

Kitchen and food safety

Introduction

This document is intended to be used as a guide by those responsible for managing kitchen areas. Please note it contains links to guidance documents published by the Food Standards Agency so an intranet or internet access is required.

Responsibilities

The day to day responsibility for ensuring the safety and health of persons working within a recognised kitchen rests with the manager in charge. Shropshire Council's senior management team and chief executive officer have ultimate responsibility.

Standard of premises and equipment

Food safety regulations deal with standards of premises and equipment (as well as the standards expected of food handlers) and these apply to the Council¹. All premises, equipment and utensils used for food-related businesses must be in an acceptable condition and state of repair, and must conform to standards of cleanliness so that there is no risk of food contamination. The premises must also be secure against the entry of, or infestation by, pests, such as birds, rodents, insects, etc.

Facilities must generally include the following:

- Sanitary conveniences, situated away from food areas and, preferably, for use by food handlers only.
- A constant and wholesome water supply
- Suitable wash-hand basins with soap, nail brushes, towels and hot and cold water.
- A sufficient number of suitable sinks designated for equipment or food washing only.
- Adequate lighting and ventilation.
- Suitably designated and sited refuse areas.
- Adequate trapped drainage systems.
- First Aid boxes equipped with blue plasters.

Training

Shropshire Council recognises that food business operators are required by law to ensure that food handlers receive appropriate supervision, instruction and training in food hygiene in line with their work activity.

In the UK food handlers do not have to hold a food hygiene certificate to prepare or sell food, the necessary skills may be obtained through on-the-job training, self-study or relevant prior experience. However, it is our policy to follow best practice and to train those responsible for the safe operation of the kitchen to at least CIEH Level 2 Food Safety in Catering standard².

Food Handlers Fitness to Work

People who work around open food while suffering from certain infections (mainly from bacteria and viruses) can contaminate the food or surfaces the food may come into contact with. This can spread infection to other people through the food.

Below is a link to guidance published by the Food Standards Agency, this guidance, which you are recommended to follow helps managers and staff to prevent the spread of infection by advising which illnesses and symptoms staff should report and what managers should do in response. In summary:

- Diarrhoea and/or vomiting are the main symptoms of illnesses that can be transmitted through food.
- Staff handling food or working in a food handling area must report these symptoms to management immediately.
- Managers must exclude staff with these symptoms from working with or around open food, normally for 48 hours from when symptoms stop naturally.

Different action is required in some cases, as explained in section 9 of the linked document.

In addition, all staff who handle food and who work around open food must always:

- Wash and dry their hands before handling food, or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, especially after going to the toilet.

This is because it is possible to be infected but not have symptoms.

[http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/foodhandlersirel
and1009.pdf](http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/foodhandlersireland1009.pdf)

Good standards of hygiene

Good food hygiene is all about controlling harmful bacteria which can cause serious illness. The four main things to remember for good hygiene are:

- **Cross-contamination** - Cross-contamination is when bacteria are spread between food, surfaces or equipment. It is most likely to happen when raw food touches (or drips onto) ready-to-eat food, equipment or surfaces. Please follow the link below for further guidance:
<http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ecoli-cross-contamination-factsheet.pdf>
- **Cleaning** - Effective cleaning gets rid of bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces. It helps to stop harmful bacteria from spreading onto food.
- **Chilling** - Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. Some food needs to be kept chilled to keep it safe, for example food with a 'use by' date, cooked dishes and other ready-to-eat food such as prepared salads and desserts. It is very important not to leave these types of food standing around at room temperature.
- **Cooking** - Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in food. It is extremely important to make sure that food is cooked properly. When cooking or reheating food, always check that it is steaming hot all the way through.

These are known as the 4 Cs. They will help you prevent the most common food safety problems.

The premises must comply with the legal requirements and good hygiene practices must be adopted and maintained in the storage, preparation and sale of food.

The Food Standards Agency have produced a series of excellent illustrated guides, under the title Safer Food Better Business which you are recommended to follow, the guides can be found at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/sfbb>

The guides deal with all aspects of managing food safety in small businesses and by following this guidance you will be doing everything, you need to do to keep your customers safe and comply with the law.

Definitions

Food has a very wide definition under the Act by including virtually anything that is eaten, drunk or sold as a food product. It does not include:

- live animals or birds.
- live fish, unless they are normally eaten whilst still alive e.g. eelers.
- fodder or feed stuffs for animals, birds or fish.
- medicines.

