



# Home Caterer Food Safety Management System

Hertsmere Borough Council



Environmental Health

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## **My Details**

Name of Food Business Operator: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Food Business (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Food Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Foods Produced By Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Date this pack was completed: \_\_\_\_\_

(This document should be reviewed every year and amended when necessary, particularly if you start making a new product or use new methods of preparation)

Review Dates:


## **How to use this pack**

All food businesses are required by law to have a documented food safety management system in place to show how they are producing safe food. This document can be used to meet that requirement for small-scale low risk caterers operating within Hertsmere Borough. If you are producing high risk foods, we would suggest you use Safer Food Better Business which has been produced by the Food Standards Agency and is aimed at small catering businesses. It can be found here:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business>

The pack is broken down into the following sections:

- General Checklist
- Safe methods
- Allergens
- Daily Diaries
- Suppliers

### **General Checklist**

This list is a guide to follow whilst preparing food for your business within a domestic kitchen. You must sign this off when completing this pack.

### **Allergens**

This section explains what your obligations are under the Food Information Regulations 2014.

### Safe Methods

You will need to go through the safety points and complete the right hand column to indicate how you meet each point.

### Daily Diaries

These only need to be completed on the days you are producing food for your business. The first box has been completed as an example.

### Suppliers

This section should contain the details of where you purchase your ingredients.

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### General checklist

- If you have suffered with vomiting and/or diarrhoea you should not prepare any food until you have been 48 hours clear of symptoms
- Before any food preparation begins you must remove any clutter from your kitchen.
- Remove jewellery, tie hair back and wear appropriate clothing.
- Do not smoke, eat or drink whilst preparing food.
- Undertake a 2-part clean of all surfaces and hand contact points:
  1. Wipe down with hot soapy water
  2. Disinfect surfaces using a disinfectant or sanitiser, ensuring you are following the manufacturer's instruction, paying particular regard to contact time.
- Always use clean cloths, separate to the ones you use domestically.
- Ensure you thoroughly wash your hands before you start handling food, after using the toilet and after handling raw food.
- Keep all pets out of the kitchen when preparing food.
- Minimise access to other people being in the kitchen, especially children.
- Check all ingredients are in date and that packaging is in good condition.
- Check fridges are operating at correct temperatures < 8°C
- Keep all raw meat at the bottom of your fridge.

**I have read this checklist and understand that when I sign my diaries it means I have followed the above points** Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Allergens**

The Food Information to Consumers Regulations became law on the 13 December 2014.

It introduced a new requirement for those selling food, such as in restaurants, takeaways, bakeries and delis, to provide more information to customers if they contain any of the 14 allergens listed overleaf.

You must never guess if an ingredient is allergen free as even a small amount of allergen in the food can make your customers very ill or be fatal. You should also therefore take care to prevent allergens spreading to other foods in the kitchen, by storing such food in separate containers, using separate equipment, thorough cleaning and hand washing after touching them.

If you are making a product containing allergens, we advise that you write down any allergens that are in the product and ensure this is passed onto your customer – you are legally obliged to inform the customer of **any** allergens in your food.

You will also need to be able to show you have checked your products carefully for any of the listed allergens by:

- Checking all the ingredients of the foods you sell, including those bought in
- Keeping a written record of which foods on your menu contain any of the listed allergens to help you answer accurately your customer's questions (see next page for allergen matrix)
- Reviewing your records regularly for any changes, especially when you change your menu, ingredients or the recipe

For more information on labelling and allergy guidance go to:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-industry>

## **Natasha's Law**

Any business that produces prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food is required to label it with the name of the food and a full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list.

This labelling helps protect your consumers by providing potentially life-saving allergen information on the packaging.















Businesses need to check if their products require PPDS labelling and what they need to do to comply with the law.

Governments across the UK have decided that these foods will need to have ingredient and allergen information provided on the label from 1 October 2021.

