



Re-opening checklist for food businesses during COVID-19

This is the FSA's re-opening checklist. NCASS has made some helpful additions for members which are marked up in **green**.

Please read this checklist, then tick and date when each check has been completed.

Planning & preparation for start-up

- Check that your Local Authority is informed of current food activities.
- Notify your Local Authority of your intention to restart operations.
- Notify your Local Authority of any change to the business activities you are registered for. This includes the introduction of any new delivery or takeaway service.
- Update your Food Safety Management System for any new Procedures.
- Consider any risks to food safety introduced by changes to procedures.
- Review and document new procedures in relation to takeaway or delivery services, e.g. allergen management, cook-chill-reheat, temperature control awaiting collection or during delivery.
- Review and implement the NCASS compliance resources, including editable Risk Assessment, guidance on operating as a delivery, collection or takeaway, compliance statement & customer notice.**
- Manage risks of cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods.
- Ensure food packaging for takeaways and delivery is food grade, and appropriate for the purpose and food type.

_____ Store food packaging hygienically. Check that the hygiene and integrity of any packaging stored through a period of closure has been maintained and dispose of unsuitable packaging.

_____ Check staff are fit for work and can access clean work clothes.

_____ Consider adjustments to fitness for work procedures to take account of COVID-19 symptoms. Initial telephone interviews with staff may be beneficial in assessing fitness to work.

_____ Review the government advice on use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) outside of medical and care settings. Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19) has further guidance for restaurants offering takeaway or delivery.

_____ If your business requires staff to wear PPE, check you have adequate stocks available.

_____ Review any PPE laundering procedures, where appropriate, to ensure PPE worn by staff can be safely changed and cleaned regularly.

_____ Ensure any changes to procedures are communicated to staff and training is provided where appropriate, including training of any new staff.

Staff should be trained / re-trained in:

- Social Distancing
- Workstation or role specific Covid-19 hazards, controls or tasks
- Cleaning
- Personal Hygiene & Handwashing
- PPE if required
- Record Keeping
- Managing Customers
- Reporting Covid-19
- Allergen management and any changes
- Business Processes / Food safety procedures and any changes or additions
- FIRST AID: Check you have enough trained first aiders to manage safety on site and to cope with staff being absent though isolating

_____ Complete the NCASS Covid-19 Safe Training course

_____ Check registered waste carrier services

_____ Ensure that your registered waste carrier services are running and available as required, to ensure there is no build-up of waste on site.

Site Checks

- Check food preparation areas are clean and disinfected (this includes work surfaces, equipment and utensils).
- Carry-out a full site assessment to determine if you can undertake a thorough clean or if a professional deep clean is needed.
- Source suitable cleaning and disinfection consumables and check existing stocks are within their use-by date. Cleaning products made-up or diluted before any closure should be disposed of as effectiveness reduces over time. See our guidance on cleaning if your regular cleaning products are not available.
- Assess if staff need re-training on dilution rates and cleaning procedures.
- Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfection, paying particular attention to shared equipment and high through-put and touch areas.
- Check all areas are free from evidence of pest activity.
- Check your pest control contractor is open and available if required.
- Look for evidence of pests, and take action if necessary, before restarting your operations. Check for:
 - signs of damage or smearing to walls and doors
 - gnawed or stained packaging
 - footprints in dust
 - animal droppings or urine smell
 - insect bodies, larvae, cocoons and egg/pupal casings
 - feathers
- Consider resetting your pest-control schedule if necessary
- Arrange for contractors to undertake a pre-opening site survey, if required.
- Check handwashing and cleaning materials' availability (this includes soap, sanitiser and paper towels)

Consider adding extra handwash basins:

Portable Handwash for mobile caterers: Consider whether your handwash has the capacity to facilitate more regular handwashing and whether you will be able to safely restock.

If you run a mobile catering business, do you have enough suitable waste-water containers for extra handwashing requirements and stations. Note: It is a criminal offence to pour wastewater OR oil into storm drains.

- _____ Make sure all consumables are within dates for use.

- _____ Obtain enough of your regular cleaning consumables such as soap, sanitiser and paper towels. Provide suitable alternatives if your regular products are unavailable.

- _____ Consider updating staff training in line with government advice that staff should wash their hands more frequently than usual. This should be for 20 seconds with warm water and soap.

- _____ Check hot and cold running water is available at all sinks and hand wash basins.

- _____ Make sure adequate hand-washing stations are provided at all appropriate points within the food production and communal areas.

- _____ Consider providing hand sanitiser additional to handwashing facilities at appropriate locations.

