

Food Delivery and Takeaway Guidance

Following the new Government restrictions placed on public houses, restaurants, cafes etc. during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic you may look to change the way your business operates and diversify, for example, by considering advertising and providing food from your normal menu or new dishes for delivery or takeaway.

This can be a great service to the community particularly as key workers working long hours want quick hot food easily and those self-isolating begin to seek alternative ways to access the food they wish to enjoy in their own homes.

This is fine to do but there are a few additional steps you should consider:

The following advice should be used in conjunction with, and to supplement the business's own food policy (Safer Food Better Business (SFBB), or equivalent). If you don't use SFBB, your food safety management system should be updated accordingly.

All staff need to be informed of the background of coronavirus including transmission routes, symptoms and what to do if staff become ill, self-isolation requirements and other relevant information to be able to effectively control the spread of coronavirus. 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>

Advice is changing rapidly as this virus progresses, and this guidance note may need revision at a later date if Government or industry advice changes.

Transmission of Covid-19

Currently scientific advice is that COVID-19 is very unlikely to be spread via food. Close contact with an infected individual via sneezing, coughing, hand to face (eyes and nose) contact are all transmission routes that need to be prevented with good hand hygiene and social distancing.

COVID-19 is thought to survive on hard surfaces for up to 3 days which is why cleaning and disinfection routines throughout the customer journey are also critical to minimise spread.

Food Registration

If you are not already registered with the Council as a food business, you [must complete a registration form](#)

If you are already registered but plan to change your food operation to include delivery, or any other significant change, for example supplying vulnerable groups, you need to inform your local authority. The easiest way is via email.

Ordering

If you have a website or other forms of advertising, you must clearly communicate that customers should ask about allergies and intolerances when they order. Here is example wording for you to use.

Allergies: Any advertising/menu should include an allergen prompt to encourage anyone with an allergy or dietary requirement to enquire about this in advance. If you have a website you should put a clear sign on this stating:

“Food Allergens and Intolerances: Please speak to our staff about the ingredients in your food before making your order”

Or, if you cannot guarantee allergen free food can be produced use the following statement:

“Food Allergens and Intolerances: Please speak to our staff about the ingredients in your food before making your order. Whilst a dish may not contain a specific allergen, due to the wide range of ingredients used in our kitchen, foods may be at risk of cross contamination by other ingredients. Please ask our staff for further information. The allergy information in Safer Food Better Business (SFBB)/or equivalent should be followed and a decision made whether any particular allergy requirement can be catered for or not”.

When customers phone to place an order, you should ask them if they or any of the people eating the food have any allergies or an intolerance. If they do, make a note of their requirements and ensure their food is prepared safely for them then clearly labelled. Where possible one member of staff should be responsible for making and delivering that meal. Any food prepared for allergenic customers should be stored separately before and during delivery.

Remember allergic reactions to ingredients can be fatal.

Further advice on managing allergens can be found at the following link:

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

<https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/food-and-drink/food-allergens-and-intolerance>

In Wales, if you have a specific menu developed for delivery food, Welsh law requires you to make people aware how to check your Food Hygiene Rating. To do that the following needs to be added to all promotional material.

“Ewch i [food.gov.uk/ratings](https://www.food.gov.uk/ratings) i ganfod sgôr hylendid bwyd ein busnes neu gofynnwch inni beth yw ein sgôr hylendid bwyd wrth archebu. /

Go to [food.gov.uk/ratings](https://www.food.gov.uk/ratings) to find out the food hygiene rating of our business or ask us for our food hygiene rating when you order”.

The font must be (a) type size of at least 9 points as measured in font ‘Times New Roman’ not narrowed; and (b) space between text lines of least 3mm.

Handwashing

Ensure staff are handwashing regularly and sinks are stocked with anti-bacterial soap, paper towels and there is warm running water available. Hand washing times are;

- On arrival at work
- On entering any service area
- Before handling any food
- After touching anything that customer, staff or delivery drivers may have contaminated
- After touching hand contact surfaces such as handrails, door handles
- Always after using the toilet or going into the toilet areas
- After touching your face, sneezing or coughing.
- In between ALL tasks
- After cleaning
- After using the toilet
- After smoking
- After handling and opening packaging, money, receipts and cleaning supplies
- After removing gloves and aprons and before putting on new one
- Any time your hands are contaminated
- After touching rubbish
- Regularly!