More information on this requirement is available on:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/introduction-to-allergen-labelling-changes-ppds>

Trading standards at Hertfordshire County Council enforce legislation regarding allergen labelling. If you have any questions, please contact them.

<b>FOOD MENU</b>	<b>Milk</b> 	<b>Egg</b> 	<b>Lupin</b> 	<b>Sulphur Dioxide</b> 	<b>Gluten</b> 	<b>Celery</b> 	<b>Crustaceans</b> 	<b>Molluscs</b> 	<b>Fish</b> 	<b>Mustard</b> 	<b>Soybean</b> 	<b>Peanut</b> 	<b>Sesame</b> 	<b>Treenuts</b> 

<b>Safe Methods – Cross Contamination</b>	
<b>Why is it critical to food safety?</b>	<b>What are my control measures?</b>
Domestic pets must be removed from the food preparation area before commencing work. Animals can carry potentially dangerous bacteria which could contaminate work surfaces. Their hair/fur can also be a source of contamination.	
Domestic kitchen equipment and surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitised prior to use. Bacteria from raw meats or unwashed vegetables can contaminate work surfaces, fridges and equipment, which can then be spread onto the food (e.g. cakes) being prepared.	
Food handlers should wash their hands thoroughly using hot water and soap before commencing work, and after handling potentially contaminated foods such as raw eggs or raw vegetables/fruits/salads. Bacteria and dirt can spread from the hands of food handlers to the product they are making.	
Food handlers must change into clean aprons/clothes prior to starting work. Dirty overalls or clothing can contaminate food with anything from bacteria to pet hairs	
Hair must be tied back and excessive jewellery should be removed prior to commencing work. Loose hair can contaminate food and jewellery can trap dirt and bacteria and could also fall off into the food.	
Food handlers who are ill or have been unwell within the last 48 hours must not handle foods. This includes diarrhoea and vomiting illnesses and colds/flu. Some illnesses are contagious and can be passed on to customers through food handling. You should make sure that anyone who handles food has been symptom free for 48 hours before returning work. (You should also have a back-up plan to ensure orders are met if you are unwell.	
Where finished products are stored in the fridge, raw meats must either be stored elsewhere or on the bottom shelves of the fridge to prevent cross contamination. Cross contamination can easily occur during storage. Finished products and cooked foods must be stored above raw meats and ingredients must be covered whilst in storage. Finished products must be boxed or wrapped in fresh, clean, non-toxic, food grade packaging.	
Fresh raw salad/fruit/vegetables must be washed thoroughly before use (particularly where they are to be eaten raw). These foods are grown outside, often in the ground and could have soil/fertilizers on them. Both can contain bacteria which can cause illness.	

Cooked foods should be protected from contamination whilst they are cooling. Foods should be thoroughly cool before being packaged to reduce the risk of condensation and subsequent mould growth.	
Specify the type of cleaning chemicals used. Reusable cloths should be changed daily and washed at a hot temperature (boil washed). Alternatively single use, disposable cloths may be used. Bacteria can easily survive and spread from cleaning cloths onto food or work surface.	
Check your working area for anything (particularly very small items) that could drop into your products. Food could become physically contaminated, posing a risk to customers.	
Fridge shelves must be cleaned regularly. Fridge shelves can become contaminated with bacteria. This can easily pass onto hands and other products stored in the fridge.	
The kitchen must be clean and tidy, with no evidence of pests such as rodents or insects. Pests can contaminate foods and ingredients. Attention should be paid to cupboards where dry goods such as flour are stored as these foods may attract pests.	

