-19 pandemic.*

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# Deliveries, Collections & Takeaways

## The independent caterer's guide to safe trading through the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Coronavirus/ Covid-19 pandemic restrictions have made many food businesses think about changing their operations so that they can offer a takeaway, delivery, or collection service.

This document is designed to help you to:

- Assess your current facilities and systems so that you can decide if “pivoting” your business to a takeaway and/or delivery service is for you.
- Work through the changes you will need to make to keep within the law.

You should consider that changing your business model is much the same as setting up a completely new business, which of course involves a lot more than “staying safe and legal”.

*If you need help in working through this, you may wish to get in touch with your NCASS Account Manager.*

## Staying “safe and legal”

The key questions that you will need to answer are:

- Does my food premises give me everything I need to meet the food safety and hygiene requirements for my proposed operation? If not, can I make the required changes?
- Will it be possible to meet the Covid-19 controls, particularly on social (physical) distancing?
- Are there any specific permissions I need before I begin to trade or anyone I should notify?
- What changes will I need to make to my documentation e.g. Food and Health and Safety risk assessments and allergy management systems? What additional training will I need to give my staff?
- What changes to packaging and labelling will be required?
- What do I need to know about online and telephone sales and how do I ensure safe food delivery, takeaway or collection?



# 1.

## **Does my food premises meet the food safety and hygiene requirements for my proposed operation?**

⚠ **This can be a deal breaker, so you will need to carry out an honest assessment at the earliest possible stage. If you find there are problems, you might be able to solve them by simplifying your food offer.**

### **Assess the suitability of your facilities**

Although your premises will have been suitable for your previous operation, if you are planning to change to a takeaway, collection, or delivery service you will need to reassess the suitability of your premises.

In any catering operation the facilities and equipment needed will depend on the type and quantity of food produced and the way it is provided to the customer. For instance, a takeaway or delivery service might offer hot food or alternatively chilled food for reheating. Different equipment and processes will be needed for each. Generally hot food delivery or collection is the simplest option.

It may be that after assessing your premises, you believe that there won't be any problems with this. Alternatively, you may find that you need to change your planned food offering or that unfortunately there are too many problems in order to go ahead. It's really important to check at the outset to avoid unnecessary costs or risks to health.

⚠ To get started, we have created a form ([Appendix 1](#)) that helps you assess your premises suitability. To start you will need to decide what food you would like to offer.



# 2.

## **Will it be possible to meet the Covid-19 controls, particularly on social (physical) distancing?**

The good news is that the Coronavirus is not believed to be transmitted by food, infection is mainly from infected people who spread the virus by coughing or sneezing. The virus is believed to be able to survive for up to 3 days on hard surfaces.

As a result, the controls to limit spread are maintaining a physical separation of 2 metres social distancing (or 1 metre plus, with additional controls), thorough & regular hand washing and enhanced premises hygiene through frequent cleaning and disinfection.

Your production unit and systems will need to be capable of meeting the requirements to limit viral transmission.

Particular questions to consider are:

- How can members of staff (who are not from the same household) be physically separated by social distancing during their work activities?
- How can working practices be changed to ensure minimal use of common areas or equipment?
- Are there separate, identifiable tools, utensils, and where possible equipment for use by each member of staff?
- What changes are needed to update the Cleaning Schedule to ensure more frequent cleaning and disinfection of common touch points e.g. switches, handles, doors, key-pads, and customer collection points?
- What must be done to ensure pre-payment for food orders by contactless means?

**⚠ The updated NCASS Covid-19 Controls document (Appendix 2) includes a Risk assessment and guidance that will assist you in putting the necessary controls in place. ➡**

# 3.

## Are there any specific Licences or permissions I need before I begin to trade or anyone I should notify?

### Permissions to trade

#### Fixed premises:

Previously fixed premises were required to have planning permission to provide hot food takeaways. This requirement has been suspended until March 2022 as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

If you are a business with a fixed premises that does not have planning permission to provide a takeaway service you can now do so, provided of course you can meet food hygiene and safety requirements as well as Covid-19 controls.

**You must notify your Local Authority's EHO team that you are or are intending to make a material change to your business. You may not get a response straight away but it is important that you inform them. If you are having difficulty with this, please get in touch with us via [opinion@ncass.org.uk](mailto:opinion@ncass.org.uk).**

### Consents/permissions to trade

#### Mobile or temporary trading units:

To trade legally, mobile units need permission from the Local Authority or from a private landowner. We have been working with the Local Government Authority (LGA) to enable mobile businesses to pivot in a similar way as fixed site. The obvious barrier is not having a specific place to trade from and so **advice has been given to Local Authorities around being flexible with NCASS members**. This advice can be found in ([Appendix 3](#)).

Key questions for mobile traders to consider are:

- Is the site you are / planning on trading from on public land?

*If so, you will need a Street Trading consent.*

If you have one you should contact your Local Authority to check that it will cover any changed activities.

If you do not have one you will need to apply to the Local Authority for a Street Trading consent. Please note that consents are usually strictly limited and even if any are available obtaining one is likely to take a long time.

- Is your planned trading site on private land?

*If so, you will need to get formal permission from the Landowner to trade.*

Once you have this you **MUST** contact the Local Authority, Environmental Health or Licensing team, to see if there are any further restrictions on trading on a private site. There will be local considerations to take into account and the Local Authority will have good reasons for asking a business not to trade in a certain way such as proximity to key sites, busy roads or other businesses for example. However, Local Authorities are being asked to be flexible with NCASS members. As such members should be understanding and work with Local Authorities to find solutions.

**⚠ Before doing so, read the Guidance from the Local Government Association which encourages Local Authorities to be flexible when considering mobile trading ([Appendix 3](#)).**

The best way to make contact with your Local Authority is by email not by telephone.



## Licences

Any business, including takeaways, cafés, fast food outlets and mobile catering vehicles, that supplies hot food or hot drink to the public, for consumption on or off the premises, between 11pm and 5am is required to have a Late-Night Refreshment licence.

If you are trading within these hours you should contact the Local Authority in order to apply for a Licence.

## Notifications

### Local Authority Environmental Health Department:

Assuming that you have a premises that can meet the food hygiene requirements, NCASS Covid-19 Controls and have a legitimate place to trade you will now need to update your Food business registration.

You should contact your Local Authority Environmental Health Department, by email, to advise them about the changes to your food business operation. You can also contact your EHO via the NCASS Connect system - you can access the 'email your EHO' button via your control panel.

**⚠ Failure to update a registration can cause future difficulties and could result in a fine.**

## Insurers

It is recommended that you contact your Insurance company to make sure that your changed operations are covered. For example - courier insurance is likely to be required if you are making deliveries for your business (you are very unlikely to be covered for delivery/courier via domestic vehicle insurance).



# 4.

## What changes will I need to make to my documentation e.g. Food and Health and Safety risk assessments and allergy management systems? What additional training will I need to give my staff?

⚠️ **If you have changed your food operation i.e. “pivoted” to a takeaway or delivery service, you will need to update or redo your NCASS risk assessments in both food safety and health and safety.**

The updated documents will tell you what controls need to be in place.

### Getting the “new” food safety basics right

You may require a reminder about how to ensure good practice in some of your day to day work due to the operational changes you have made.

### Food hygiene and safety

The list below has some of the most likely areas where an update could prove useful.

- Food premises requirements ([Appendix 4](#)).
- Cleaning ([Appendix 5](#)).
- Information sheet on Deep cleaning and Cleaning for Covid-19 controls ([Appendix 6](#)).
- Waste Management ([NCASS Due Diligence Manual](#)).
- Food storage ([Appendix 7](#)).
- Shelf life ([Appendix 8](#)).
- Food handling and preparation ([Appendix 9](#)).
- Hot food- cooking, reheating and hot holding ([Appendix 10](#)).
- Cold food, chilling, cooling and defrosting ([Appendix 11](#)).

- Traceability ([Appendix 13](#)).
- Vacuum packing ([NCASS Due Diligence Manual](#)).
- Sous-vide ([NCASS Due Diligence Manual](#)).
- Safe cooking of burgers ([NCASS Due Diligence Manual](#)).

### Allergen management

Although you will be used to managing allergens in your business it will be important to check to make sure that in changing your business operation you have identified all the allergens present in the food you produce. You will also need to make sure that cross contamination risks have been controlled, particularly when you are not interacting face to face with your customers.

Key considerations will include:

- New recipes.
- New suppliers.
- Substitutions- which are likely to be more frequent as the food supply is under pressure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Increased risk of cross contamination – due to change in workflow or rearrangement of workstations to ensure social distancing.
- New customers and less opportunity to declare allergies /ask questions due to social distancing/remote ordering
- If you are unable to put in place safe procedures to prepare meals for allergy sufferers, you **MUST NOT** offer or serve allergy-free food to customers until you are confident you can prepare those dishes safely. ➔

You may also wish to encourage customers to declare their allergies by training staff to ask about allergies at the point of taking a telephone order or by including a question about allergies at the start of an online order form.

ⓘ See see Section 6 of Appendix 1 for details of the requirement to provide allergen information for online purchases and for deliveries.

ⓘ For general information on controlling allergens and management of orders from allergy sufferers see the Allergen Guidance ([Appendix 13](#)).

## Staff training

Once you have amended your risk assessments and made any necessary changes to your allergen management system you will need to update your staff and train them in applying the new controls.

➤

# 5.

## What changes to packaging and labelling will be required?

### Packaging

Moving to a takeaway or collection and delivery system will require more packaging and increased labelling.

When selecting packaging it will be important to ensure that:

- It is made from “materials suitable for contact with food”. The presence of a symbol that looks like a wine glass and a fork indicates that the material is safe for use in contact with food.
- It protects food from contamination and is robust and suitable for its intended purposes.
- It is single use only (due to the risk of contamination with multi-use items).
- It is stored hygienically to avoid risk of contamination.

### Labelling

If food is prepared to order and then packed for collection or delivery it would be considered to be food that is non-prepacked. This is likely to be the case for small takeaway/ delivery/ collection businesses.

The following information must be provided for “Non prepacked” foods:

- the name of the food (its description).
- the allergens present.
- in the case of a meat product, a meat content declaration (% of product).
- in the case of irradiated food (to enhance shelf-life), an irradiated food statement.

Whilst the following are not required by labelling law, for food safety reasons you should:

- Make a statement about shelf life e.g. Eat within 24 hours- See information sheet shelf life ([Appendix 8](#)).
- Provide information about handling e.g. reheat until above 75°C, refrigerate until consumption etc.

