



HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE FOR A NEW BUSINESS

If you intend on opening a small to medium sized business within the Borough, as an employer or self employed person, you must comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and associated regulations made under it.

The following are some health and safety issues that will affect you should you open a food or non food business as you can be subject to health and safety intervention, as and when appropriate.

1. Training

You must ensure any employees have suitable information, instruction, supervision and/or training to ensure their health and safety when carrying out their duties. This is especially important if operating machinery or equipment. Please keep copies of any training records on site for authorised officers to see.

2. Health and Safety Policy & Risk Assessment

If you employ 5 people or more, you must prepare a written Health and Safety Policy.

You must also consider a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment of your business activities and record this if you employ 5 or more people.

- This assessment may include topics like
- Manual Handling;
- Lone Working;
- COSHH (chemicals, dust and substances);
- Slips and Trips (the greatest cause of accidents in food businesses); and
- Using Work Equipment.

This is not an exhaustive list. For Policy and Risk Assessment templates, please go to www.hse.gov.uk.

3. Health and Safety Poster

You must display a Health and Safety Law poster if you have employees. The new version is modern, easy to read and set out in simple terms, using numbered lists of basic points, what employers and workers must do, and tell you what to do if there is a problem. This can be ordered from HSE Books (telephone: 01787 881165) and is distributed by other internet and booksellers.

4. Workplace Accidents

- If someone has been hurt or falls ill at work, it is important to take care of them straight away, and make any dangerous conditions safe.
- If you have employees, there must be an 'appointed person' on duty at all times to take charge of the situation.

- You must provide an Accident Book (e.g. BI 510) or other approved recording system.
- You must provide a first aid kit containing, for example:
 - a leaflet giving general guidance on first aid
 - 20 individually wrapped sterile plasters (assorted sizes)
 - 2 sterile eye pads
 - 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages
 - 6 medium (approx. 12cm x 12cm) and 2 large (approx. 18cm x 18cm) individually wrapped sterile wound dressings
 - one pair of disposable gloves
- Please do not keep tablets or medicines in your first aid box. Your appointed person should ensure that your first aid box is restocked when necessary.

Certain accidents are legally reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Disease & Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 on line via www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index/htm

5. Electrical Safety

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 applies to all businesses.

- If taking on an existing business, ask the current owner / occupier for a copy of the most recent Electrical Test Inspection Certificate to show that the fixed installation (i.e. wiring and distribution board etc) has been inspected within the last 5 years and is deemed safe.
- If one cannot be provided, consider employing an NICEIC or other competent and registered electrical contractor to carry out a site survey on the fixed installation. Visit www.niceic.com
- Regular routine visual inspection of portable equipment is necessary in checking for faults and defects. The checks must be made by a 'competent' person who needn't be an electrician if it is low risk equipment (e.g. computers, kettles, microwaves).
- Electrical equipment must not be sighted in areas where it may be exposed to the effects of wet or other hazardous conditions.
- All metallic / conductive parts need to be bonded and efficiently connected to earth.

We can ask to see a certificate or other proof of inspection and / or maintenance at any health and safety visit.

6. Gas Safety

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 apply to all businesses.

- Any gas appliance, installation pipe work or flue must be maintained in a safe condition so as to prevent a risk of injury, notably carbon monoxide escape. Such work can only be undertaken by a contractor on the **Gas Safe** Register; please see www.gassaferegister.co.uk to find a local contractor.
- If taking on an existing business, ask the current owner / occupier for a copy of the most recent Gas Safety Certificate to show that any gas boiler and / or appliances have been inspected within the last 12 months and deemed safe.
- If one cannot be provided, consider employing a Gas Safer registered contractor to carry out a site survey on the gas installation.
- Any gas appliance must also be CE Marked and suitable for use in the UK.

Please consider your gas and ventilation needs carefully and seek advice from a specialist. For instance, some appliances in a food business require a dedicated flue system and require the provision of an interlock which will shut off the gas supply in the event of an air movement failure.

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7. Temperature in the Workplace (Ventilation)

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 apply to all businesses.

- The temperature in indoor workplaces “shall be reasonable”. There is no specific temperature, although guidance says the minimum temperature in workrooms should normally be at least 16°C, unless much of the work involves severe physical effort in which case the temperature should be at least 13°C.
- Guidance states an acceptable zone of thermal comfort for most people in the UK lies roughly between 13°C and 30°C, with acceptable temperatures for more strenuous work activities concentrated towards the bottom end of the range, and more sedentary activities towards the higher end.
- In food businesses, workplace temperatures and humidity that build up from cooking and equipment must not be excessive to either compromise food safety or affect the health of any employees.

Please consider your ventilation needs carefully and seek advice from a specialist.

8. Work Equipment

You must have arrangements to ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair. You should keep a written record of when any equipment is maintained or serviced etc. This is especially important for any mobile vehicles, pressure vessels (e.g. coffee machines); slicing machines, band saws and dough mixers etc.

9. Working Hours

The Working Time Regulations 1998 apply to all businesses.

- Employees must not work more than an average of 48 hours a week unless by written agreement to do more. Night workers (11pm - 6am) should not work more than an average of 8 hours daily.
- Adults are entitled to a 20 minute rest break during the working day if working for longer than 6 hours. Those under 18s are entitled to 30 minutes break if working longer than 4 hours.
- Adults are entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of 11 consecutive hours between each working day. Those under 18s are entitled to 12 hours rest.

10. Safety Glazing (shop doors and windows)

Every window or other transparent or translucent surface in a wall, partition, door or gate needs, where necessary for reasons of health or safety, be of a safety material or be protected against breakage of the transparent or translucent material; and be appropriately marked or incorporate features to make it apparent. The regulation only expects action "where necessary for reasons of health or safety".

Please ensure you assess every window or other transparent or translucent surface in a wall, partition, or door or gate to establish whether there is a risk of anyone being hurt if people or objects come into contact with it, or if it breaks.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of legal requirements and it is up to the business operator to comply with all relevant laws.

To contact BDRS for any health and safety, food hygiene, licensing or trading standards matter, please refer to our website www.sutton.gov.uk, ring our call centre on 0208 770 5070 or email us at bdrs@sutton.gov.uk.