<b>Safe Methods – Cooking and Temperature Control</b>	
<b>Why is it critical to food safety?</b>	<b>What are my control measures?</b>
Raw products such as some Moroccan-style mousses and cheesecakes should be avoided (unless you can demonstrate how you are making them safely). Products made with uncooked or lightly cooked eggs can carry Salmonella bacteria which can cause food poisoning. We would recommend that you use lion branded eggs for your business.	
Bacteria can survive and grow in some types of food if they are not properly refrigerated. Ingredients requiring chilled storage, such as dairy items, must be kept in the fridge. You should have some method of being able to monitor the temperature of your fridges to ensure they are 8°C or colder.	
Bacteria can survive and grow in food in certain foods if they are not cooked properly. Food should be cooked thoroughly to ensure bacteria levels are reduce to a safe level. To check food is cooked you can use a probe, visual checks or insert a skewer into the product and check that it comes out clean.	

<b>Safe Methods – Allergens</b>	
<b>Why is it critical to food safety?</b>	<b>What are my control measures?</b>
Foods must have any allergens labelled in bold. People who are allergic to certain ingredients can be seriously ill or die if exposed to them.	
Particular care must be taken when producing food that is “Allergen free”. Foods prepared free of an allergen must not be contaminated by allergens during storage, preparation, cooking and cooling.	

<b>Safe Methods – Other</b>	
<b>Why is it critical to food safety?</b>	<b>What are my control measures?</b>
Stock rotation ensures that foods beyond their use by dates are not used	
Where foods are prepared in large quantities and then stored, you should have some method of being able to identify their shelf-life. This includes foods placed in the freezer. Usual methods include use of date labels.	

<b>Example</b> Date: 17/11/2025	Date:
Product Made: Victoria Sponge	Product Made:
Further info: prepared 17/11/2025 for the “Smith Wedding” Delivered 18/11/2025 -Gluten Free Cake -50 Cupcakes with Icing	Further info:
Signed: <i>E Spencer</i>	Signed:
I have followed my procedures	I have followed my procedures

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**My Suppliers**

<b><u>Name of Suppliers</u></b>	<b><u>Products</u></b>

# PRODUCT WITHDRAWAL AND RECALL



Responding quickly to any problems with food products you use or sell is an important part of managing food safety in your business.

Sometimes there will be a problem with a food product that means you will need to 'withdraw' it (when you should stop using/selling it) and/or 'recall' it (when customers are asked to return/destroy a product). You may find out about a problem with a product from:

- a manufacturer of the product
- a supplier or wholesaler
- a notice in newspapers
- your local authority
- a trade association
- the Food Standards Agency

If you hear about a problem with a product, you should stop using/selling it straight away. You might also need to tell your customers. There are a number of reasons that a product might be withdrawn or recalled. For example, it could have been found to:

- contain harmful bacteria
- be physically contaminated, e.g. with pieces of glass or metal
- be wrongly labelled, which could be a problem for people with food allergies

You or your staff may also notice a problem with a food product that means it may not be safe to eat. If this happens, you should stop using/selling it straight away and tell your local authority and [the Food Standards Agency](#).

WHAT TO DO	HOW?
Make sure you know the details of the problem.	If a manufacturer or supplier has issued a product withdrawal or recall, make sure you know which product and which batches are affected.
As soon as you find out about a problem with a product, stop using/selling it.	Remove the affected product from anywhere you use, store or sell it and label it clearly to show it should not be used/sold.  Remember to check if you have used the product as an ingredient in any food you have prepared and stored, e.g. in the freezer – if you have, ask your local authority for advice.
Make sure your staff know about the problem.	This is so your staff know what to do and do not use/sell the product.
Tell your customers if you need to.	If the problem is with a product that your customers might not eat or drink straight away, you may need to let them know that the product is being recalled and why.  If the manufacturer or supplier asks you to put up a recall notice, you should do this. If you are not sure what to do, contact your local authority.

## THINK TWICE!

It is a legal requirement to keep a record of what food products you have bought, who you bought them from, the quantity and the date. Usually the easiest way to do this is to keep all your invoices and receipts. You should keep this information in a way that makes it easy for you or an enforcement officer to check back to see where a product came from.