**While non-prepacked foods have far fewer labelling requirements than prepacked foods, any information that must be available to customers follows identical rules.**

This information can be provided in the following ways:

- on the product e.g. on a label where there is packaging; attached to packaging or visible through packaging.
- on a notice. The information can be given on a notice that is close to the product or on the shelf edge.

**If food is prepared in bulk and then packaged for future orders it is likely to be considered to be prepacked.**

Labels on pre-packed food must have:

- the name of the food.
- the quantitative ingredients declaration (QUID).
- a list of ingredients (including allergens, which need to be “highlighted”).
- the weight or volume of the food (net quantity).



- a 'best before' or 'use by' date.
- the name and address of the food business operator responsible for the food information.
- the alcoholic strength by volume (as a percentage) on drinks containing over 1.2% alcohol by volume.

ⓘ There are specific rules about how the information must be displayed ([See your NCASS Due Diligence Manual](#)).



# 6.

## What do I need to know about online or telephone ordering and how do I ensure safe food collection and delivery?

### Taking online and/or telephone orders

#### General:

If you provide an online menu or order form, or advertise food for telephone orders, you must make sure that the customer can clearly understand what you are selling i.e. the product, the quantity and the price as well as all the relevant allergen information.

#### Managing allergens:

Allergen information must be provided:

- before the purchase is completed and
- at the point of delivery or collection.

#### Ordering

Where orders are taken by telephone or through a website, the business must provide the same level of clear and accurate allergen information as in a shop, market stall, pop up or restaurant.

To ensure that requests for 'allergen free' meals are properly handled the business must make sure that:

- all staff taking telephone orders are trained to handle such requests. It may also be helpful to train staff to ask customers if they or any of their party have any allergies or intolerances at the start of the ordering process.
- online order forms have a highlighted section that asks for information about allergies and intolerances.
- there is a statement on the website telling customers where they can find allergen information.

⚠ *For further details on handling allergen free requests see Appendix 13.*

### Delivery or collection

Allergen information must be provided with the food. The business must decide the most practical way to do this e.g. through the product label or through an advisory sheet.

The information must be accurate, clear and easy to see.

### Safe collection and delivery

#### Hygiene requirements:

It is essential to make sure that all food delivered to customers, or collected by customers is safe, is what it says it is and is fit to eat.

The hygiene controls to ensure this will have been identified in your updated online NCASS Food Safety Risk Assessment.

Summarising the food safety elements this means following the 4 C's, that is:

- Keep it at the right temperature (2 Cs here – Cooking and Chilling).
- Hot above 63°C or Cold below 8°C.

For delivery you will need suitable, clean insulated containers to maintain the correct temperature during transportation. You will need to set up a system to monitor temperature during transportation e.g. use of infra-red thermometer to test temperature at pick up



and at delivery. Written records should be kept of temperature monitoring.

Delivery routes should be kept short to help to maintain safe temperatures.

For collection you will need to make sure that food is held at the correct temperature until the customer has arrived to pick it up. This can be managed by allocating collection times, which will also help with social distancing requirements.

## Keep it clean

- Hygienically stored, suitable, single use food safe packaging and containers will be essential to maintaining good food hygiene.
- Insulated containers, designed for food use, will need to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between delivery rounds.
- Delivery vehicles will need to be kept in a clean and hygienic condition.

## Avoid cross-contamination

- This will apply throughout food production as well as during transportation.
- Suitable food safe packaging and containers will be needed to protect food from contamination risks.
- Separate insulated containers will need to be used for raw and cooked foods.
- Any non-food items will need to be separated from foodstuffs.
- If an allergen-free meal has been ordered, it should be clear when delivered which container it is in. It should be transported in a separate insulated container from other foods.

## Public health requirements

- The Covid-19 control documents address issues around delivery safety in terms of driver hygiene, and social distancing practices and these must be read alongside the hygiene and safety requirements in this document.

⚠ **Please see Appendix 2 (Covid-19 Controls Document and supplementary guidance on Safe deliveries).**

## Other requirements

Businesses will need to check that all delivery vehicles are insured for commercial use and are in a roadworthy condition. This will be particularly important where drivers use their own private vehicles.

Businesses may also wish to carry out other checks as to driver competence and suitability. These are outside the scope of this document.



# Assessing existing food premises suitability for change to takeaway/collection or delivery service.

## Proposed Food Offer

Food(s)	Maximum daily quantity (portions)	Hot hold for collection/delivery (Y/N)	Cook chill for reheating (Y/N)	Cook freeze for collection or delivery (Y/N)	Other process e.g. vacuum packing, sous vide. Please specify

## Premises & Equipment Assessment

General Requirements	Yes	No
Good, well organised (linear) workflow, to minimise cross contamination risks		
Adequate workspace to allow safe food production e.g. separation of raw and cooked foods during storage, preparation, production, service or collection		
Adequate space to allow good allergen management		
Separation of clean and dirty activities e.g. high risk food prep and washup and waste disposal		
Adequate space to meet operational needs and social distancing requirements		
Sufficient hand wash provision		
Adequate storage areas		
Sufficient refrigeration for storage		
Sufficient freezer storage provision for operations e.g. storage or for cook-freeze		
<b>Specialist operations</b>		
Blast chiller- for cook chill operations		
Blast freezer- for cook freeze operations		
Sous-vide machine		
Vacuum packer		

# Coronavirus & Covid-19

## My Covid-19 Controls

### Special Measures Procedures

This document is an updated version of the NCASS COVID-19 Compliance pack and describes general practices and procedures to reduce the risks of your staff and customers catching Covid-19 whilst working in or using your food business.

This document has been produced by NCASS and is in line with Government requirements (NCASS will provide updates to keep it current).

You need to check that you are able to carry out the recommended practices detailed in this document. If they do not suit your particular operation (premises) and ways of working you must contact your NCASS Account Manager for advice on alternative arrangements.

Unless these or similar measures are in place the risk of Covid-19 infection will not be controlled and trading is likely to be prohibited.

**N.B:** This document is in addition to other policies and procedures contained within the NCASS Due Diligence system.

### How to use this guidance

**N.B:** This document is in addition to other policies and procedures contained within the NCASS Due Diligence system.

This document should be easily accessible to you and your team as well as EHOs or Relevant Authorities who should want to check that you have put special measures in place to ensure that you are trading safely.

**Please read each statement and fill in the tick box after each one to confirm that you are operating within these parameters.**

**N.B:** If you are not able to trade following this advice or any equivalent, please do not trade - the potential consequences are too great to take this risk.

### Your working practices

#### General Statement:

My food business implements measures to reduce the risk of staff and customers becoming infected with the Covid-19 virus.

These control measures are based on a Covid-19 risk assessment, produced by our Trade Association NCASS and are in-line with Government requirements. They are updated when requirements and advice from statutory bodies or NCASS change.

We have checked the measures outlined in this document to make sure they fully apply to our business and where they do not, we have made appropriate updates within this document.

We also display a short version of these controls, our "customer notice", in a prominent place so that our customers can see what we are doing and what we would like them to do to help us control Covid-19 infection risks.

**The end of this document contains practical resources for you to use.**



### Hygiene & my food premises:

Our staff have been trained to pay extra attention to keeping our premises clean and hygienic. In addition to cleaning and sanitising food contact areas, equipment and utensils, we pay special attention to areas likely to be touched by staff and customers e.g. collection points.

These hand contact areas are frequently sanitised. We have updated our cleaning schedules to make sure that we use the right chemicals properly to kill both bacteria and viruses.

### Personal Hygiene:

In order to reduce the risk of Covid-19 infection and to maintain good standards of food hygiene, our staff, including those doing deliveries, have been trained to wash their hands regularly and thoroughly, in line with Government guidance.

A notice that reminds staff about how to wash their hands thoroughly is posted near hand wash basins and in staff toilet areas (see [handwashing poster in the Practical Resources section](#)).

Our staff avoid touching the face, mouth, eyes and nose to reduce the risk of infection transfer. If they accidentally touch any of these areas, they will immediately wash their hands thoroughly.

We make sure that our staff have clean uniforms. Reusable uniforms will be washed at a minimum of 60°C unless this is not suitable for the material. In such cases we will use a suitable laundry sanitiser in the process.

### Ventilation:

We will keep doors and windows open whenever possible, to move any coronavirus droplets, produced by infected people, outside, limiting transmission possibilities

### Illness reporting and controls:

Our staff have been made aware of the symptoms of Covid-19 infection and the need to report details to their employer if they or a member of their household have symptoms.

If they have a new continuous cough or a high temperature or these symptoms are present in a member of their household, they will not be allowed to come to work.

We have a system in place to allow staff members to report symptoms of illness, or illness in their household, without attending work.

If any staff show such symptoms at work, they will immediately be sent home and the premises will be temporarily closed for thorough cleaning, in line with Public Health guidance (see [Deep Cleaning Guidance in the Practical Resources section](#)).

In addition, we will seek advice from our Local Authority or NCASS on the need to quarantine any other staff members who may have been in close contact with an infected staff member at work.

Staff with symptoms of Covid-19 infection will not be allowed back to work for a minimum of 10 days (from the day after their symptoms began) and where there is a member of their household showing symptoms they will not be allowed back to work for a minimum of 10 days from the day after symptoms began.

**N.B:** Any person testing positive for Covid-19 or identified as close contact of an infected person will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will be told the start and finish dates for their self-isolation. If a person testing positive has not shown any symptoms the period will be 10 days, starting the day after they took their test. Self-isolation is the main way to prevent viral spread and is a **LEGAL REQUIREMENT**. Failure to self-isolate is punishable by a fine.



### Social Distancing:

#### Our Staff

Unless our staff are members of the same household, we will have rearranged our ways of working to keep them physically separated i.e. 2 metres apart (or 1 metre plus, with additional controls). This applies to work on our premises and to travel to and from work i.e. we require staff not to share a private vehicle, unless they are members of the same household.

#### Our Customers

##### Ordering

Wherever possible we ask our customers to pre-order their food. This allows us to arrange a collection time, manage the number of people on site and maintain social distancing.

##### Payments

In order to limit the risk of Covid-19 infection we ask our customers to pay for their food by contactless means e.g. by card or other digital payment system. Where keypads are used for payment, they will be thoroughly sanitised between customers.

If cash handling is necessary, our staff have been trained to thoroughly wash their hands between transactions.

##### Collection

Where possible we give customers an allotted collection time have a queuing system and ask customers to maintain a separation distance of 2 metres from each other. We have arrangements in place to assist customers to do this.

We ask all our customers to avoid direct contact with our staff. Food and drink orders will be put in bags when ready and placed at a collection point, which will be frequently cleaned and sanitised. Customers will be called up to collect their food when it is ready.

