



SAFE METHOD:


# GIFT FOOD



It is important to make sure that any foods given as gifts or donations are safe for residents to eat.

SAFETY POINT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
<p><b>Advice to visitors</b></p> <p>It is a good idea to give advice to the family and friends of residents about how to make sure the food they bring as gifts will be safe to eat. This might include advice such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is best to bring low risk food such as washed fruit, biscuits and chocolate.</li> <li>• Avoid bringing hot food.</li> <li>• Only use eggs that are British Lion code or equivalent assurance scheme in foods that will not be cooked thoroughly, such as mousse, icing and desserts.</li> <li>• Store and transport home-made or unpackaged foods in a clean, sealable container.</li> <li>• Check to make sure your family member or friend does not have an allergy to any of the ingredients.</li> <li>• Make sure that any foods with a 'use by' date, cooked food, or cakes and desserts containing cream are kept in the fridge. It is a good idea to transport these types of food in a cool bag or box, especially in hot weather.</li> <li>• Gift and donated food should be limited to food with a best before date that does not require refrigeration.</li> </ul> <p>You may want to have this advice written down for family and friends, and make sure all your staff know about it.</p>	<p>You cannot be sure that food brought by family and friends has been handled safely, so it is better to encourage low risk food.</p> 	<p>Do you have written advice for family and friends?</p> <p>Yes      No</p> <p>If yes, does it cover the safety points listed?</p> <p>Yes      No</p> <p>If no, what advice do you give?</p> <p>How do you inform family and friends of this advice?</p>
<p><b>Storing food</b></p> <p>If family or friends bring food that needs to be kept chilled, make sure it is put in the fridge if it is not eaten straight away.</p> <p>Ideally, gift food should be kept separately from the care home's main fridge. It is a good idea to label chilled, ready-to-eat food with the date and time it is placed in refrigerated storage, and add the residents name.</p> <p>Foods should be stored in a clean container with a lid.</p> <p>Food past its use by date should not be used.</p>	<p>Chilled foods need to be kept cold and used within shelf life to keep them safe and stop harmful bacteria growing.</p> <p>This will help staff to keep track of when the food was bought in and who for.</p> <p>This helps to protect the food from harmful bacteria and prevent pests.</p>	



SAFETY POINT	WHY?	HOW DO YOU DO THIS?
<p><b>Donated food</b></p> <p>If you accept donations of food from a supermarket, charity or other organisation, you need to be confident that they handle food safely. Consider the following things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the food stored, packed and transported in a hygienic way?</li> <li>• Is the packaging undamaged?</li> <li>• Are chilled and frozen foods kept cold/frozen until delivered?</li> <li>• Are foods within their 'use by' date when delivered? Never use foods that have passed their 'use by' date.</li> </ul> <p>If you cannot be confident that the organisation donating food handles it safely, it is safest not to accept donations of food from that organisation, or to only accept low risk food, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foods with a 'best before' date e.g. tins or biscuits.</li> <li>• Other foods that do not need to be chilled e.g. fruit and vegetables.</li> </ul>	<p>It is essential for you to make sure that any food you accept as a donation is safe for residents to eat.</p> 	<p>List the supermarkets, charities and other organisations you accept food from and the types of foods you accept.</p>
<p><b>Records</b></p> <p>If donated food comes with a delivery note, keep this with others from your food suppliers. If there is not a detailed delivery note, write down the details in the diary, including the name of the organisation and what foods you have accepted.</p>	<p>If there is a problem with a particular food you will have a clear record of where the food came from.</p>	<p>What do you do?</p>

### 'USE BY' AND 'BEST BEFORE' DATES – WHAT THEY MEAN

'Use by' date – do not use or serve any food after this date. Even if it looks and smells fine, eating food after its 'use by' date could make residents ill.

'Best before' date – food should be safe to eat after the "best before" date, but it might begin to lose its flavour and texture. Eggs are an exception – they should always be used by their 'best before' date.

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG	HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have any doubts about the safety of donated food, throw it away.</li> <li>• If a resident's family or friends bring types of food as gifts that are unsuitable, discuss your advice with them and why this is important.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to organisations donating food about your concerns.</li> <li>• Make sure all staff, residents and visitors know your advice on gift food.</li> <li>• Review procedures and make sure all staff are aware of any changes.</li> </ul>

**Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary**