The definition of food also includes tap water and products of no nutritional value which are being used for human consumption, such as:

- releasing agents used in bakeries to ease the removal of bread from baking tins
- food additives or colourings
- bulking agents used as an ingredient in some processed foods
- chewing gum.

Consumer protection

It is an offence to sell any food which is not of the nature, substance or quality demanded.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) is essentially a food safety risk assessment process that helps food business operators look at how they handle food and introduces procedures to make sure the food produced is safe to eat.

The main steps in this system are:

- Identifying hazards;
- Identifying critical control points (CCPs) at steps where control is essential to prevent or eliminate a hazard or reduce it to acceptable levels;
- Establishing critical limits at CCPs which separate acceptability from unacceptability;
- Implementing effective monitoring procedures at CCPs;
- Establishing corrective actions when a CCP is out of control;
- Establishing verification procedures;
- Ensuring the system is documented and records kept up to date.

If your operation is a small cafeteria or of a similar size by following the guidance in Safer, Food, Better Business (follow the above link) you will be able to satisfy the requirements of the HACCP system. However, this depends on the size and nature

of your operation. Further advice can be obtained from our Public Protection – Food Safety Team.

Alternatively, the following link is suitable for small business operations will guide you through the HACCP process <https://myhaccp.food.gov.uk/>

Health and Safety

All workplaces in the UK must comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act and legislation made under this act. This applies equally to the premises where kitchens and food business operate from. Rather than reproduce existing guidance here we have provided links which will take you to the relevant sections.

Risk assessments

All operations will need to carry out risk assessments. Risk assessment is the systematic identification of hazards, evaluation of risks and determination of necessary control measures for all the work activities carried out in the undertaking.

By carrying out a risk assessment you will be able to identify other areas where you need to take action.

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/risk-assessments/>

Note: the **significant** findings of the assessment must be recorded where five or more people are employed.

Work Equipment

This is a very broad term and includes plant, tools and machinery, all of which may be associated with food activities. For example, oven, knives, mixers, slicing machines, pots and pans, dish/glass washers, worm-type mincing machines, vegetable slicing machines, wrapping machines, bandsaws, machines with circular saw blades, circular knife slicing machines, potato chipping machines and food mixing machines when used with attachments for mincing, slicing, chipping, or any other cutting operation or for crumbing etc. are all items of work equipment. Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (as amended), any work equipment provided by employers must be suitable for the intended task, taking into account the conditions and work areas it will be used in and any

limitations associated with the equipment itself. Further guidance can be found by following this link: <https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Manual handling

Many of the work activities carried out in catering will involve a significant degree of manual handling, i.e. lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying or otherwise moving, by bodily force, any loads. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 require **hazardous** manual handling activities to be avoided where reasonably practicable, i.e. using mechanical or other aids, or if it is not reasonably practicable, for the activities to be **assessed** and **reduced** to the lowest risk level, e.g. by splitting the load into smaller units or getting assistance from a colleague. Further guidance can be found by following this link:

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Workplace and Environments

Kitchens are notoriously hot places to work and would require special provision in relation to adequate ventilation to control the temperatures to reasonable levels. One significant effect of such hot temperatures is the onset of heat stress and fatigue which may affect an employee's ability to work normally and safely. There is also a need to ensure that provisions are available for person working in these temperatures to have access to a ready supply of drinks (other than just water) to maintain their body fluid and mineral, etc. levels. Further guidance can be found by following the links: <https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Washroom and toilet facilities

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Electricity at work

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

<https://www.shropshirelg.net/services/occupational-health-and-safety/a-z-of-arrangements/>

1) Legislation

The following legislation is relevant to food preparation and handling:

- The General Food Regulations 2004 (as amended) and the;
- Food Safety Act 1990 (Amendment) Regulations 2004 make substantial amendments to the Food Safety Act 1990:
 - to implement the requirements of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 and
 - provide penalties for breaches of these requirements.
- Food Hygiene Regulations 2006
- Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991
- Food Premises (Registration) Amendment Regulations 1997
- The Food Information Regulations 2014
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended 2004)
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations together with the ACOP and guidance
- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) regulations 1981 (as amended 2013)
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 2002

2) Training:

The following are examples of recognised training certificates:

- Catering Manager - CIEH Level 3 Award in Supervising Food Safety in Catering
- Kitchen Assistant - CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering
- Dining Assistants - CIEH Level 1 Award in Food Safety Awareness in Catering

Ideally these courses should be refreshed every 3 years

Either Shire Services, (please contact 01743 250250 for further information) or the Environmental Health Food Safety Team (please contact Tim Clode for further information) can deliver these courses.

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