

COVID-19 Guidance for Food Businesses on Home Delivery

Mid Sussex District Council understand that businesses may look to change their business model and diversify in order to maintain their business during this time.

The following advice is for those businesses that are looking to make provision for takeaways and deliveries where they have not done so before.

A business will only be in a position to do this if they are registered as a food business with a Local Authority.

We suggest that you check with your insurance company that you and your delivery staff are covered for these additional activities.

Scientific advice is that it is very unlikely that COVID-19 can be spread through food, but, if you are changing how you are used to operating then you should think through the hazards and ensure that you have control measures in place.

Review your menu and think about which items are suitable for takeaway and delivery. You should ensure that you have adequate storage facilities for any additional stock you are purchasing.

Consider how you are going to process the food orders and whether you will need to cook and cool the food in advance. If you decide to do this, food must be cooled as quickly as possible and refrigerated until required. Measures used to reduce cooling times include: portioning/reducing volume of food being cooled; transferring into shallow trays; restricting size of meat joints; and use of an ice bath.

All foods must be delivered to consumers in a way that ensures that they do not become unsafe or unfit to eat.

Foods that need refrigerating must be kept cool while they are being transported. This may need to be packed in an insulated box with a coolant gel or in a cool bag. If you are transporting hot food, it should be kept hot. This may need to be packed in an insulated box. It is recommended to keep distances short and times limited to within 30 minutes.

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>

Allergen Management

Review your allergen procedures, particularly how you are going to ensure that the correct allergen-free dish is received by the correct customer.

There is a wealth of advice for businesses on allergen management on the FSA website at <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses>

Contact-free delivery

Limiting contact when delivering orders will help keep everyone healthy, so you could consider leaving deliveries at the door of your customer, rather than handing it over to them. Knock on the door step back at least 2 metres and wait nearby for your customer to collect it.

Take payments over the phone or internet rather than taking a cash payment.

Infection Control

You have responsibilities to ensure food handlers are fit for work under the food hygiene regulations and in addition you have a general duty to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of persons in your employment and members of the public.

Relevant staff must be provided with clear instructions on any infection control policy in place, and any person so affected and employed in a food business and who is likely to come into contact with food is to report immediately the illness or symptoms, and if possible their causes, to the food business operator.

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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>

However, this is not specific for food businesses, but it does advise that if you have been asked to self-isolate, you can order by phone or online, such as through takeaway services or online shopping deliveries. **However, make sure you tell the delivery driver that the items are to be left outside, or as appropriate for your home.**

If you are undertaking deliveries, then you should have a system in place to ascertain/develop a system whereby clients can notify the restaurant/delivery drivers whether they are self-isolating so that action can be taken accordingly as highlighted above.

If you have any questions regarding the above please do not hesitate to contact Environmental Health on 01444 477433 or by email to foodsafety@midsussex.gov.uk