#### Delivery

Our delivery drivers have been trained to maintain high standards of hygiene e.g., thorough handwashing before and after delivery and to maintain physical separation from others during delivery (social distancing). They wear appropriate PPE when conducting their work: gloves if they have to pass food to customers.

Our drivers will ideally place an order outside a customer's door, alert the customer and step back to maintain physical separation. (See [Safe Deliveries in the Practical Resources section](#))

We ask our customers to maintain a separation distance of 2 metres from delivery staff.

#### Assessing risk

These controls are set out in our Risk Assessment (see the [Practical Resources section](#)).



# Covid-19 Compliance Statement

By signing this document, I confirm that I have made sure that my business operates in accordance with the Special measures procedures, and the linked Risk Assessment, current at the time of signing

**I have:**

- Read and understood the Covid-19 - Special Measures Procedures Version 3 released by NCASS 05/2021
- Carried out a risk assessment based on the NCASS generic Covid-19 virus risk assessment matrix. In doing so I have made sure that the required controls are suitable for my business/ businesses. Where controls are not suitable, I have consulted NCASS and/or my Local Authority in order to identify appropriate alternatives.
- Fully implemented the control measures and staff have been trained in their use.
- Posted a summary of the controls in place to reduce the risk of Covid-19 infection (the NCASS Customer Notice) in a prominent place so that customers are aware of what we are doing to keep them safe and how they can help us to do so.

**I will make sure that:**

- There will always be a responsible person in the premises during working hours to ensure that the necessary Covid-19 control measures, as well as food safety controls, are implemented.
- Staff are regularly reminded of the controls and the importance of following them.
- All new staff are trained in the controls before starting work.
- Any changes to the controls, identified by NCASS or my Local Authority are implemented.
- All staff are trained to level 2 Food Hygiene and in the measures outlined in this document.
- All persons working on the unit receive additional training in the safe washing of hands and additional sanitising measures.
- A copy of the revised NCASS Covid-19 customer statement has been placed in a prominent position for all customers to see.
- A Hand Wash and/or Hand Sanitising poster is clearly visible and is close by to the wash hand basin

Signed .....

Position .....

Date .....

# Covid-19 – Deep Cleaning

## Public Health England Guidance

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed coronavirus may have visited (COVID-19) is disposable gloves and an apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.

If a risk assessment of the setting indicates that a higher level of virus may be present (for example, where unwell individuals have slept such as a hotel room or boarding school dormitory) or there is visible contamination with body fluids, then the need for additional PPE to protect the cleaner's eyes, mouth and nose might be necessary.

### Cleaning and disinfection

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.

All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including:

- Objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids.
- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells.

Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options below:

- use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine

or

- a household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants

or

- if an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

Avoid creating splashes and spray when cleaning.

Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.

When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.

Any items that are heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of.



### Laundry

Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other people's items.

Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing the virus through the air.

Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above.

### Waste

Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues):

Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full.

The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied.

It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known.

Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours.

- if the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste.
- if the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste.

If storage for at least 72 hours is not appropriate, arrange for collection as a Category B infectious waste either by your local waste collection authority.

If they currently collect your waste, or otherwise by a specialist clinical waste contractor. They will supply you with orange clinical waste bags for you to place your bags into so the waste can be sent for appropriate treatment.

# Safe Deliveries

## Limiting Covid-19 transmission risk

### Delivery

#### Social distancing

- Social distancing is necessary between delivery drivers and food production staff as well as between drivers and those taking in the delivery.
- As a starting point food production staff should pack completed dishes in suitable containers, then place them in a plastic bag. Bags should be placed in clean, insulated delivery containers, at the required temperature.

**N.B:** The exact temperature will be identified in the Businesses' Food safety Risk assessment (within the DD Food safety Management system)

- The insulated containers should then be placed in a suitable pick up area so that delivery drivers can collect them whilst maintaining a distance of 2 metres from others.
- On arrival at the delivery address the driver should remove the order, in its plastic bag, from the insulated box and take it to a pre-agreed delivery point e.g. a front doorstep.
- Once placed at the delivery point the driver should step back and alert the customer of its arrival e.g. by phone call, text, WhatsApp etc.
- Payment should not be taken at the door and where possible should be taken electronically at the order stage. Suitable PPE, hand washing facilities and training should be implemented in the case of cash handling to avoid all possible contamination by money.

#### Personal hygiene of delivery drivers

- Drivers must be trained in good handwashing. When arriving to pick up a delivery they should thoroughly wash their hands and dry them. The Business may choose to require drivers to wear gloves as customers may appreciate this.
- If gloves are worn drivers must be trained in putting them on, after hand washing, and taking them off, after the final delivery, so that they avoid transferring any potential contamination to themselves.
- Even if gloves are worn social distancing must still be maintained and drivers must still avoid touching their face.
- On return to base hands must be washed after glove removal if they have been worn.
- If gloves are not worn the business should provide drivers with an alcohol hand sanitiser (with an alcohol content of at least 60+%) and train them in how and when to sanitise their hands e.g. immediately before a delivery and straight after a delivery.

COVID-19 Controls

# Practical Resources

# Covid-19 Virus Risk Assessment

This Risk Assessment is an overview of Covid-19 specific hazards (risks) and shows the way in which they can be controlled, monitored and corrected.

This is a dynamic document which means that you must regularly review the contents and make changes when your business operations and processes change, or legal requirements change. The risk assessment must accurately reflect the way that you are operating your business.

Parts of this Risk Assessment are editable. This is to allow the matrix to fully recognise different types of business and because advice and regulations from Government may change over time.

Look out for the editable areas - they will be the **blue boxes**. There is additional space within each hazard for you to fill in additional controls specific to your business. You will see that there is also a blank part of the table for you to use if you need to add additional hazards to the Risk Assessment that are specific to your business.

We have also added an 'Evidence' column to this Risk Assessment, this is because you will most likely be asked to show what your Covid-19 hazards are, how you are controlling them and any evidence of this. For example, with the hazard; 'contamination of premises or equipment', one of the controls is 'thorough cleaning and disinfection/sanitising of premises', your evidence here could be your cleaning record.

## Terminology:

**Hazard** - this is anything that could be deemed a risk to you, your staff and the public.

**Controls** – this is what you are doing to manage this hazard, i.e.: to make sure you are reducing the risk of a specific hazard as much as possible.

**Evidence** – this is made up from the records you keep, e.g.: cleaning logs, staff sickness logs, COSHH assessment, training records etc. If these are completed carefully and regularly they can show that you are controlling the potential hazards.

**Corrective Action** – these are the steps you take to make sure hazards are kept under control e.g.: a member of your staff may need to be re-trained to make sure they are following your work procedures to reduce the risks of specific hazards.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Disclaimer:

NCASS issued this editable Risk Assessment on 26/05/21 to NCASS members. It must be used in conjunction with your food safety management system and high standards of hygiene and hand washing and any additional information specific to your business must be added by you in the spaces provided.

Hazard / Risk	Controls	Evidence	Monitoring	Corrective Action
Viral transfer from staff	<p><b>Good personal hygiene</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff instructed in the need to avoid touching the face, mouth, eyes and nose and to avoid direct skin contact with others during work.</li> <li>• Staff trained to frequently and thoroughly wash their hands</li> </ul> <p><b>Social distancing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working practices rearranged to allow staff separation of metres e.g. fixed workstations, access to common equipment separated by time and sanitising of common touch areas between usage</li> <li>• Staff trained in new procedures</li> <li>• Staff advised about need to travel to work and for work in separate vehicles</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B:</b> Social distancing requirements do not apply to members of the same household</p> <p><b>Face coverings</b></p> <p>Face coverings to be worn indoors by both staff and customers unless seated at tables to eat and drink</p>		Responsible person monitors procedures and practices to ensure that controls are properly implemented	<p>In the case of control failures, procedures reviewed and amended as necessary</p> <p>Staff retrained as necessary</p>

Hazard Risk	Controls	Evidence	Monitoring	Corrective Action
<p>Contamination of premises or equipment</p>	<p><b>Cleaning schedules reviewed and updated, and staff trained in enhanced cleaning procedures to ensure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough cleaning and disinfection/sanitising of premises</li> <li>• Frequent use of Viricidal chemicals to sanitise high risk areas e.g. common touch points such as light switches, door handles etc. and Customer touch areas such as Collection points.</li> <li>• Keyboards such as for card readers wiped down after each use  <b>N.B:</b> Sanitiser cloths capable of killing viruses should be used to avoid damage from quantities of liquid</li> </ul> <p><b>Ventilation optimized</b></p> <p>Doors and windows opened to give good airflow</p>		<p>Responsible person monitors procedures and practices to ensure that controls are properly implemented</p>	<p>In the case of control failures, procedures reviewed and amended as necessary</p> <p>Staff retrained as necessary</p>

Hazard Risk	Controls	Evidence	Monitoring	Corrective Action
<p>Presence of staff with Covid-19 symptoms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System in place to report suspected infection without attending workplace e.g. by phone/ email etc.</li> <li>• System in place for staff to report positive Covid-19 tests or identification as a close contact of an infected person</li> <li>• Staff informed about requirement to report any illness with Covid-19 like symptoms i.e. new continuous cough and/or high temperature affecting them or a member of their household</li> <li>• Staff reporting symptoms of illness required to self-isolate for days or for days where a member of their household has symptoms, even if the staff member appears well</li> <li>• System in place to immediately exclude (send home) any member of staff showing signs of COVID-19 infection at work</li>   <li>• In the case of a member of staff showing symptoms at work, or reporting testing positive, the premises will be closed temporarily to allow decontamination in accordance with Public health guidelines (<i>Details provided in the Covid-19 controls pack</i>)</li> <li>• Consideration of the risk of contamination of other members of staff</li> <li>• Consultation with Local Authority to determine appropriate action in line with Government guidelines</li> </ul>		<p>Responsible person monitors procedures and practices to ensure that controls are properly implemented</p>	<p>In the case of control failures, procedures reviewed and amended as necessary</p> <p>Staff retrained as necessary</p>

Hazard Risk	Controls	Evidence	Monitoring	Corrective Action
Contamination by money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of contactless payment systems wherever possible.</li> <li>• In cases where cash handling is necessary staff trained to thoroughly wash hands between transactions. 2 metre separation distance maintained throughout</li> </ul>		Responsible person monitors procedures and practices to ensure that controls are properly implemented	<p>In the case of control failures, procedures reviewed and amended as necessary</p> <p>Staff retrained as necessary</p>

Hazard Risk	Controls	Evidence	Monitoring	Corrective Action
<p>Viral transfer from customer to customer or customer to staff</p>	<p><b>Order collection</b> <b>Social distancing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food pre-ordered to allow collection times to be spread out, limiting customer presence at any one time</li> <li>• Queuing system. Controls to separate customers by metres</li> <li>• Call forward for collection to allow staff to step back as customer approaches to pay/collect food</li> </ul> <p><b>Delivery</b> <b>Social distancing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System to maintain separation distance e.g. food placed on doorstep, delivery driver steps back, alerting customer to arrival of food, whilst maintaining a metre separation distance</li> </ul>		<p>Responsible person monitors procedures and practices to ensure that controls are properly implemented</p>	<p>In the case of control failures, procedures reviewed and amended as necessary</p> <p>Staff retrained as necessary</p>

<b>Hazard Risk</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>	<b>Corrective Action</b>

## Coronavirus (COVID-19)

# Handwashing techniques

### Do

- ✓ wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- ✓ always wash your hands when you get home or into work
- ✓ use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- ✓ cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- ✓ put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- ✓ try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell

### Don't

- ✗ do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean

## Handwashing technique with soap and water



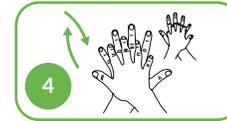
Wet hands with water;



Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



Rub hands palm to palm;



Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



Rinse hands with water;



Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



Use towel to turn off faucet;



Your hands are now safe.

