

A guide on how to comply with food safety legislation



Good hygiene practices for outdoor catering

The following pages of advice are based on the requirements of:

- The Food Safety Act 1990
- The Food Safety (General Hygiene) Regulations 1995
- The Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations 1995.

This leaflet gives you advice on good hygiene practice and how to comply with the requirements of food safety legislation. The standards we have indicated are the minimum that we will accept. Failure to meet these standards may result in eviction from the site/venue and possible prosecution.

Stalls and vehicles used for preparing, cooking and selling food

Design and construction of stalls/vehicles

- All stalls/vehicles must be designed and constructed so that they can easily be kept clean, avoid any risk of food contamination, and any risk from pests.
- All stalls must be screened at the top, rear and sides, to protect food and catering equipment from contamination. The materials used must be able to be cleaned easily.
- Vehicle interiors should be fitted for the purpose of food preparation with cleanable lining and kitchen fittings.
- Work surfaces, cooking facilities and storage facilities must be of smooth, durable and readily cleanable material (not bare wood), and must be kept clean.
- Ensure there is adequate lighting and ventilation in vans.

Equipment

- All stalls/vehicles must have suitable hand washing facilities with a constant supply of hot and cold water, along with a supply of soap and disposable towels. This must be set up to a suitable height ready for use when catering.
- All stalls/vehicles must have suitable facilities for washing utensils, equipment and food. Ideally a double sink unit for washing and rinsing should be used with a constant supply of hot and cold water.
- All stalls must have adequate facilities for disposing of rubbish and waste food, and for separating out unfit food. Large plastic sacks must be properly tied or sealed. Cardboard boxes and open containers are not suitable for disposing of waste. All waste must be placed in the containers provided.

Water supply

- All stalls/vehicles must have a sufficient supply of fresh water. Water supply should be available on site, but please check beforehand.
- Ice must only be made from fresh water, and must be stored and handled in conditions which protect it from contamination.

Food handling practices

All stall/vehicle operators must take adequate precautions to protect food from contamination.

The basic rule is: **keep raw food away from cooked/ready to eat food**

- Raw ingredients and other materials must be stored to prevent contamination and/or deterioration
- Provide separate containers for raw and ready to eat foods and avoid dual use at all times. Containers used for transporting food must be cleaned and capable of being kept clean
- Use separate cooking utensils for raw and cooked foods.

Temperature control

- Careful control of food temperatures is probably the most important way of reducing the risk of causing food poisoning
- Adequate facilities must be provided for maintaining and monitoring suitable food temperatures
- Cold food must be kept below 8°C and hot food must be kept above 63°C
- Ensure that chilled or frozen goods are delivered at a suitably controlled temperature
- Food must be kept cool (below 8°C) until it can be cooked or heated
- Take care when cooking raw foods, and make sure that they are thoroughly cooked before they go on sale. Cook small quantities at a time, and for long enough to cook the inside of the food.
- Adequate facilities must be provided for reheating and maintaining (whilst stored) the temperature of hot food, at or above 63°C.

- Only sufficient food for service on the day should be brought for reheating. Any leftovers at the end of the day must be thrown away and on no account must it be reheated again for sale the day after.
- Partial cooking off-site is not recommended because of the difficulties with temperature control over prolonged periods of time.

Checking the temperature of your food

You cannot check correct food temperatures unless you have a thermometer. Basic digital probe model thermometers can be used to check that cooking, as well as cold storage of food, is being done properly and safely. Make sure that you use a probe wipe to sanitise the thermometer before and after use, to prevent cross-contamination.

Personal hygiene

- Always remember to wash your hands before handling food, and after using the toilet or after handling raw foods or waste
- Wear clean clothing
- Ensure cuts and sores are covered with a coloured waterproof dressing
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food, and never cough or sneeze over food
- Do not smoke or eat near food.

Training

As stated in the Food Safety Regulations, the owners of food businesses must ensure that staff that handle food are supervised and instructed, and/or trained, in food hygiene matters.

There are a range of food hygiene courses offered by recognised organisations, such as the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and The Royal Society of Health (RSH).

Your local Environmental Health Officer may be able to advise you on courses in your area.

Safety

Mobile vans

Separate accommodation is required for liquid petroleum gas (LPG) containers outside the van. The pipework to appliances must be fixed, but a small flexible hose is acceptable between the cylinder and appliances. The cylinder and supply must be properly secured and ventilated to the outside of the van. All equipment must be safely positioned and most will need to be permanently fixed.

Stalls

Armour type flexi-hosing must be used between appliance and cylinder, with a suitable shut-off valve. The cylinders must be secured and positioned safely and carefully, out of passageways and away from heat sources.

Fire precautions

Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of fire. A suitable fire blanket and extinguisher must be conveniently located near all cooking areas. Either Powder or CO₂ must be readily available.

Electrical appliances

All electrical appliances and associated wiring, plugs and sockets etc., should be in a sound and safe condition. Fuses should be fitted appropriate to the rating of the appliance, or as required by the site for electrical safety.

General points to remember

Care should be taken when positioning pipes, cables and any other items, so that they don't present a hazard in the working space, either underfoot or where they may be damaged.

A **first aid box** must be readily available.

Take whatever precaution necessary to prevent injury to the public or any person working on the stall or van.

There may be other specific safety requirements on the site you are to operate on - you are advised to check these with the organisers.

