

## **Environmental Health & Consumer Protection**

Southampton City Council  
One Guildhall Square, Southampton, SO14 7FP

Direct dial: 023 8083 2519  
Fax: 023 8083 3079  
Email: [food.safety@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:food.safety@southampton.gov.uk)

Please ask for: Food Safety Service  
Our ref: FS/Starter Pack  
Your ref:

Dear Sir/Madam,

This information pack has been sent to you by the environmental health service, to help you set up your food business. The pack contains basic information, which will help you to comply with the law. The environmental health service can give you some of the advice and information you will require, but you may also need to contact other Council departments or other agencies or seek further technical information.

The environmental health service enforces the law relating to food hygiene; the health and safety of your staff and customers; and environmental protection matters, such as drainage problems, noise or odour nuisance. We are also available to give you advice and information about complying with these laws. This pack contains some information leaflets, on food hygiene and health and safety which you may find useful, but you should also make sure that your business complies with the law regarding planning, building control, trading standards and licensing. The contact details for these services are included.

You should keep in contact with the environmental health service as you plan your business. It is important to think about potential problems and solve them before your business starts trading. You may decide to contact the environmental health service to discuss these issues. As you plan your business, it is important for you to consider the location and layout of your premises, the range of food you will sell, any food processing or preparation you will carry out and your likely customers. This will help you to identify solutions to potential problems and will help us to give you advice.

Examples of potential problems that can arise include:

- The size or the inappropriate layout of your food preparation area can affect food hygiene or the safety of your staff
- The durability of the materials used to construct the premises or the equipment you will use can lead to ongoing maintenance problems if they are not sufficiently robust.
- The layout of the food preparation area, or the materials used to construct it, can prevent effective cleaning.

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- Inappropriate refuse storage can attract rodents and cause odour problems
- Litter dropped by your customers can affect your neighbours
- The toilet facilities for your staff or your customers may be insufficient. (If you provide any seating for your customers, you will need to provide customer toilets).
- The odour or the noise from extraction and ventilation systems can cause nuisance to your neighbours;
- The noise from refrigeration plant or other equipment can cause nuisance to your neighbours;
- The noise from food preparation, particularly late at night, can nuisance to your neighbours, especially if there are flats above the premises.
- The noise from customers using your premises late at night or from early morning deliveries to your business can cause nuisance to your neighbours.
- Grease and waste food can block drains. (Grease traps can help to prevent these problems and waste oil must be removed by a licensed waste collection contractor).

When you have identified the premises for your business, you should check that it will comply with the food hygiene laws, particularly those that relate to the structure of the premises. The premises may require extensive alteration work and you should consider whether this work will comply with the law.

The leaflet 'Food Hygiene – A Guide for Business (which is available at <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/hygieneguidebooklet0209.pdf>) provides some information and further detailed guidance is available in the appropriate guide to good hygiene practice for your particular business. The guides covering catering, retail, markets and fairs, wholesale, baking, fresh produce, butcher's shops, mail order and vending. These guides explain how to comply with the legal requirements. They are published by The Stationery Office. You can order them on line at [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk) or by calling 0870 600 5522.

### **Legal notices**

Existing premises may have had legal notices served, which require work to be completed to comply with the law. You should ask a solicitor to make enquiries about outstanding notices before you buy or lease the premises. If the works haven't been carried out by the previous owner, they may still need to be completed and could become your responsibility.

### **Toilets**

If you provide any seating for your customers, you will need to provide customer toilets. Guidance on the number of toilets you need to provide can be found in the British Standard on the Provision of Sanitary Facilities (BS6465 – Part 1). The scale of provision will vary, depending on the number of customers your premises will accommodate. You may need to provide toilets which can be used by disabled people.

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Staff must have access to toilets and they should meet the requirements set out in the Approved Code of Practice on The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.

### **Refuse**

You will need to make arrangements for food waste and other refuse from your business to be stored appropriately and removed regularly by a licensed waste collection contractor. (If your business involves frying, the waste oil will need to be collected by a licensed contractor. It must not be poured into the drains, as it may block them.) You will need sufficient lidded refuse bins to store all of your refuse until it is collected by the contractor. You should make sure that the bins can be sited in an area which is easily accessible to both you and your staff, and to the contractor and which can be kept clean. There is a charge for the collection and disposal of trade waste. You can contact Southampton City Council's trade waste service on 023 8083 4325. (Other contractors also provide trade waste collection and disposal services.)

### **Ventilation**

If you are cooking food, you may need to install a suitable ventilation system to remove heat and steam. These often comprise a canopy above the cooking area, linked to ducting which discharges outside the premises. These systems can cause odour and noise nuisance, so they need to be carefully designed. They often include filtration equipment to remove odour and may include sound proofing to control noise from the fan motor.

### **Hand washing**

If unwrapped food is handled at the premises, wash hand basins must be provided. These must have hot and cold water and be linked to the drainage system. A supply of liquid soap, preferably in a dispenser, together with hand drying materials must be provided. Suitable hand drying materials include paper towels and paper or fabric roller towel in a cabinet.

### **Registration**

The law requires all food business premises to be registered with the environmental health service. A registration form is enclosed in this pack. You should complete and return the form before you start to trade from the premises. (If you intend to trade from a mobile premises, you should register using the address where the unit is normally kept overnight).

