

**Section:** Food and Safety Team  
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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 . With the reopening of non-essential shops on 15<sup>th</sup> June and the likely reopening of the hospitality sector in July there are many new 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> At the time of writing guidance was available for shops and also for restaurants offering takeaway and delivery. New guidance for preparing to reopen cafes, restaurants and other hospitality businesses is expected the week of 15<sup>th</sup> June.

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=referal&utm\\_campaign=coronavirus&utm\\_term=covid-landing&utm\\_content=home-page-popular](https://www.hse.gov.uk/news/coronavirus.htm?utm_source=hse.gov.uk&utm_medium=referal&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](http://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 referred to above 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.

Controls could include (but are not limited to) separate workstations for staff, controlling the number of customers coming into the shop, increased cleaning and disinfection of work

areas, hand contact surfaces and work equipment, more frequent handwashing, screens (where needed). You should be aiming to maintain 2m social distancing at all times wherever possible.

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. You also need to supervise them to make sure that they are working safely at all times.

### **Queuing and spaces outside your business.**

You need to think carefully about how you manage customers coming into your business and also queuing outside. This is going to be especially important now that more businesses will be opening. You will need to talk to the businesses near you to work out where any customers can queue without coming too close either to customers for other business or those wanting to walk on pavements. If you are based in a shopping centre you also need to speak to the people who manage the shopping centre.

You may need to have someone outside to ensure that your customers are queuing safely. Our Highway's Teams will be doing their best to mark pavements to ensure public safety, please do not put any permanent markings on the pavement outside your shops.

When the hospitality sector opens further 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.

If large numbers of people gather outside your business (not in your queues) in a way that you think breaches the current restrictions then please notify Thames Valley Police at the time by calling 101.

Please note that if you are a licensed premises, and customers take away alcohol, and gather in the immediate area to drink it, leading to breaches of the Coronavirus Regulations, the Licensing Act 2003 or Anti Social Behaviour controls, the premises could be subject to enforcement action.

We are working hard to help businesses operate safely , if you have any queries please email the team on [foodandsafety@slough.gov.uk](mailto: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**