

# Environmental Health

## Running a Small Food Business from Home

If you are running a small business from your home kitchen and are concerned about the implications of current food hygiene legislation the following guide will give you brief outline of the standards expected of you.

If you require more detailed information or advice on the issues listed here, or any other aspect of food safety including training or law, please contact Environmental Health on 01543 308999 where an Officer will be able to give advice specific to the business you are hoping to operate.

### **Some Items to Consider:**

#### **Registration**

You are required to register your business 28 days before you begin operating under European regulation 852/2004 - if you are already open for business it is very important you register as soon as possible. There is no fee for registration and forms and guidance notes are available from Environmental Health on 01543 308725 or from the Council website at:

[http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?downloadID=162](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?downloadID=162)

#### **Training**

People involved in food handling must be trained to an appropriate level for the task they are doing. As a brief summary those working alone or supervising others should be able to demonstrate a knowledge of basic food hygiene, including temperature control requirements, why personal hygiene is important and how to store foods safely.

Lichfield District Council regularly runs the Level 2: Food Hygiene in Catering course (formerly known as the Basic Food Hygiene). For details contact Phil Howell on 01543 308744 or see [http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download\\_info.php?fileID=350](http://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=350) for booking information.

#### **Structure**

All parts of the premises used for food preparation and storage must be kept in good repair. All surfaces must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and must be kept in a clean condition.

#### **Lighting**

Adequate lighting is necessary to provide a safe working environment and to facilitate the hygienic preparation of food.

#### **Ventilation**

Adequate ventilation is necessary to remove fumes and steam and to keep your premises cool.

#### **Equipment**

All equipment should be safe to use, in good order, clean and should be capable of being thoroughly cleaned.

#### **Washing Facilities**

At least one sink must be provided for washing purposes. Ideally two should be provided, one sink for the preparation/washing of foods, and the other for the washing of equipment. However this is not always possible in a home kitchen - an officer will be able to advise you accordingly.

#### **Hand Washing Facilities**

A separate facility must be provided for hand washing purposes, reasonably accessible from the kitchen. This basin must have hot and cold water, soap & hygienic hand drying facilities.

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### **Toilet Facilities**

Toilets used by people handling food for public consumption must be in good repair and maintained in a clean condition.

### **Refuse**

Waste stored in the kitchen must be in a clean bin with a close fitting lid, preferably foot-operated. Outdoor refuse storage must be kept clean and tidy.

It is a legal requirement that all businesses have a waste control contact in place to remove their business waste. It should not be combined with your domestic rubbish.

### **Pest Control**

The premises must be free from rodent and insect infestation and proofed to reduce the risk of such infestation.

### **Temperature Control**

Food within a refrigerator should be below 8°C, but ideally below 5°C. Frozen food in the freezer should be at -18°C or lower. It is good practice to put shelf thermometers in these appliances to monitor their temperatures. You must separate food intended to be used for your business and personal use; ideally, separate refrigerators/freezers should be used but this can also be done by using clearly marked containers.

### **Pets**

Pets & their food should be kept well away from all food preparation & storage areas at all times.

### **First Aid**

First aid materials must be provided for the use within the kitchen in the form of waterproof plaster, bandages, & dressings. You do not have to use blues plasters by law, but obviously if these drop in the food they are easier to see.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Clean washable clothing must be worn by all persons engaged in the handling of food for public consumption & a high standard of personal cleanliness maintained.

### **Washing machines**

Ideally washing machines should be sited away from food preparation & storage areas. However, if there is no alternative, an agreement may be reached with the visiting officer that such a machine may be used provided its use is confined to such times, as food is not being prepared.

### **Water Supply**

Only potable (wholesome) water is to be used. If your water is not supplied by mains water you must by law have it tested to make sure it is wholesome.

### **You may find the following sources of information helpful:**

'Starting Up' by the Food Standards Agency

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/startingup.pdf>

'Catering from Home Safely' by the Food Standards Agency

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/cateringfromhomesafely.pdf>