## Alcohol handrub hand hygiene technique

(containing at least 60% alcohol) for visibly clean hands



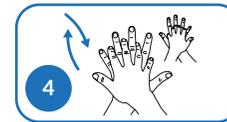
Apply a small amount of the product (about 3ml) into a cupped hand;



Apply enough to cover all hand surfaces;



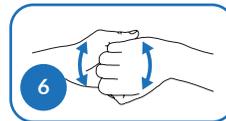
Rub hands palm to palm;



Rub back of each hand with the palm of the other hand with fingers interlaced;



Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Rub backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlaced;



Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand using rotational movement;



Rub tips of fingers in opposite palm in a circular motion;



When dry, your hands are now safe.

Government advice:

[www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public)

NHS advice:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19)

# Customer Notice

We are working to keep people safe during this challenging time whilst still providing amazing food. To help us to do so we have put some Special Measures in place.

- 1. We have increased our cleaning and disinfection routines. We frequently sanitise customer touch areas such as Collection points**
- 2. Our staff pay particular attention to thorough hand washing and avoid touching their face, nose or mouth**
- 3. We have strict procedures in place to prevent staff with any signs of Covid-19 infection from working**

**Please help us to keep you safe by:**

- 4. Pre-ordering your food by phone or online**
- 5. Paying for your order through contactless systems e.g. by card or secure digital systems such as PayPal or Apple pay. Where this is not possible, we have implemented measures for the safe handling of cash**
- 6. Respecting our queuing system for collection, designed to keep customers 2 metres apart**
- 7. Maintaining a separation distance of 2 metres from our staff by only moving up to the Collection point when called forward**

Thank you for your help to keep us all safe

# COVID-19: Mobile caterers and street trading

The Local Government Association (LGA) has been approached by The Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS) asking for councils to take a flexible approach regarding the operation of mobile caterers, many of whom fall outside the scope of various business support schemes established by the Government.

While a small proportion of NCASS's members operate from fixed pitches for which they hold street trading licence, the vast majority usually operate at seasonal festivals and events which have now been cancelled.

To preserve their businesses and livelihoods, many of these caterers are now looking to operate within or near to the areas where they are resident, to serve both the public and those involved in the emergency response. NCASS is on the NHS procurement list for catering provision during COVID-19 in England and some of its members have been asked to provide a food service for hospitals and resilience teams, with requests being made on a regular basis.

Clearly, councils will want to avoid any unregistered food businesses setting up operations, as well as being assured that any pre-registered food businesses newly operating in their area has the appropriate food and safety measures and registrations in place. NCASS have advised that they have an online platform called Connect which can help provide this information to councils.

Councils will also want to be assured that food businesses are following social distancing measures, and are not operating in a way that encourages people to congregate. Many councils have advised that operating delivery and takeaway services through pre-orders only, defined as operating as a 'roundsman' under street trading legislation and outside the scope of the requirements, would be a sensible route for these food businesses to take to help ensure this.

We are aware that in some areas there have been tensions between food businesses that normally operate in the local area, and mobile caterers seeking to do so as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, which is something that councils will clearly need to balance. We have advised NCASS that the most important thing that their members can do is to engage with the relevant council about how they are seeking to operate and where from. Pragmatic steps that councils could take if it is possible to do so include:

- Consideration of when and where street trading licences are required and what flexibilities there may be around this, including:
  - what may constitute operating from private land [1], particularly where the business is there at the request of the owner, and
  - whether existing licence holders could temporarily switch their locations.
- The option of short-term licences or approvals.
- Expedited consideration of applications for licences where these are required.

On the issue of fees for relevant licences, the LGA's broader licensing guidance sets out some of the approaches councils are taking. While it is unlikely to be possible to offer refunds or waive fees entirely, there may be scope for councils to consider extending the length of existing licences where a business with a street trading licence has been unable to trade for a period during the COVID-19 emergency; however, this will be for each individual council to determine based on local circumstances.

[1] Whilst acknowledging the principles set out in case law (*West Berkshire DC v Paine* [2009] EWHC 422 (Admin))

# Premises

Good design and construction can help the food business deliver safe food. However, poor design and construction can make it much harder for a business to produce food safely. The food business must ensure that the premises are kept in good condition and repair.

Location of equipment and workflow in the food business must be planned to facilitate safe production of food.

## Design & Layout

The layout, design and size of the premises must be arranged so that:

- Storage areas and equipment are easily accessible and do not create a cross contamination risk.
- The workflow physically separates ready-to-eat foods and raw foods, wherever possible. Where this is not possible, planned time separation and two-stage cleaning are in place between preparation of different food types.
- Adequate cleaning and disinfection can be carried out. Equipment is movable where possible to allow easy access to all parts.
- Dirt cannot accumulate. Sharp edges where grease and dirt can get trapped are avoided (floor/ wall junctions are covered)
- There is no possible contact with toxic materials, the shedding of particles into food and the formation of condensation or undesirable mould on surfaces.

## 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. The following types are considered generally acceptable:

- Smooth washable painted plaster.
- Direct fixed-ceiling systems

- Suspended ceilings.

At temporary events where marquees or tents are used, the structure must fully cover the top of the food business and must be made of clean, flame retardant materials.

If a food business has a ceiling that is different to the above, it is likely that they will not meet legal requirements, therefore the FBO should contact their NCASS account manager to discuss their arrangements.

## Doors

Doors must be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfect. This will require the use of smooth and non-absorbent surfaces. Suitable surfaces include:

- Wood (must be painted with washable paint or water-proofed with varnish or similar)
- Stainless steel.
- Plastic or panelling.

Any glass panels must be toughened glass.

Doors must fit closely in the frame to form a barrier against dust and pests.

To reduce Covid-19 transmission risks doors and windows should be kept open whilst the premises are occupied to optimize air flow. To prevent insect ingress screens may need to be fitted.

## Walls

Walls must be maintained in a sound condition and must be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfect.



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. Suitable surfaces include:

- Glass reinforced polyester (GRP)
- Resin-bonded fibreglass or fibreglass-reinforced plastic panelling fixed directly to the walls.
- Epoxy resin and similar coatings.
- Washable painted plaster.
- Stainless steel sheeting.
- PVC.
- Ceramic tiles.

Corners should be physically protected from impact damage by the use of bumper strips and corner beading. Door stops and kick plates may also be required.

At temporary events where marquees or tents are used, the structure must cover most sides of the food business area with openings as required (i.e. the front side open to serve customers) and the walls of the unit must be made of clean, flame retardant materials.

If a food business has walls that are different to the above, it is likely that they will not meet legal requirements, therefore the FBO should contact their NCASS Account Manager to discuss their arrangements.

### Pipe work / ducting

Pipe work and ducting should be bracketed away from walls so as to allow access for cleaning. Where a pipe passes through a wall or ceiling it should be sealed.

### Floors

Floor surfaces must be maintained in good 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.

Suitable surfaces include:

- Vinyl safety flooring.
- Resin flooring.
- Flooring tiles made of vinyl or ceramic.

At temporary events where marquees or tents are used food, preparation areas must have some sort of flooring provided. If the flooring is of a continuous nature, it must be of a type that is easily cleaned and be free from tears and snags. If boarding is used, then it must be of a non-slip, easily cleanable type preferably made from a plastic or a nylon type material.

Where appropriate, floors must allow adequate surface drainage.

If a food business has floors that are different to the above, it is likely that they will not meet legal requirements, therefore the FBO should contact their NCASS account manager to discuss their arrangements.

### Hatches, windows and vents

Hatches and other openings must be constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt.

Those which can be opened to the outside environment must (where necessary) be fitted with insect-proof screens which can be easily removed for cleaning.

To reduce Covid-19 transmission risks doors, hatches and windows should be kept open whilst the premises are occupied to optimize air flow. To prevent insect ingress screens may need to be fitted.

### Surfaces

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

Suitable surfaces include:

- Stainless steel
- Laminated kitchen work top



### Toilets

Access to an adequate number of flush lavatories and associated hand wash facilities must be available and connected to an effective drainage system. Lavatories must not lead directly into rooms where food is handled.

All sanitary conveniences within food premises shall be provided with adequate natural or mechanical ventilation.

At markets and events, the FBO/Responsible Person must make sure that the location of the toilets is known and whether there are toilets provided for the sole use of food handlers (and other workers) on the site.

### Food Washing

Adequate provision must be made for any necessary washing of food.

If there is a dedicated food wash sink, then it does not need hot water but must have an adequate supply of cold potable water. If there is no space for a dedicated food sink, one sink can be used for both food and equipment. However, food must not come into contact with the sink and it must be placed in a colander or similar. Between different uses, the sink must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

At markets and events where potable water is likely to be scarce food washing should be done prior to arrival on-site.

### Wash hand basins

An adequate number of wash hand basins must be available, suitably located (so as to be readily accessible to food handlers e.g. close to the entrance to the kitchen and close to where high risk food handling takes place) and specifically designated for cleaning hands.

Wash hand basins must be provided with a readily available supply of hot and cold (or appropriately mixed) running water, soap (preferably liquid) for cleaning hands and a method of hygienic drying i.e. disposable towels. Alcohol gels are not acceptable on their own but can be used as a supplement to hand washing. All staff must be aware of the

need to dry their hands thoroughly.

If taps are not hands free, food handlers must be advised to use the disposable paper towels to turn off the tap.

