

**Ref No 9004 (v4)**

## Catering Premises and Equipment

### Introduction

New food hygiene regulations were introduced in January 2006. The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended), to provide the framework for EU legislation to be enforced in England. There are similar regulations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. If you are planning to start a new catering business, you must register your premises with the environmental health service at your local authority at least 28 days before opening.

This is a legal requirement under the Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991 and applies to most types of food business, including catering businesses run from home, and mobile or temporary premises such as stalls and burger vans. Contact your local authority for information on how to register.

### Premises

When selecting premises for your business, it is very important to make sure that they: meet the necessary regulations; are suitable for the purpose of your business; and allow you to prepare food safely.

The following rules apply to the entire premises, not just the areas used for preparing food.

#### Design and construction

The premises you use must be designed and built in a way that allows you to keep the place clean and to work hygienically. They must also be designed to keep out pests, such as flies and rats.

#### Hand washing facilities and toilets

Your premises must have enough wash-basins for staff to wash their hands. This is as well as sinks in food areas for washing food and cleaning equipment – also see Hardfacts 9005 and 9006.

There must also be enough toilets and these must not lead directly into food areas.

#### Washbasins

Basins for washing hands must have hot and cold running water and you must provide soap and materials for drying hands hygienically, such as disposable towels.

#### Changing facilities

You must provide adequate facilities for staff to change their clothes, where necessary.

#### Waste

You must make adequate arrangements for food waste and other types of rubbish to be stored and removed.

There are rules about the way certain types of food waste must be collected and disposed of. Contact your local authority for more information.

#### Water supply

There must be an adequate supply of drinking water at your premises.

#### Other requirements

Your premises must also have adequate ventilation, lighting and drainage.

### Food preparation areas

All these rules apply to rooms where food is prepared.

#### Floors, walls and surfaces

Floors, walls, and surfaces in food rooms, must be in a 'sound condition'. They must be easy to clean and (where necessary) to disinfect.

In practice, this means that floors, walls and surfaces should be smooth, hard-wearing, washable and in a good state of repair.

#### Ceilings

Ceilings must be designed and constructed in a way that prevents condensation, build-up of dirt, moulds, and shedding of particles.

In practice, this means that ceilings should be in good condition, smooth and easy to clean, with no flaking paint or plaster.

### Windows

Windows and any other openings must be designed and built in a way that prevents dirt building up. Windows that can be opened to the outside must be fitted with insect-proof screens, where necessary.

### Doors

Doors must be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect.

### Equipment

All equipment that comes into contact with food must be kept in good repair and be made in a way that allows it to be cleaned thoroughly and, where necessary, to be disinfected.

### Facilities for cleaning equipment

Your premises must have adequate facilities for cleaning and disinfecting any tools, utensils and equipment used in the premises.

There must be an adequate supply of hot and cold water.

### Facilities for washing food

You must have a separate sink for washing food (not the same one used for equipment and utensils) if un-wrapped food is handled as part of your business. There must be an adequate supply of hot and/or cold water of drinking quality.

Always use basins and sinks for the right purpose. Staff should wash their hands in basins that are used just for washing hands. They should never wash their hands in a sink used for cleaning equipment or a sink used for washing food.

Equipment should be cleaned in a sink used just for that purpose and food should be washed in a sink used just for washing food.

## **Cleaning**

Effective cleaning removes bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces. So it helps to stop bacteria from spreading onto food. You should take the following steps:

- Make sure that all your staff wash and dry their hands thoroughly before handling food

- Clean food areas and equipment between different tasks, especially after handling raw food
- Clean as you go. If you spill some food, clear it up straight away and then clean the surface thoroughly.
- Use cleaning products that are suitable for the job, and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Do not let food waste build up

Lack of basic cleanliness is one of the most common reasons for food businesses being prosecuted.

## **Key Action Steps**

- If starting a new business or proposing material changes to an existing catering business, contact the local authority to notify them. This is normally dealt with by the Environmental Health Department
- Review the standards and facilities provided in the premises against the legal requirements seeking advice from the local authority Environmental Health Department if in doubt on any aspect.

## **References**

For more information visit the Food Standards Agency's 'Safer food, better business' website at [www.food.gov.uk/cleanup](http://www.food.gov.uk/cleanup) or contact your local authority.

The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations, 2006 (as amended) can be accessed at the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) website. <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>

The following leaflets are available from the Food Standards Agency publication Tel: 0845 606 0667

Food hygiene – A guide for businesses

Starting up – Your first step in running a catering business

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Aviva Risk Management Solutions operate a Risk Helpline during normal business hours for the cost of a local telephone call. The telephone number is:

**0845 366 66 66**

[www.aviva.co.uk/risksolutions](http://www.aviva.co.uk/risksolutions)