

Food Safety Advice for Establishments Serving Takeaways

Copeland Borough Council understand that businesses may look to change their business model and diversify in order to maintain their business during this time. The following advice is for those businesses that are looking to make provision for takeaways and deliveries where they have not done so before.

Scientific advice is that it is very unlikely that COVID-19 can be spread through food, but if you are changing how you are used to operating then you should think through the hazards and ensure that you have control measures in place.

Registration

A business will only be in a position to do this if they are registered as a food business with a Local Authority.

Temperature Control

Foods that need refrigerating while they are being transported, such as meat products, cooked food that has been cooled, dairy products, vacuum packed foods, prepared salad, prepared vegetables or prepared fruit, must be kept cold at or below 8°C, while being transported.

If you are transporting hot food, it should be kept hot. Food must be cooked to 75°C for 30 seconds or equivalent and if hot holding, the food is to be kept at or above 63°C. If the food temperature falls below 63°C it must be discarded after 2 hours. Hot food needs to be packed in an insulated box. It is recommended to keep distances short and times limited to within 30 minutes.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) have provided advice for business – ‘How to manage a food business if you sell products online, for takeaway or for delivery.’
<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/distance-selling-mail-order-and-delivery>

Allergens

There is a wealth of advice for businesses on allergen management on the FSA website at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses>

Labelling Requirements

Food must be labelled so that it is easy to understand – you must give customers:

- The name of the food
- A list of ingredients that contain any of the 14 allergens (nuts, peanuts, eggs, milk, fish, crustaceans, molluscs, cereals containing gluten, celery, lupin, mustard, sesame seeds, soya) to inform those suffering food allergies
- A Use By date (Follow manufacturer's instructions on the use by labels or a maximum of 3 days including date made)
- Cooking/reheating instructions if applicable
- Storage instructions

Contact-free delivery

Limiting contact when delivering orders will help keep everyone healthy, so you could consider leaving deliveries at the door of your customer, rather than handing it over to them. Knock on the door, step back at least 1 metre and wait nearby for your customer to collect it. Take payments over the phone or internet rather than taking a cash payment.

Infection Control

You have responsibilities to ensure food handlers are fit for work under the food hygiene regulations and in addition, you have a general duty to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of persons in your employment and members of the public.

Relevant staff must be provided with clear instructions on any infection control policy in place, and any person so affected and employed in a food business and who is likely to come into contact with food is to report immediately the illness or symptoms, and if possible their causes, to the food business operator.

The Government have issued guidance on COVID-19 for employees and businesses <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

However, this is not specific for food businesses, but it does advise that 'if you have been asked to self-isolate, you can order by phone or online, such as through takeaway services or online shopping deliveries. However, make sure you tell the delivery driver that the items are to be left outside, or as appropriate for your home'.

If you are undertaking deliveries, then you should have a system in place to ascertain/develop a system whereby clients can notify the restaurant/delivery drivers whether they are self-isolating so that action can be taken accordingly as highlighted above.