Food preparation/cooking/packing

Your Safer Food Better Business pack/or equivalent should be updated/enhanced to reflect the delivery service/takeaway and how it will be offered safely.

If you are starting to prepare/produce new menu items it is important that these are produced hygienically especially with regard to control of cross contamination. Make sure that there is careful separation of raw and ready to eat foods. Don't allow any contamination of ready to eat foods (or equipment for ready to eat foods) with anything that may have been in contact with raw meat or dirty root vegetables.

It is advised that food is offered cooked and ready to consume immediately i.e. the customer cooling food for consumption later is best avoided. Determine if you are also going to cook, cool and send food out cold for consumption at a later time. For any food intended to be re-heated at a future date, and not consumed immediately on delivery, you should indicate when the food should be used by.

The cooling of food safe methods must be followed in Safer Food Better Business/or equivalent and the advice to the customer should be to fully re-heat, where appropriate (to above 75°C /until piping hot) and to consume on the same day. Cooked foods intended for chill storage must be cooled as quickly as possible i.e. cooled from 55°C to 20°C within 2 hours and then be transferred to chill conditions. The times at which cooling starts and ends must be recorded.

It is suggested that you record the core temperature of your cooked high risk foods in your SFBB diary daily. Food should not be cooked too far in advance of service and adequate provision needs to be made for it to be hot held until sent out for delivery at 63° or above.

The food should be packaged in a disposable, lidded container. This should not be returned by the customer for re-use. Ensure the packaging is stored in hygienic conditions at your business before use.

You should provide an adequate number of insulated boxes for delivery to ensure the food arrives to the customer at 63°C or above. The distance and number of deliveries needing to be made will form part of this consideration and it is recommended to keep distances fairly short and times limited to within 30 minutes.

It is strongly suggested that the insulated box is made of a wipeable material i.e. plastic or similar, rather than cloth/fabric based as this will not be easy to sanitise on a regular basis.

You should use the two stage clean to disinfect the insulated boxes (both internally and externally) at the start of the day before being used for carrying food and after deliveries, and also regularly throughout the day. The ice packs should be sanitised as per the insulated box. Check that you are using sanitisers that comply with [BSEN1276](#) and staff are adhering to the correct contact time. At the end of the shift clean all high-touch surfaces one more time before closing.

Consideration will need to be given to a separate insulated box for any cold food deliveries i.e. food to be re-heated later in the day or cold puddings. These should be supplied with an adequate number of ice packs to ensure cold food arrives at 8°C or colder.

You should carry out periodic checks to ensure the food is arriving adequately hot or cold and record this in the FSM Diary.

In terms of food delivery and if you prepare any food in advance or freeze food in order to cope with increased demand you will find these four individual documents from the Food Standards Agency especially useful;

[Chilling down hot food](#)

[Freezing](#)

[Ready-to-eat-food](#)

[Managing food allergen information](#)

Traceability

You must keep records of who you have supplied food to as part of traceability requirements. Should you have to change or use different suppliers, ensure their details are recorded in your food safety system.

Staff Social distancing

It is extremely important staff keep themselves and others safe. Staff must keep 2m away from each other at all times, as people may be infected and not showing symptoms yet. Ensure all staff understand what is expected of them and make sure their working area is reviewed and rearranged if necessary to allow this to happen safely. For example, you may have to put in extra controls that say only 1 person can be in the walk in chiller at anytime.

Make sure this 2m rule applies at all times, in the kitchen, front of house, lunch and break times and monitor compliance.

Use of delivery staff/vehicles

You should check that the car insurance of the delivery driver covers business use and that the vehicle is safe (copy of most recent MOT, or similar). There must be no smoking permitted in any delivery vehicle as these are considered workplaces. Working time and length of time driving should also be considered. You can check here for [Rules on Driving Hours](#). A thorough risk assessment will ensure you comply with the law but if in doubt check with your legal advisors.

Food must not be subjected to potential contamination during transportation. Keep the interior of the vehicle clean and do not transport food with animals or chemicals such as fuel, oil and screen wash.

The delivery driver should be given a basic induction on handling the food correctly and health monitoring should be in place. Staff need to be checked daily to ensure they aren't showing any relevant Coronavirus symptoms (fever, persistent cough etc). If so, they need to be immediately sent home as per the self-isolation guidance.

The usual 48-hour exclusion applies for (non-Coronavirus related) sickness and diarrhoea.