All fixed premises must have an immovable wash hand basin with suitable drainage.

Tea urns (boilers) are not an acceptable method of providing hot water for hand washing as the water is generally boiling hot.

The use of bowls to mix water in for hand washing is not an acceptable method of hand washing because;

- It is not effective for hand hygiene as water needs to run over hands to physically facilitate the washing away of dirt and micro-organisms.
- Without continuous management, the water in the bowls is used more than once, which means people are not using clean water to wash their hands, and
- With regards to Health & Safety, the transferring of water into bowls increases the risk of scalding and of slips due to spills.

Where a 'plumbed' in basin is not possible, portable, purpose built sealed units, such as Teal© basins, which can supply a stream of warm water and do not need frequent filling/emptying must be supplied and used.

### Low-risk or fully wrapped foods

The only exception to the above is when only low-risk foods such as biscuits, sweets, olives, etc. are for sale and utensils are always used for handling food, or where all the food is fully wrapped. In such cases, a wash hand basin may not be justified and the use of antiseptic wipes (must meet BS EN 1500) and/or disposable gloves may be used as an alternative along with methods of ensuring minimal contact with food i.e. tongs, spoons, double bagging.

The business should discuss whether this approach is suitable for them with their NCASS Account Manager or LA before commencing the business.



If a food business does not have access to its own wash hand basin, the FBO/Responsible Person must ensure that at every location the business trades, there will be access to clean and suitable wash hand facilities (supplied with warm running water, soap and hygienic method of hand drying) for their food handlers following use of the toilet.

### Ventilation

There must be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. The ambient temperature should be approx 25°C or below. Natural ventilation will only be suitable in small premises with limited cooking.

Mechanical airflow from a contaminated area (washing up or waste) to a clean area must be avoided.

Filters and other parts requiring cleaning or replacement must be readily accessible.

To reduce Covid-19 transmission risks airflow should be optimized.

### Drainage

Drainage facilities must be adequate for the purpose intended. They must be designed and constructed to avoid the risk of contamination of foodstuffs.

### Equipment Cleaning

Adequate facilities must be provided for the cleaning and disinfecting of work tools and equipment. This could include sinks, glass washers and dishwashers.

These facilities must be constructed of materials resistant to corrosion and must be easy to clean and have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. There must also be appropriate drying/draining space.

If the business handles both raw and ready to eat foods, particular attention will need to be given to ensure that there is no cross-contamination of equipment.

At markets and events where potable water is likely to be scarce, the FBO/Responsible Person will need to plan what equipment will need to be washed throughout the day and what can be stored for washing at the end of days trade (such as back at home). If there is a lack of facilities for equipment cleaning, the business will need to ensure it has enough equipment such as tongs, spoons, knives to replace items as they get dirty, or if there is an accident and equipment is dropped or broken.

### Lighting

Food premises must have adequate natural and/ or artificial lighting which is appropriate for use in food premises.

Lighting must be bright enough to allow for safe food handling, facilitate good cleaning in all areas and easy monitoring of pest activity.

Glass lights must be protected to prevent breakage. Shatter-proof designs or diffusers should be used.

### Changing facilities and personal items

Adequate changing facilities should be provided in relation to the type of business and level of protective clothing required.

If food is handled and full chefs whites need to be put on, then a secure changing area must be provided. If drinks and wrapped foods only are being served with only aprons worn, then full changing facilities would not be necessary.

Where there is not a secure changing area with secure lockers, then space must be provided for clothes and personal items to be stored where they will not contaminate food.

During the Coronavirus pandemic shared areas such as changing rooms must be closed. Staff should come changed ready for work. Work clothes must be protected from contamination when travelling to work.



### Conveyances and Containers

Conveyances and containers used for storing or transporting foodstuffs must be kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition in order to protect foodstuffs from contamination.

They must where necessary be designed and constructed to permit adequate cleaning and disinfection.

They must not be used for transporting anything other than foodstuffs where this may result in contamination of foodstuffs. There must be effective separation of products, where necessary, to protect against the risk of contamination and effective cleaning and disinfection between loads. All containers must be suitable for food use.

### Public Areas

Public areas, if applicable, must be kept clean, tidy and free from hazards that are likely to cause injury.



# Cleaning

All work areas, including surfaces and structures, must be kept clean. The level of cleaning required must be assessed by the responsible person and set out in a cleaning schedule.

**N.B:** Appendix 6 deals specifically with Effective cleaning for Coronavirus (Covid-19) inactivation

Effective cleaning must achieve both the standards set for Covid-19 inactivation and the food hygiene requirements

## Definitions

Cleaning is the process by which dirt, grease, food particles and general soiling are removed.

A **detergent** is a chemical which helps to dissolve grease and remove dirt.

A **disinfectant** is a chemical means of reducing bacteria to a safe level. Disinfectants must meet one of the following standards BS EN 1276: or BS EN 13697.

A **sanitiser** is a chemical which has both a detergent and a disinfectant in one solution and is able to clean and disinfect. When used as a single stage process sanitisers are only suitable as a clean as you go measure and not as a disinfection control that will remove bacterial contamination. Manufacturer's instructions must be followed.

## Clean as you go

Clean as you go means cleaning up spillages, equipment and soiling as they occur during work activities.

## Cleaning schedule

An appropriate cleaning schedule must be in place. It must include:

- What must be cleaned and when.
- Instructions for any preparation or dismantling/reassembling of equipment before and after cleaning.

- What is to be used e.g. hot water, detergent, disinfectant and any necessary dilution, contact time, rinsing, etc.
- Any personal protective equipment (PPE) needed e.g. use of gloves or wearing of goggles.
- Method of cleaning.
- Where appropriate, the job role or the person responsible.
- The food businesses cleaning schedule is located in the Daily Recording Diary including details of the disinfectant used and contact time.

Where possible these stages should be applied to washing up and the cleaning of equipment and work surfaces.

- **Pre-cleaning** removes initial dirt and loose surface materials.
- **Main cleaning** removes all debris and residues and will involve detergents to break down grease and heavy soiling.
- **Rinsing** in hot water to remove traces of detergents or chemical agents used.
- **Disinfecting** reduces bacteria to a safe level.
- **Final rinsing** removes all traces of disinfectant and prevents tainting of foods or transfer of tastes and smells.
- **Drying** removes the moisture from the final rinse process ➤

### The 6 stage cleaning process

#### Equipment and surfaces

Equipment in contact with food must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between being used for different foods. Surfaces must be cleaned and disinfected frequently as necessary, and prior to any food handling or change of food type.

#### Refrigerators

Refrigerators should be cleaned and disinfected at least once a week or as necessary i.e. if there has been a spill. Special attention should be paid to cleaning rubber door seals. Handles and surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day as necessary.

#### Floors

Floors must be cleaned and disinfected daily or as necessary i.e. if there has been a spill. Hidden areas, behind equipment, and under sinks and cupboards must be included.

#### Walls, doors & ceilings

Walls, doors and ceilings must be cleaned with an appropriate product as necessary. Cleaning of ceilings should take place first. For walls and doors, cleaning should start at the highest point and progress downwards

### Cleaning cloths

The use of disposable or semi-disposable cloths is recommended and they must be changed regularly.

If the business uses reusable cloths, then these will be treated in the same way as disposable ones i.e. by only using them once. Once the cloth has been used, it will be placed in a designated bucket, bag or similar for dirty items and stored away from food. The cloths will then be laundered to 90°C, thoroughly dried, and stored in a clean place away from potential contamination ready for re-use.

When using cleaning cloths, care must be taken to prevent the spread of contamination from one surface to another. Colour coded cloths correctly used will assist in reducing the risk of cross contamination.

The British Institute of Cleaning Science use set out the colour code below. However, the business may wish to use colour coded cloths in a different way. Many coffee shops use yellow cloths for the coffee machine. If the business has adopted a colour code or similar for cleaning cloths, it is detailed in the *Daily Recording Diary*.



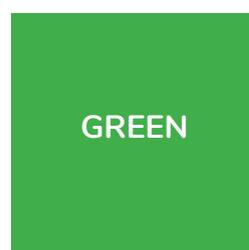
RED

High-Risk Areas/  
Restroom Cleaning  
(Toilets, Urinals)



BLUE

General Lower Risk  
Areas (Excluding  
Food Areas)



GREEN

Food Processing/  
Servicing General  
Food and Bar Use



YELLOW

Washbasins, Sinks,  
Cabinets and  
Other Washroom  
Surfaces



### **Cleaning equipment**

Cleaning materials such as mops and cloths must not be cleaned in a wash hand basin or food sink.

Cleaning equipment must be kept in good condition and repair so that they can effectively clean and be effectively cleaned themselves.

Where waste water from cleaning can only be disposed of in sinks used for washing food or cleaning tools and equipment, the sink must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before normal use recommences. Buckets should always be emptied after use to avoid stagnant water.

### **Chemical storage**

All chemicals must be stored where they cannot contaminate food. This may be in a separate area or at the bottom of a general storage area.



# Effective cleaning for Coronavirus (Covid-19) inactivation

## Cleaning for food safety

General cleaning and disinfection procedures are covered as part of the NCASS Due Diligence system and you may want to check to make sure that you have got everything in place for cleaning to remove food hygiene risks.

Rules for the use of cleaning chemicals such as correct dilution, correct contact time, following Manufactures instructions and use of disposable cloths etc. will apply no matter whether cleaning and disinfecting is for food safety or viral reduction reasons.

## Cleaning to remove Coronavirus contamination

Enhanced cleaning and disinfection (sanitising) is a necessary control to reduce the risk of Coronavirus contamination on surfaces.

Apart from increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfection (or sanitising) it is important to focus on the areas of greatest risk and to make sure the right chemicals are used for the job. Just because a cleaning or disinfection chemical will kill bacteria it does not mean that it can kill viruses.

## Identifying the riskiest areas for viral contamination

The new Coronavirus (Covid-19) is mainly spread by droplets from infected people i.e. through coughs and sneezes, but it can also be transferred by hands.

To reduce the risk of contamination transfer the key focus should be on places that are touched frequently by staff and/or by customers e.g. work surfaces, collection points, switches, door

handles, push plates on doors, toilets, hand towel dispensers, taps, electronic payment keypads etc.

## Frequency of cleaning and disinfection

### General

Whilst it is essential to regularly clean and disinfect the riskiest areas, the frequency will vary depending on activities and trade. Some things will need more regular disinfection than others e.g. electronic payment keypads should be disinfected with a sanitiser cloth (containing at least 60% alcohol) after every use.

In other cases the frequency of disinfection needed may be variable e.g. the more trade, the more potential contamination and so a greater requirement for cleaning and disinfection.