### **Food Hygiene Training**

The law requires all food handlers to be trained, instructed or supervised in food hygiene to an appropriate standard. Food handlers who prepare open food should complete a Level 2 food hygiene training course. A list of local food hygiene training providers is enclosed in this pack. You should ensure that all of the food handlers employed in your business receive appropriate food hygiene training.

### **Managing Food Safety**

The law requires all food business operators to put in place documented procedures to ensure that food is produced safely. The procedures must be based on the HACCP principles, which are commonly used by the food industry. HACCP stands for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. It is a system designed to prevent food safety problems occurring. To help food business operators comply with this law, the Food Standards Agency have developed 'Safer Food, Better Business'. You should obtain a copy of the Safer Food, Better Business pack to help you to put HACCP procedures in place when you start to trade. The pack is available free of charge and can be obtained by telephoning 0845 606 0667 or emailing [foodstandards@ecgroup.co.uk](mailto:foodstandards@ecgroup.co.uk).

### **Health and safety**

You will need to ensure the health and safety of any staff you employ and any customers or other people who may be affected by your business. Advice and information is available at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).

The law requires you to think about any risks which your staff or customers may be exposed to and for controls to be put in place to prevent or minimise these risks. This process is called risk assessment and further information is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm).

If you employ five or more people, the law requires you to prepare a written health and safety policy. You should include the details of any risk assessments with your safety policy. Further information on writing a safety policy can be provided on request.

You must also provide your employees with information about health and safety law. This information can be provided by displaying the health and safety law poster (ISBN 07176 24935). The health and safety poster can be purchased from bookshops.

You will need to provide a first aid kit. The leaflet provides further details on first aid provision. If you, your staff or your customers have certain types of accidents, you must report them, either directly to the environmental health service or through the Incident Control Centre (more information about accident reporting can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm)).

You should also consider whether you need to make contact with any of the following services for advice.

### **Planning consent**

You should make sure that the premises you intend to use for your business have the appropriate planning consent. This law is enforced by Southampton City Council's development control service. You should contact this service directly to check that your premises have the appropriate planning consent. It is important to check even if you are taking over a business which is already operating, as this is no guarantee that the appropriate planning consent has been given. The development control service can be contacted on 023 8083 2603 or by e-mailing [planning@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Building control**

If you are carrying out alterations to the premises you may need building control approval. You should check whether any alteration work requires approval by contacting Southampton City Council's building control service. The building control service can be contacted on 023 8083 2558 or by e-mailing [building.control@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Disabled access**

You may need to make reasonable alterations to the premises to allow them to be accessible by all of your potential customers, including those with disabilities. The building control service can give you information about disabled access and can be contacted on 023 8083 2558 or by e-mailing [building.control@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Licensing**

Some activities which are carried out by food businesses require licensing. Examples of activities which require licensing include supplying alcohol; providing regulated entertainment; selling hot food late at night and trading on the street. You should contact Southampton City Council's licensing service to find out whether your business will require licensing. The licensing service can be contacted on 023 8083 3245 or by e-mailing [licensing@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Trading Standards**

Southampton City Council's trading standards service can provide advice about correctly labelling or describing food on a menu; weights and measures; the composition of food including the use of colourings and other additives and price descriptions. If you want further information, please contact the trading standards service on 023 8083 3999 or by emailing [trading.standards@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:trading.standards@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Mobile food premises**

If you intend to trade from a mobile premises, you should read the following information. Street trading is prohibited in many parts of the City Centre. It is important that you identify a suitable location for trading, if you intend to trade on the street. For information on the street trading, please contact the Licensing Service on 023 8083 3245 or by e-mailing [licensing@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@southampton.gov.uk).

Trading in the City Parks, The Common, Car Parks and Special Events are controlled by Southampton City Council. The appropriate contact details for these locations are given below:

- City Parks Pitches are leased to concessionaires on a 3 yearly contract.  
(Contact: Nina Jetten – Playing Fields Support Officer - Tel 023 8083 2713.)

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- Special Events If these are operated by the City Council then the contact is Craig Lintott (Tel 023 8083 2077.)

Trading from the highway without the appropriate permission may result in enforcement action being taken by the police or Highway Authority for obstruction. (The 'highway' is normally defined as including the adjoining footpath). If you intend to trade from private land, you should obtain the permission of the land owner. It is also important to ensure that the appropriate planning consent has been given for the location of this land. Southampton City Council's development control service can give you advice about planning consent and can be contacted on 023 8083 2603 or by e-mailing [planning@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southampton.gov.uk)

If you sell hot food or drink after 11.00 p.m., you will require a licence. If you trade from more than one pitch, you will require a licence for each location. For further information, you should contact the licensing service on 023 8083 3245, or by e-mail [licensing@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@southampton.gov.uk).

### **Inspection of your business**

When your business starts to trade you will be included on our food hygiene inspection programme. Your business will be inspected at regular intervals. The environmental health service will also investigate any complaints about your business. If your business does not comply with the law, the inspector will often write to you, explaining the action you need to take. If the problems are serious, the inspector may take more formal enforcement action. We are always available to discuss the action you need to take to ensure that your business complies with the law.

I trust that you will find this information useful and wish you success with your business. If you should require any further information, please contact the food safety service.

Yours sincerely

**Gavin Derrick**  
**Team Leader – Food Safety**

If you require this letter or future correspondence from us in a different format (e.g. tape, Braille, or disc) please do not hesitate to let us know