Guidelines for barbecuing at outdoor events

Minimise the risks attached to the cooking and handling of barbecued meat and poultry, and provide safe and wholesome products by following these rules:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food and after touching raw meat.
- Thaw meat and poultry before cooking. Keep all raw foods covered and separate from cooked foods.
- Store, prepare and cook raw meats, including chicken, separate from other foods – even when cooking – to avoid cross-contamination.
- Always use separate utensils for raw and cooked meat.
- Once cooked, the food should be sold straight away or stored in a hot cabinet at the correct temperature (63°C or above), until it is sold.
- When cooking raw food, ensure that it is completely cooked through, in particular chicken, burgers and sausages.
- Cook all meat and meat products until they are piping hot and the juices run clear.
- Turn food regularly as it cooks to avoid charring on one side and under-cooking on the other.
- When cooking meat and poultry, ensure larger, thicker portions are placed on the barbecue farthest away from the most intense heat to ensure thorough cooking without burning.

Food safety hazards at outdoor events

Catering at an outdoor event is a high-risk activity and will always carry with it the possibility of causing food poisoning to a large number of people. Past food poisoning outbreaks have shown that even if food has been prepared in a clean mobile unit, illness can still be caused if the food is not stored, prepared, cooked and served properly.

Poor and careless hygiene practices, and the warmer weather in the summer, can create ideal conditions for bacteria such as salmonella and E.coli to multiply to unsafe levels in food.

There is a general requirement in the UK Hygiene Regulations for all food businesses to be operated in a hygienic manner and that all food served to the public is safe and wholesome. To achieve this, it now means that people who run food businesses will need to look carefully at each step in the operation of their business so that anything which might affect the safety of food (a hazard) is identified. If you do this, you will go a long way towards cutting down the risks of hazards occurring and causing illness or injury to your customers.

Hazard analysis

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations require that anyone who sells or processes food, does so safely and hygienically. We have provided the checklist below to help you ensure that any hazards are identified, for you to put the necessary controls in place. This is specifically designed for caterers attending outdoor events.

If you answer 'no' to any of these questions, then there is a potential problem which will increase risks of something going wrong. Most of these are common sense practices, which you have probably been following for years.

Purchase

Are you purchasing raw ingredients or food products from a reputable company? Yes No

Storage

Are all food storage areas in a good state of repair, and clean and free from pests? Yes No

Is good stock rotation carried out, and are stocks within their expiry dates? Yes No

If you use raw and cooked foods are they adequately separated during storage? Yes No

Are high-risk foods (e.g. cooked rice) stored under refrigeration below 8°C? Yes No

Preparation

Do staff always wash their hands before preparing food, and after handling raw food? Yes No

Are separate utensils used for raw and cooked food, e.g. tongs, knives, etc.? Yes No

Do you use separate chopping boards for raw and cooked food? Yes No

If you answered 'no' to the previous question, are they properly disinfected between contact with raw and cooked foods? Yes No

Cooking

Is all frozen meat and poultry thoroughly thawed before cooking? Yes No

Is all meat and poultry cooked until it is piping hot and the juices run clear? Yes No

Are cooked and part-cooked food separated during cooking? Yes No

Reheating food

Is all food reheated until it is piping hot? Yes No

Do you only reheat food once? Yes No

After cooking

Is food cooked and served straight away? Yes No

If 'no' is it held at 63°C or above until served? Yes No

Once cooked, is food protected from contact with raw food and foreign bodies? Yes No

Cleaning

Do you have a cleaning schedule to ensure all areas of the unit are kept clean? Yes No

Do you and your staff operate a 'clean-as-you-go' procedure? Yes No

Do you use clean cloths and a 'food-safe' disinfectant to clean food contact surfaces? Yes No

Do you ensure that cleaning chemicals are kept away from food? Yes No

Pest control

Is the unit adequately covered and screened to protect food from contamination? Yes No

Is the unit free from pests, and is open food protected from flying insects? Yes No

Food waste

Are there sufficient lidded refuse containers for the safe storage of food waste? Yes No

If there is no main drainage are there sufficient containers for liquid waste? Yes No

Staff

Are all food handlers trained, supervised or given instruction to ensure food safety? Yes No

Do staff display a good standard of personal hygiene and wear clean over-clothing? Yes No

Do staff wash their hands on entering the unit, especially after visiting the toilets? Yes No

Are food handlers aware that they should not work if suffering from certain illnesses? Yes No

Is there a first aid box with blue waterproof plasters? Yes No

Remember that food poisoning is preventable, and we can all help avoid it by following good hygiene practices.

Spanish

Si desea esta información en otro idioma, rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 6111

Portuguese

Se desejar esta informação noutro idioma é favor telefonar para 020 7926 6111

French

Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 6111

Bengali

এই তথ্য অন্য কোনো ভাষায় আপনার প্রয়োজন হলে অনুগ্রহ করে ফোন করুন 020 7926 6111

Twi

Se wope saa nkaeboy yi wo kasa toforo mu a fre 020 7926 6111

Yoruba

Ti e ba fe lmoṣan yii, ni èdè Òmiràn, eṣì, e kàn wà l'ágogo 020 7926 6111

If you would like this information in large print, braille, audio tape or another language please contact 020 7926 6111

Our customer care standards

Lambeth Council staff aim to look after you whenever you need our help.

- When you arrive in reception, we will let you know how long you may have to wait if you don't have an appointment, and see you on time if you do. Contact details will be on display and staff will wear name badges.
- When you phone us, we will answer within five rings and take a brief message if the person you need to speak to isn't there. There will be an alternative number on our answer machines if they are taking our calls, but if you choose to leave a message, we will return your call by the next working day.
- When you send us a letter, fax or email, you will receive a full response within ten working days. If we can't reply in full by then, we will let you know why and when you can expect a full response.
- When you speak to us, we will give our name. We will be polite and courteous, treat you with respect, and offer you help.
- If you have a complaint, we will try to resolve it for you. If you are unhappy with our response we can send you information on Lambeth Council's formal complaints procedure.

Lambeth Regulatory Services (Consumer Protection)

London Borough of Lambeth

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London SE24 OAZ

Telephone: 020 7926 6111

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