The food business operator (or Responsible person) will be best placed to make ongoing assessments of the need but as a general rule there should be an interval of no more than 2 hours between each cleaning and disinfection routine in "high touch" areas.

### High risk of contamination

If it is known that an infected member of staff has been working in the food business then all areas where they have been will need to be cleaned in line with the Public Health Guidance supplied as part of the Covid-19 controls pack [\(see Appendix 2\)](#)



### Suitable chemicals for Coronavirus inactivation

A number of chemicals, disinfectants and sanitisers, have been designed to inactivate viruses. They are generally known as virucides.

You should be able to find details of a product's effectiveness against viruses on its label.

Certain British/European Standards are indicators that the product can inactivate viruses e.g. BS EN 14476:2019 and BS EN 1276.

You should consult your supplier to obtain suitable virucidal chemicals.

If you are not able to obtain a specific chemical designed to inactivate viruses (as they may be in short supply due to the pandemic) an effective alternative is to:

1. Thoroughly clean surfaces with a suitable detergent to remove grease and dirt. After the contact time has passed, rinse with fresh water (unless instructed otherwise by the label)
2. Disinfect with a carefully prepared solution of sodium hypochlorite to give a concentration of 1000 ppm available chlorine (diluting as necessary following manufacturer instructions).

⚠ Use of household bleach, diluted 1:50 should have the same effect.

**BUT** it's important to dilute bleach with care as it is corrosive.

**To safely dilute any Corrosive or otherwise harmful substance you should first carry out a COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) risk assessment- it's a legal requirement.**

Whilst the following is not a substitute for a full COSHH assessment the likely controls would be:

Ensuring that the bleach is added to the water i.e. 1-part bleach to 49 parts water.

Carrying out the dilution in a well-ventilated room whilst wearing suitable personal protective equipment such as gloves, goggles and an apron.

Small scale cleaning can also be carried out using commercial sanitiser sprays, that are effective against viruses. These should be alcohol based with a minimum 60% alcohol content

### Documenting change and training

Where chemicals have changed or are used in a different way the Business must update its COSHH assessment, provide relevant Personal Protective Equipment to staff and train them in the new systems.

As the necessary changes to cleaning and disinfection are put into practice it will be important to make sure the Businesses' Cleaning Schedule is updated and staff trained in new systems.



# Food Storage

Keeping food in the right place in the business and using correct food storage products is essential to protect food safety, minimise food waste and ensure optimum food preservation.

Any food business needs good food storage which may include dedicated store rooms, shelving and storage racks, walk in fridges and freezers, ingredient bins, flour buckets and smaller food containers.

Foods must only be stored in food grade containers. Items such as domestic bins, plastic washing up tubs and carrier bags are not suitable for food storage even when new.

## Dry food storage

Food businesses generally have ambient food products that they need to store which may include ingredients such as flour, salt, herbs and spices, or ready to eat foods such as crisps, condiments and biscuits.

- To maintain the quality of the products, food should be kept in dry, well ventilated storage areas. Where foods must be kept in the main food prep/kitchen area, the food needs to be stored away from sources of moisture such as splash zones around sinks/wash hand basins or above steaming kettles/saucepans.
- Food should not be stored directly on the floor. For heavy items or large sacks of goods, pallets can be used to keep the food off the floor.
- Fruit and vegetables that are not stored in a fridge should be stored so that they are protected from contamination, whilst still allowing good air circulation.
- Cleaning materials should be kept in separate storage areas. Where cleaning materials and chemicals are stored in

the same area as food, they must so that they will not contaminate foods i.e. on the bottom shelf.

- Stock must be rotated. In general the 'First in, First Out' principle should be applied but dates on products also be checked to ensure the product with the shortest shelf life are at the front.
- Loose foods must be stored in rodent proof containers.
- Fruit and vegetables that are not stored in a fridge should be stored so that they are protected from contamination, whilst still allowing good air circulation.
- Cleaning materials should be kept in separate storage areas. Where cleaning materials and chemicals are stored in the same area as food, they must so that they will not contaminate foods i.e. on the bottom shelf.



## Refrigerated storage

Most food businesses will have chilled items that they need to store such as raw meats, fish and poultry, dairy products, cooked rice and ready to eat meats such as ham.

Where possible, the food business should purchase and use commercial refrigerators. Commercial fridges are designed for much more frequent use. A domestic fridge might only be opened a dozen times a day, whereas a commercial fridge could be constantly being opened over the course of a few hours. Commercial fridges feature powerful compressors, much sturdier construction and are often fan assisted that ensure that the temperature recovers after each opening.

- High risk foods must be stored in a refrigerator. This includes foods that are marked with a 'use by' date.
- Where possible raw food should be stored in a separate fridge to ready to eat food, but where this is not practical, then all ready to eat foods must be stored on shelves above any raw food to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- The holding temperature of fridges must be checked daily and recorded in the businesses' Daily Recording Diary.
- All food must be covered, preferably in a container with a tight fitting lid, or similarly protected to reduce the risk of contamination and to reduce the loss of moisture.
- Hot food must not be placed in the fridge.
- The contents of each fridge must be checked daily and any food that is unusable or past its use by date must be removed and thrown away.
- Fridges must be kept clean and in good repair.

## Freezer storage

Some food businesses will have frozen items that they need to store such as frozen chips, frozen vegetables or ice-cream.

Aside from size and capacity, commercial freezers are designed for much more frequent use and like the commercial fridges can recover faster following frequent opening of the unit.

- Freezers must be kept at 18°C or colder unless the manufacturer's instructions on the food states otherwise i.e. ice-cream that may need to be at a higher temperature for service.
- Where possible raw food should be stored in a separate freezer to ready to eat food, but where this is not practical, then all ready to eat foods must be stored on shelves above any raw food to reduce the risk of cross contamination. In chest freezers the different compartments should be allocated so that raw and ready to eat foods are kept away from each other.
- The temperature of freezers must be checked daily and recorded in the Daily Recording Diary.
- All food must be covered, preferably in a container with a tight fitting lid, or similarly protected to reduce the risk of contamination and to reduce the loss of moisture.
- Hot food must not be placed in the freezer.
- The contents of each freezer must be checked frequently and any food that is unusable or past its use by date must be removed and thrown away.
- Freezer must be kept clean, free from the build-up of excess ice and in good repair.



### Other storage

Some food businesses may need to store food in insulated boxes to keep it cold or warm.

This should only be for short periods and the Responsible Person still needs to carry out checks to ensure that food is being held within legal parameters for food safety.

- Insulated bags and boxes must be kept in good condition and be clean and disinfected.
- Food must be chilled thoroughly in a fridge before being placed in a cool box (or heated to 75° or above before going into insulated box/ bag).
- The insulated cool box/bag must have enough ice or icepacks to keep the food cold.
- Insulated bags/boxes that are holding cold food should be kept out of direct sunlight and away from sources of heat.
- Insulated bags/boxes should only be opened when necessary and should not be left open if there is food inside that needs to be kept under temperature control.
- If food has become too warm (chilled foods) or too cold (hot foods) then it must be disposed of carefully.



# Shelf Life of Foods

## Food durability

With the exception of a few designated foods it is a mandatory requirement that foods carry a use by date or the date of minimum durability – in the form of a best before date.

The food business must check dates on foods that are delivered as part of their delivery checks.

## Use By

This must be used for those foods which are highly perishable from a microbiological point of view. After a relatively short period, these foods are likely to present a risk of food poisoning, and so “Use By” relates to the safety of the food and expires at midnight on the date shown. Typically, this form of date coding is found on fresh and ready to eat foods such as cream cakes or cooked meat. After the “Use By” date food is deemed unsafe and it is a criminal offence to sell it.

## Best Before

This is used to indicate the period for which a food can reasonably be expected to retain its optimal condition and so relates to the quality of the food. This is the point at which the taste or eating quality may begin to decline. The food will still be safe to eat beyond this point but it will not be at its best. Legally food that has passed the best before date and is still fit for human consumption can be sold. Commonly it will therefore be found on items such as ambient, dried or frozen foods.



### Food produced by the food business

Foods prepared and/or cooked on the premises must be provided with a 'Use By' date in accordance with the following:

Preparation Method	Shelf Life
Foods cooked and chilled	Day of cook plus 2 days
Cooked foods that are vacuum packed	Day of cook plus 4 days
Foods defrosted under refrigeration on the premises– including those frozen on the premises	Day of defrost plus 2 days (providing foods frozen on site are frozen at least 3 days before the original use by/best before date)
Chilled foods prepared on the premises	Day of production plus 2 days
Chilled foods that are frozen on the premises	Day of freeze plus 3 months
Opened packs of dried foods	Within original 'Best Before' date and/or in line with manufacturers storage instructions and shelf life



# Food Handling and Preparation

A food business is responsible for making sure that the food it produces is safe to eat.

In terms of food handling and preparation, the most likely form of microbial contamination is cross contamination, which occurs when bacteria are spread from contaminated food (usually raw) to a ready to eat food. Contamination can be direct or indirect.

Foods which are likely to be a source of contamination include:

- Raw meat and poultry.
- Unwashed fruit and vegetables, especially those that are visibly dirty. Unless supplied pre- packed and labelled as ready-to-eat.
- Fish and shellfish
- Eggs in their shell

Specific hazards relating to the food business are highlighted in the online risk assessments. Specific Hazards and the relevant Critical Control Point and Critical Limits are monitored and recorded in the Daily Recording Diary.

In general, avoid cross contamination during food handling and preparation by:

- Making sure that raw and ready to eat foods are separated.
- Having separate storage, handling and preparation areas. Where it is not possible to have separate preparation and storage areas, additional measures must include:
  - Preparing raw and ready to eat food separately with appropriate cleaning and disinfection between.

- Avoid preparing food where there is a potential risk of contamination i.e. next to sink or waste bin.

- Where a single fridge is used for raw and ready to eat food storage, raw food must always be kept below ready to eat food.

- All food must be properly packaged e.g. kept in clean lidded and labelled food safe containers.

- Equipment and utensils such as chopping boards and knives should be colour coded in order to avoid cross contamination i.e. red for raw meat, blue for raw fish and white for dairy products such as cheese. If colour coded equipment is not being used, thorough cleaning and disinfection must be carried out.

- Dual use of complex equipment such as vacuum packers, slicers or mincers should be avoided. Where there is a risk of cross contamination separate pieces of equipment must be used.

- Where it is not possible to have separate employees for separate food handling tasks, employees must change protective clothing (i.e. apron) and wash their hands between handling raw and ready to eat foods.