The driver, where possible, should avoid coming into the main kitchen area and avoid excessive kitchen staff contact. It is suggested that one of the kitchen staff 'box up' the food and place in a low risk area of the kitchen ready for the driver to pick up and deliver. The driver should wash their hands with soap and water both on arrival and returning to the kitchen.

Food delivery

Vehicles should be fully fuelled at the start of the delivery process so as to minimise any refuelling and handling of petrol pumps during the delivery process. If re-fuelling has to take place, then disposable plastic gloves should be worn and removed before re-entering the vehicle.

Consider how you will accept payment for example, upfront or on delivery. Cashless systems must be implemented due to hygiene reasons.

If possible, the driver should be provided with hand sanitiser at 60% + alcohol content, after removal of any gloves and for periodic use between the individual deliveries.

It is preferable if there is no physical handing over of the food from the driver to the customer. There should be a set drop off point established in advance such as the door step. The doorbell or door can then be rung/knocked and the driver to distance themselves 6 feet (2 meters) as per Public Health guidance. Drivers should not enter the customers' property under any circumstance. This is especially important where a customer is either in self-isolation or ill.

You must ensure you have a system in place to enable the customer to notify you of any self-isolation/illness in advance of delivering.

Consideration needs to be given where a customer does not answer the door as to whether the food will be left or returned. Setting up an approximate time of delivery and contact details such as a telephone number should help minimise this issue.

Food Takeaway

If you are planning on providing food which customers can collect from your premises, much of the guidance above still applies. You should encourage non-cash payments.

You should also designate a low risk area for hand-over of the food. This should be well away from the kitchen area and at a distance from as many staff as possible. Staff handing over the food should place the food down and keep a sensible distance from the customer. This area should regularly be sanitised throughout the day and staff should wash their hands after each handover. You should try and adopt a one in – one out policy and also try to organise allocated collection time slots for customers so as to avoid people queuing outside the premise. If this is not possible then you should ensure a queue control system is implemented, inside and outside your premises, ensuring the two meter distancing requirement is applied.

You could also post signage; here is some suggested wording:

Social distancing. To protect our customers and staff at this time, we are actively managing the number of customers who can come into our premises at any one time. Please make sure you stand 2 meters apart using the marked lines on the floor, when at the front wait behind the line until called forward. Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

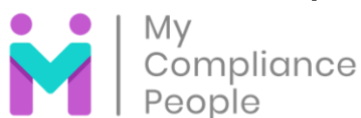
Laundry

Uniforms are a potential source of transmission. Ensure staff wear clean uniform at all times. All uniform must be washed at temperatures above 60°C or higher or a laundry sanitising agent used if the fabrics can't be washed at such high temperatures. It is recommended as standard practice in food businesses that uniforms are laundered commercially.

If you can't wash items immediately, leave in a sealed bag for at least 3 days and wash as normal.

Further guidance/links

Free Advice from Experts



[My Compliance People](#) have agreed to provide advice **free of charge** during these unprecedented times. Supporting the hospitality community to help businesses trade safely is the heart of this initiative as businesses step up to serve communities across the UK. My Compliance People have a community of independent freelance food safety experts and environmental health practitioners who you can talk to get the

advice you need. Get in touch for **FREE** advice via email covid19@mycompliancepeople.com

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>

Relaxation of planning use

The Government has announced a relaxation of planning rules to assist pubs and restaurants during the Coronavirus pandemic. For the next twelve months premises who were not previously licenced will now be able to operate as takeaways providing hot food and drink. Further information on the relaxation of planning rules can be found on the [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website

Alcohol (Premises) Licence

You can only offer a take away service / deliver alcohol if your premises licence states “Off-sales” or “both” under “Where the licence authorises the supply of alcohol, whether these are on and/or off supplies”, usually on the second page of the licence summary (part B) or page 2 of part A.

When delivering alcohol always ensure that ID checks are still carried out and that alcohol is not given to anyone under the age of 18.

You can only provide takeaway of hot food and drink until 23:00hrs unless you have “Late Night Refreshment” on your licence, if you are offering late night delivery, payment would then need to be taken over the phone or via an online delivery service portal.

Should you require further clarification on this or wish to make a variation to your premises licence, please contact the Licensing team.

Should you require any more detailed advice on changing your menu or your food safety procedures please email food.healthandsafety@rctcbc.gov.uk