Equipment checks

- Check your fridges, chilled display equipment and freezers are working properly.
- Thoroughly clean equipment before restarting and restocking.
- Check required temperatures and any temperature control records, if kept during closure period.
- Review whether equipment requires maintenance after a period of inaction.
- Allow sufficient time for equipment to reach required temperature before restocking.
- Remove and refresh any ice left in machines and dispensers.
- Check your other equipment (e.g. oven) is working properly.
- Thoroughly clean all equipment before reopening.
- Inspect for maintenance requirements, verify temperatures and re-calibrate where necessary for time or temperature.
- Run dishwashers and glasswashers empty on hot cycle before use.
- Flush through taps and other equipment with water systems (e.g. bain marie).
- Consider Legionella risks and take action in line with Legionella guidance from the Health and Safety Executive to reduce risks.
- Check probe thermometer is working properly, and probe wipes are available.
- Consider whether probe thermometers need to be recalibrated.
- Fire Safety - Check all fire extinguishers in date and undamaged.**

Mobiles Caterers & Gazebos

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, NCASS had planned to consult (with members) and then publish street food standards, which we had developed in association with industry partners and experts to promote and support safe street food (mobile catering).

A major reason for developing those standards was the piecemeal uptake of the update LPG COP24 across the industry – and the reasonably regular reports of explosions or fires at markets and events. With much of the restaurant industry now able to move outside, old habits in street food are likely to translate into unsafe cooking on high streets. No NCASS member should be using a gas rig that is not compliant with COP24 which has been in place for over two years.

NCASS members should upload images of their gas rigs in situ alongside their gas safety certificates as this will enable us to help UK LPG to identify gas engineers that are signing off unsafe installations that pose a risk to caterers, their staff, the businesses trading alongside them and the public.

NCASS Strongly recommends that all gazebo traders or those looking to trade from outside kitchen set ups, ensure that their rig is COP24 compliant.

Additional checklist for mobile caterers

- Up to date gas certificate demonstrating COP24 Compliance.
- Ensure all equipment is commercial grade, CE marked and listed for outside use.
- All electrical appliances to have RCCB connectors and sockets.
- Kitchen arrangement to maintain distancing and limit staff / customer contact.
- If handling cash do you have means of safely storing or cleansing potentially contaminated money, washing hands at point of exchange and handing over non-contaminated change? Do you have a portable touch free card reader?

Ingredient & product checks

- Check raw materials and ingredients.
- Check for any damage to packaging which might affect safety of food or result in loss of allergen information.
- Check for any evidence of temperature abuse which may render the food unsafe. Refer to temperature control records where available.
- Check the use-by and best before dates on existing stock. Ensure that storage has been in-line with manufacturer's instructions. For example, check that any opened or unsealed product has been stored in line with labelled instruction such as 'Once opened consume within.'
- For foods frozen by you on closure, check that labelling and records are sufficient to allow the safe use of the food.
- Check that the length of storage is in-line with your assessment at point of freezing.
- Check that you can obtain your usual raw materials and ingredients so that your product specifications can be met.
- Ensure that any new suppliers are reputable and can meet your requirements. Safer food, better business guidance is available on the selection of suppliers and contractors.
- Check allergen information is accurate and available for all items on sale.
- Review your allergen management system, allergen matrices and menus to account for changes of supplier and any new raw materials or products.
- Review new takeaway or delivery services to ensure risk of allergen cross-contamination is managed.
- Ensure allergen information is available to customers at time of ordering and at delivery of food.

Social distancing measures

- Review the government advice on social distancing in the workplace in *Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)*.
- Provide where possible for 2 or 1 metre+ social distancing. See *Social distancing at work* and *Food preparation*.
- Consider steps to minimise staff-customer interactions. See *Managing your customers, visitors and contractors*.
- Consider how you will communicate with, update and where necessary train staff in new procedures. See *Communications and training*.
- Identify staff at higher risk. See *Protecting people at higher risk*.
- Cohort working teams to lower staff mixing. See *Workforce management*.
- Increase ventilation. You should assess the possibility to do this without introducing new risks or hazards to food safety and hygiene. See *Before reopening*.
- Refer to government guidance on social distancing, customer interaction and communication or instructions to the public.

Customer Engagement

As an independent business, you will understand that every interaction with your customers counts, from social posts to mailers, through to online orders and in person conversations.

- Write down what your customers should expect when they visit your business, e.g., enhanced cleaning procedures, recording personal details for NHS Track & Trace, hand sanitisers etc.
- Share this with your customers via your website and social media channels so they know what to expect when they visit your premises.
- Clearly display these expectations in your premises.
- If you are taking customer contact details, ensure that you are GDPR compliant and clearly explain to the customer what their data is being used for.
- Share your Covid-19 Risk Assessment on your website.
- Use clear signage and place in an area of your premises where customers can easily read it to remind them of your expectations.
- Demonstrate to customers that you are keeping them safe through good hygiene and PPE where appropriate.