

Section: Food and Safety Team
Date : 2nd July 2020
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To the Food Business Operator

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
Operating a COVID secure food business**

I am writing to update you with the most recent guidance for operating a 'COVID secure' food business . As the hospitality sector prepares to open this weekend there are many things you need to consider in order to protect the safety of your staff, customers and the general public.

You have a responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of yourself, your employees and others affected by your business activities.

Guidance

There is a range of guidance on the GOV.UK website relating to different types of businesses. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>. This includes a specific guide for restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaways.

There is also additional guidance on the Health and Safety Executive's website particularly on how to undertake a COVID risk assessment.
https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm?utm_source=hse.gov.uk&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=coronavirus&utm_term=covid-landing&utm_content=home-page-popular

We also have Slough Borough Council Coronavirus webpage which includes a range of other information including support available to businesses- www.slough.gov.uk

Risk Assessment

You must carry out a risk assessment to consider the risk of Coronavirus infection at your workplace. You will need to introduce a range of controls to reduce the risk. The guidance documents give you information about the sort of controls you need. If you employ five or more people (even if they do not all work at the same time) you must write the risk assessment down.

Social Distancing for Staff:-

You should aim to maintain 2m social distancing at all times. If this is not viable then you may reduce the distancing to a **minimum** of 1 metre **but you must also put in place extra mitigation to control the risks**. Mitigating controls could include (but are not limited to)

separate workstations for staff, working back to back or side by side (rather than face to face), providing screens, increased cleaning and disinfection of work areas, hand contact surfaces and work equipment & more frequent handwashing. More options are described in the guidance. The choice of mitigation must be based on your risk assessment.

You must give information and instruction to your staff on the risks and how you want them to work to ensure their safety. You need to remind them that they must not come to work if they are unwell or should be self-isolating. If they are unwell they should be referred to the test and trace service for testing. You also need to supervise them to make sure that they are working safely and adhering to social distancing rules at all times.

Managing your customers.

Queuing:- You need to think carefully about how you manage customers coming into your business and also queuing outside. You will need to plan where any customers can queue without coming too close to customers for other business or those wanting to walk on pavements. You may need to have someone outside to ensure that your customers are queuing safely

Sitting at tables (inside or outside):-

Indoors groups are limited to people from two households. Outside groups are limited to either people from two households **or** a maximum of 6 individuals from any number of households.

Customers from different households must be able to maintain social distancing of 2m between them (if this is not viable this can be reduced to a minimum of 1m as long as you have additional mitigation in place). This applies even if the people from different households have come in as one group/booking.

You need to think about how you arrange seating, access to toilets, moving around the premises, ordering and service at tables to ensure that social distancing is maintained at all times. All of your considerations should be included in your COVID risk assessment.

Buffet service restaurants are not recommended at the moment.

Extra cleaning will be needed between customers and precautions over shared items such as plates, cutlery, glasses and condiments will need to be introduced. Single use sachets are advisable.

You may be tempted to put seats outside for your customers to use. In most areas of Slough this is not permitted. Please do not do this unless you have specific permission to do so

Keeping customer details for 'Test and Trace' purposes:-

Any business where customers stay on site to consume their food or drink should keep contact details for their customers in case the 'Test and Trace' service need to do any follow

up. Contact information needs to be kept securely for 21 days and then can be securely disposed of. You will need to think about how you do this. In most cases the details of a lead group member including their phone number will be sufficient. You must protect the personal data of your customers.

If you take bookings then you will probably have sufficient information in your booking systems, but if you allow passing customers to 'eat in' then you are going to need to start keeping extra information about them too.

Allergens Information

In preparation for reopening, you may have changed supplier or ingredients. We advise you to review your allergens information; to ensure you do not end up causing an allergic reaction to your customers. Also, if there are any changes, ensure your staff are trained up. If there has been no changes, remind your staff to be allergy aware.

We are working hard to help businesses operate safely, if you have any queries please email the team on foodandsafety@slough.gov.uk and we will get back to you.

We will be carrying out monitoring of businesses as they start to reopen. If we receive complaints or we see evidence of unsafe working practices then we will contact you to discuss this further.

Yours faithfully



Ann Stewart
Food Team Leader