### Foods eaten raw

Some foods such as oysters, beef carpaccio, steak tartare and sushi are eaten raw. They need to be handled as carefully as ready to eat foods, to avoid them being contaminated, but they also have the potential to contaminate other ready to eat foods. Consequently, they need to be stored and handled separately to standard raw and ready to eat foods. They should be handled and prepared by someone with specialist knowledge. Where the food business is handling one or more of these foods, the Responsible Person will have read and understood the relevant NCASS Special Care Sheet(s), have highlighted these items in the online risk assessments and have specific Critical Limits listed, monitored and recorded in the Daily Recording Diary.



# Hot Food - Cooking & Reheating

This section provides general information on the legal requirements for hot food in food businesses. However, when the food business completes its online risk assessment, specific Critical Control Points will be identified for certain foods and they will override the information given here.

**The businesses Critical Control Points plus critical limits, and the monitoring of them will be recorded in the Daily Recording Diary.**

## Cooking

Food must be cooked properly in order to kill harmful bacteria. Cooked food must always be steaming hot all the way through.

The general rule is that the core of the food must reach 70°C for 2 minutes or an equivalent. Examples of equivalents are:

- 60°C for 45 minutes
- 65°C for 10 minutes
- 70°C for 2 minutes
- 75°C for 30 seconds
- Non-exempt, marine fish 60°C for 1 minute

It is especially important to make sure that poultry, pork, rolled joints and products made from minced meat (such as burgers and sausages) are thoroughly cooked. This is because there could be bacteria in the middle of these types of products due to the mincing process. They should not be served pink or rare – if the business wishes to serve burgers less than thoroughly cooked; advice will be sought from their NCASS Account Manager.

Whole cuts of beef and lamb (such as steaks, cutlets and whole joints) can be served pink/rare as long as they are fully sealed on the outside.

The specific time/temperature combination for different cooked foods supplied by the food business will be detailed in the businesses Daily Recording Diary.

## Hot Holding

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland it is a legal requirement that once hot food must be kept at 63°C or above unless the 2 hour rule is being applied to food on display (*see section on Food Display*).

In **Scotland**, the requirement is that food being held hot must be held above 63°C. The requirement allows food to be kept out of hot temperature control for handling, preparation and display for sale as long as the conditions do not pose a risk to health. There is not a specific time limit given and therefore the business would need to do a risk assessment based on the type of foods being held.



### Reheating

When food is reheated, it must be steaming hot all the way through. The requirement of a core temperature of at least 70°C for 2 minutes must be applied to ensure food safety.

*In Scotland, there is a legal requirement for reheated foods to reach at least 82°C.*



# Cold Food - Chilling, Cooling, Defrosting

This section provides general information on the legal requirements for cold food in food businesses. However, when the food business completes its online risk assessment, Critical Control Points will be identified for certain foods and they will override the information given here.

The business Critical Control Points plus critical limits, and the monitoring of them, will be recorded in the Daily Recording Diary.

## Cold food

Cold food must be kept at 8°C or below. This is the legal requirement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Many businesses opt for the lower temperature of 5°C as their target temperature for the operation of fridges and similar to allow for temperature fluctuations due to the door being opened.

In **Scotland**, food must be kept in a fridge or cool ventilated place. However, the critical limit of 8°C or below should still be applied.

Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. Some food needs to be kept chilled to keep it safe such as food with a 'use by' date, cooked dishes and other ready-to-eat food such as prepared salads and desserts. There are some canned foods that require chilling even if unopened. The Responsible Person will check and follow the manufacturer's instructions (on the label) regarding the storage of foods to ensure foods are safely stored.

The business must do the following things:

- Check chilled food on delivery to make sure it has been kept under temperature control.
- Put chilled food in the fridge as soon as possible.

- Keep chilled food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible during preparation
- Check regularly that fridge and display units are operating correctly i.e. is keeping food at the stated critical limit or below.

## Chilled display

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland it is a legal requirement that high-risk foods are kept under temperature control. However, such foods can be stored at ambient if the 4 hour rule is being applied to food on display ([see section on Food Display](#)).

In Scotland, the requirement allows food to be kept out of cold temperature control for handling, preparation and display for sale as long as the conditions do not pose a risk to health. There is not a specific time limit given therefore the business would need to do a risk assessment based on the type of foods being held.



## Ready Meals

Cooling effectively is a key part of producing ready meals, business must be aware of the risks and what is required to mitigate them – we only recommend ready meal production for experienced caterers with the appropriate equipment and knowledge. Temperature recordings must be taken at the appropriate time, if not using a method such as a blast chiller, businesses will have to evidence that the processes they are using are safe.

## Cooling

Where possible, food should be served immediately.

However, there may be foods that need to be cooked, cooled and served cool such as a joint of ham or there may be foods that are cooked in advance, cooled and then re-heated for service such as individual meat pies.

Hot cooked food must be cooled as quickly as possible. This will often be a two stage process. The time the food is in the danger zone must be controlled and limited. Once the temperature of the food falls below 63°C, the food must be cooled to 20°C within 90 minutes and then placed in a fridge to reduce the temperature to 8°C or below.

The best way to ensure that food is cooled quickly and safely is by using a blast chiller. However, some businesses may not have space for this equipment.

Where a blast chiller is not a practical solution, the business will cool food quickly by employing a combination of the following:

- Keeping the food portion size small e.g. joints no larger than 6lbs (2.5kilos).
- Placing the food in a room that is cooler than the kitchen.
- Stirring liquid foods frequently with a clean spoon during cooling.

- Spreading the food out into large shallow trays so that heat is lost more quickly
- Immersing the cooking vessel in clean cold water or ice and stirring the contents frequently.
- Transferring the food from the hot cooking equipment such as saucepan and placing in a clean, pre-cooled dish.

Food will be protected from contamination whilst cooling i.e. not left near an open window or left in a dirty area of kitchen such as wash up area. Food will be covered with equipment such as metal meshes, food nets to prevent contamination by flying pests.

*See special guidance sheet on Rice (In your Due Diligence Manual) for more information about this product.*

## Defrosting

If any food is defrosted, this must be carried out in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing or toxins forming in the food. While foods are being defrosted, food handlers must keep food at a temperature that would not result in a risk to health.

Where liquid coming from the defrosting food may present a risk to health (e.g. when defrosting raw meat), food handlers must ensure it doesn't contaminate other foodstuffs. Raw foods must be defrosted away from/ below other foods. It is best practice to place the foods in a dish or bowl to stop liquids contaminating surfaces.

Food that is ready to eat such as cheesecakes or cooked hams must be defrosted under refrigeration to prevent the growth of micro-organisms during the defrosting period.



# Traceability, Food Withdrawal and Recall Policy

A problem with a food product or ingredient can result in a “withdrawal” (where it must be removed from use or sale) or a “recall” (where customers are asked to return or destroy the food material). Where food is identified as being unsafe (the food is likely to be harmful to health) it must be withdrawn from sale or recalled from consumers (if it has already been sold). Note: when a sale is direct to the consumer, a business is not expected to keep the consumer’s contact details.

## Traceability

For traceability, the business must maintain an accurate record of suppliers’ details, most businesses such as retailers and caterers this will include:

- Suppliers name and contact numbers
- Type of products supplied by each supplier

This information will be kept up to date in the Daily Recording Diary.

The quantity of products supplied and the dates of delivery must also be available if requested. This information will normally be provided by producing invoices/receipts for any food at the business. Invoice and/or receipts do not have to be available at all times but the business should be able to provide them within a few days if requested to do so by an Authorised Officer of the LA.

Business may wish to record additional details such as batch codes, as this will allow easy identification of affected batches, if there is a product recall.

## Withdrawal and recall

If a food product has been deemed unsafe a ‘Food Alert’ may be issued and the food business must take action in accordance with the advice that it contains.

The business can sign up to automatically receive emails regarding food alerts by registering at [www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-food-safety-alerts](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-food-safety-alerts). Alternatively, a Food Alert may be issued and the food business may be notified to the business via a manufacturer, supplier, wholesaler, trade association, through a notice in the newspaper, from the local authority or the Food Standards Agency.



If the business is made aware of a food alert that relating to food that they may have purchased and/or used the Responsible Person will:

- Thoroughly brief staff on the issue and any actions they need to take.
- Swiftly identify any products covered by the withdrawal/recall notification and remove them from sale. The affected products will be labelled as “not for human consumption” and stored separately from other food until they can be returned to supplier or safely disposed of.
- Make detailed checks (including where the recall refers to an ingredient) to identify where the affected material is, and in which product it has been used. Such products will then be removed from sale.
- Institute a recall where it appears likely that the food involved may not yet have been eaten. Customers will also be advised about the reason for withdrawal/recall and invited to return the food (for a refund).
- Where it is the business product that is subject to the recall, they will work closely with the Local Authority, especially in providing traceability information, to make sure that affected food is removed from sale and disposed of correctly.

The business will make a note of any actions taken in relation to Withdrawals/Recalls in its Daily Recording Diary.



# Allergens

Food allergies are increasing and can have severe effects. In the worst case, a severe reaction to an allergen (anaphylactic shock) can result in death within a short period of time. Even tiny amounts of an allergen, when consumed by allergy sufferers, can result in serious health problems including in some cases, death.

The Food Information Regulations 2014 cover both pre-packed and loose foods and applies to all types of food businesses including catering premises, restaurants, pubs, mobile vehicles, street food vendors and all temporary facilities.

## The 14 named allergens are:

1. Celery and celeriac
2. Cereals containing gluten
3. Crustaceans, for example prawns, crabs, lobster and crayfish
4. Eggs
5. Fish
6. Lupin
7. Milk
8. Molluscs
9. Mustard
10. Nuts, including almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia or Queensland nuts
11. Peanuts
12. Sesame seeds
13. Soya, which can be found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu as well as in a range of processed food products

14. Sulphur dioxide, which is often used as a preservative in dried fruit, meat products, soft drinks and vegetables as well as in wine and beer

## Other allergies

People can be allergic to other foods. Allergies to strawberries, citrus fruits and kiwi are common in the UK, for example. The food business may wish to be aware of, and be able to give advice around any allergy that a customer advises them of - but if they are in any doubt, they must not make guarantees or offer information unless they are certain. The business is only required by law to give information on the 14 named allergens above.



## Identifying and tracking allergenic ingredients

When preparing a food product, it is essential to check all the ingredients for the presence of any of the 14 listed allergens. Where any are present, they must be listed so that consumers can be provided with accurate information about the food(s) they need to avoid. This can be done using the 'Allergen Matrix' and/or 'Individual Allergen Product Sheet' available as part of the NCASS Due Diligence system.

