Starting a food business

How to register, set up and manage a food business.

Register as a food business

When you start a new food business or take over an existing business, you must register your food business with the local authority. You should do this at least 28 days before opening.

Find out what types of food businesses need to register.

Different rules apply if you’re a:

- childminder
- volunteer or charity organisation

If there are any changes to your food business, such as change of owner or if your business is closing, you must update your business details with the local authority. If you’re a new owner of an existing business, you will need to re-register the business in your name.

Once registered, your business may be inspected by the local authority and given a food hygiene rating under the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme.

Setting up a food business

You need to consider a number of requirements when setting up a food business.

Choosing the right premises for your business is very important. The premises must comply with the necessary regulations and allow you to prepare food safely.

You will need to consider how to manage:

- food preparation areas
- equipment
- food waste

You must also meet the requirements for fire safety and health and safety in the workplace.

You can find more information on how to get help and support for your food business when setting up a food business.

Managing food safety

Managing food safety is about complying with food hygiene requirements and food standards.
You must have a written **food safety management procedure** which shows you’re complying with **food hygiene** requirements. It is important that as food business owner or manager, you have had suitable **training in food safety and hygiene**.

You must also show certain information on **food labels and packaging**. This is to allow consumers to make informed choices.

If you are using prepacked food you must include any **food additives** in the ingredient list. Suppliers of non-prepacked food and manufacturers of prepacked food, must declare if any of the **14 allergens** are present in the food.

Food businesses must also be able to demonstrate where they **buy and supply food or food ingredients** from. This is known as **traceability**.

If there is a food incident and there are concerns about actual or suspected threats to the safety, quality or integrity of food, you must immediately tell your local authority. You may need to **withdraw or recall** your products.

Local authorities are responsible for enforcing food hygiene laws and can **inspect your business** at any point in the food production and distribution process.

**Food hygiene in your business**

You need to ensure you get **food hygiene** right, from the start. This includes implementing the 4Cs of food hygiene: **cleaning**, **cooking**, **chilling** and **cross-contamination**.

When **storing food** and **transporting food**, you must prevent the food from becoming contaminated and ensure chilled and frozen foods are kept at the right temperature.

Your staff must receive the appropriate **supervision and training in food hygiene**.