In order to provide accurate information on allergen presence, the business must:

- Identify the allergenic ingredients in all the food products it uses, makes or supplies. For products made by the business, the use of a standard recipe will make it easier to recognise when changes to allergen content information are required (such as when there has been an ingredient substitution).
- All packaged, labelled food purchased by the food business will have the allergy information provided on the package. This information must be used to build the allergy matrix/ individual allergen product sheet. If the manufacturer has stated that a food "May Contain" an allergen, then that information must be included. This can be identified by placing an 'M' in the relevant column of the allergen matrix for 'May Contain'.
- Maintain a record of the allergens present in purchased pre-packed foods such as sauces, desserts etc. that will be incorporated into more complex dishes. This will allow allergen presence to be tracked.
- Always check deliveries to make sure that they are exactly as ordered and where substitute products are found ensure allergen records for relevant dishes are changed etc. Look out for labels stating 'New Recipe' or 'Improved Flavour' as there may have been an ingredient change that the business will need to know about and update the allergen information.
- Keep ingredients in the original containers wherever possible or keep a copy of the labelling information in a central place (either on paper or stored electronically). This could be done by taking photos of packet goods.
- Ensure that containers are clearly labelled when ingredients delivered in bulk are transferred or stored in smaller containers,
- Ensure that the allergen information is kept up to date (for example, if recipes are changed or products substituted).
- Make sure that the supplier records are kept up-to-date to help trace back to the source of the information for any queries.

**Allergen information must be recorded on your NCASS allergen matrix.**



## Managing allergen cross contamination

To reduce the risk of allergen cross contamination, the business will ensure that as a minimum the following general measures are in place:

- Surfaces, equipment and utensils are thoroughly cleaned and washed to reduce the risk of cross contamination by allergens
- Staff are trained to wash hands thoroughly before producing any “allergen free foods”
- As far as possible, physical separation of allergen containing ingredients is in place e.g. use of separate storage, preparation, display and service areas. This will consider the likelihood of cross contamination e.g. dusty products such as flour and ground nuts will be hard to control in open areas as they can be spread by air currents.
- In very small preparation areas, without physical separation it is likely to be extremely difficult to manage allergens cross contamination, especially where flour or similar light, finely ground ingredients are used. This **MUST** be considered when advising customers about allergen presence and in such circumstances, a guarantee about a meal or dish being “allergen free” cannot be given.

## Cross contamination from allergenic ingredients

Whilst the biggest problem for allergic and hypersensitive consumers is the presence of undeclared allergens in food as an ingredient of that food, allergic reactions can also happen when allergen cross contamination has occurred. Suitable measures should be in place to prevent such cross contamination. When developing menus, the business needs to consider what allergens they are planning to use in the foods they produce, and what measures they will take to reduce the likelihood of cross-contamination. They need to also consider the nature of product and associated

allergen. For example, the seeds easily fall off sesame seeded burger buns and seeds may be found throughout the freezer and gathered at the bottom of the freezer. It is highly likely that any other foods stored in that freezer will have traces of sesame on them. Therefore, if you use sesame seeded burger buns, you would want to bring that to the attention of someone who advised you of a sesame allergy, even if they were not have a burger and bun.

**The proteins of allergens are all different and hence adhere differently to surfaces. By using cleaning sprays these can sometimes denature the proteins and make them spread further and wider. It is therefore important that a thorough cleaning procedure is followed if allergen free preparation is to take place.**



## Labelling of products

Where a product contains any of the 14 allergens covered by the legislation, accurate information on the allergen content of the food must be available to consumers.

## Loose food

Loose foods are all meals and snacks that are not prepacked.

It's up to the food business to decide how to provide the information on allergens present in the food produced and/or sold. This might be through:

- The menu
- A chalkboard
- An information pack or allergen menu folders, which could store product specification sheets, ingredient labels, recipes or tables detailing the allergen information
- Verbally, by speaking to staff

The information must be accurate, consistent, verifiable and available to the customer whilst they are choosing their food.

If the food business has a policy to 'up sell' (offer additional products at the point of order) the customer would not have had time to consider the additional items in terms of allergens. Therefore, if the business up sells, it will have procedures in place to ask additional questions about allergies at the point of ordering

If allergen information is not provided in an obvious place for customers to see at the point of ordering, there will be a means of advising the customer at the point of decision as to how it can be obtained. As an example, the NCASS sign below can be used which can be obtained by calling the NCASS office. Further information on how to handle requests about allergens and how to prepare allergen free dishes is given below.



Where the business uses messaging on a written menu to advise customers about allergens, it will use the same font size and style as the rest of the menu and ensure that the colour of the writing is easy to read. The messaging will be placed in a prominent place on the menu (i.e. the front).



## Prepacked foods

Prepacked foods are any foods that are sold pre-wrapped at point of manufacture.

## Natasha's Law / PPDS

**! From October 2021, new food labelling laws for prepacked for direct sale food will be introduced.**

The new requirements mean that prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food will need to have the name of the food and a full ingredients list with allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list.

These changes will help protect food hypersensitive consumers by providing potentially life-saving allergen information on the packaging.

## Labelling of pre-packaged food

Allergenic ingredients in prepacked food must be emphasised in the ingredients list, (e.g. by highlighting, boldening, CAPITALISING, underlining, italicizing or putting them in another font).

For example:

- Skimmed **milk**
- **Goats' cheese (milk)**
- **Wheat** flour (gluten)
- Prawns (crustacean)
- Yoghurt or buttermilk (**milk**)
- **Wheat** (gluten)
- Nut (**Almond**)
- Tofu (**soya**)
- Tahini paste (**sesame**)

Cereals that contain gluten include wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan), rye, barley, and oats. Nuts include almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio

nuts and macadamia nuts (also known as Queensland nut). For gluten and nuts, it is necessary to specify where the gluten is from, and which kind of nut.

Peanuts are listed as a separate allergen.

## Precautionary allergen labelling

If there is a risk of a food product being affected by allergen cross-contamination, the label should include one of the following statements:

- may contain X
- not suitable for someone with X allergy

Precautionary allergen labelling must only be used following a thorough risk assessment when there is a risk of allergen cross-contamination is real and cannot be removed.

## Other ways of selling

Where "Distance selling" takes place (for example telephone orders or via a website linked to multiple restaurants/takeaways), the business must provide the same level of clear and accurate allergen information as in a shop, market stall, pop up or restaurant. Allergen information must be provided before the purchase is completed and at the point of delivery i.e. for a delivered meal the information must travel with the food to the customers home.

## Managing a food allergy request

This procedure must be followed when a customer advises the business of an allergy.

There may be some occasions where the business cannot meet the customer's request and these circumstances should be fully explained to the customer when refusing the customer.



## Appendix 13

- 1 A customer may ask about what ingredients are in a dish or ask for something to be served 'plain' instead of letting the business know they have an allergy. The business must treat such enquiries as allergy enquiries. Seek further clarification from the customer as to whether they are allergic or intolerant to that food and check with them what ingredient(s) they need to avoid.
- 2 Staff members are not to guess about the ingredients. All queries are to be referred to the Responsible Person to deal with allergy related requests.
- 3 The Responsible Person will pass the Allergen Matrix or Individual Product Sheet to the customer so that they can examine the products to see what is suitable for them.
- 4 If the business handles the ingredient that the customer has advised they are allergic to, even if the dish they choose is free from that ingredient, the responsible person will ensure that the customer is aware that the product is handled by the business, so the customer can make an informed decision.
- 5 Ensure that an allergy free order is clearly marked on the ticket or advised directly to the person who will prepare the food. Do not just write or give the name of the allergen free dish. The food handlers need to be made aware of what the customer is allergic to, to prevent any cross-contamination.
- 6 Depending upon ingredients handled earlier, the food handler may need to change apron or any other clothing that could be contaminated with the specified allergen before they start to prepare the allergen free dish.
- 7 After changing, the food handler must thoroughly wash hands with warm water and soap, followed by drying on clean disposable paper towels, before starting to prepare the allergen free dish.
- 8 When preparing the dish, the food handlers must make sure that worktops and all the equipment used are thoroughly cleaned including chopping boards, knives, mixers, bowls, pots, pans, griddles and utensils. Where relevant, equipment must be dismantled to ensure that all allergen residues are removed. Equipment which is encrusted with carbonised food residues e.g. woks or baking tins must not be used.
- 9 If the food needs to be cooked in deep fat fryer (or similar) the food handler must ensure they use a fryer that has not been used for any foods that may contain the allergen or the fryer must be thoroughly cleaned and fresh oil used.
- 10 The food handler must only prepare the allergen free dish and not undertake other food handling tasks, or similar where hands/clothes could get contaminated, until after they have passed the allergen free dish to responsible person.
- 11 The product will need to be identified as a "special allergen free order" to ensure it reaches the designated customer, without risk of post-production allergen contamination. The Responsible Person will re-check details of order to ensure it is correct before passing over to the customer.



### Training

Good training in managing allergens is critical to customer safety and business success. The business will ensure that staff are trained in how to handle customer requests for information about food allergies and intolerances.

- All training will be appropriate to the role of the individual staff member. This will ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the provision of information about allergens.
- The Responsible Person will deal with queries and customers relating to allergens. All other staff will pass matters onto that person. If the Responsible Person is temporarily absent from the premises, the customer will be advised so and the transaction will either be aborted or held until the Responsible Person returns.
- All staff will be trained in measures to be taken if a customer suffers an allergic reaction.

This will involve:

### Signs of an allergic reaction

It is not always clear if someone is having an allergic reaction because other serious conditions can have similar symptoms. However, if the customer is clearly in difficulty medical assistance should be summoned without delay. Warning signs of an allergic reaction include:

- Difficulty in breathing
- Swollen lips or mouth
- Someone collapsing

### Dealing with a severe allergic reaction

- Calling an ambulance (999) - When reporting the incident, it will be important to explain that the customer may be having a serious allergic reaction or suffering from anaphylactic shock. Mentioning the word anaphylaxis will stress the urgency of the situation to the emergency services and will ensure that an appropriate response is provided. If the customer has a known allergy, they may have been prescribed an auto-injector. A first aid trained member of staff should assist in its administration.
- The Responsible Person may assist in the administration of an auto-injector if they have been trained to do so, the ambulance crew should be advised that an auto-injector has been used
- Reassure the customer suffering the allergic reaction. They should be made as comfortable as possible; however, they should be moved as little as possible as it could worsen the situation. Reassurance should be given until the ambulance arrives
- Where possible a member of staff or other identified person (such as a willing customer) should be assigned to directing the arriving ambulance to the location of the customer suffering the allergic reaction.

