

Advisory Note 14 Commercial Use of a Domestic Premise

This guidance contains advice for owners of domestic premises which are used for the commercial production of food. This would include home caterers where food preparation in the home is taken elsewhere, e.g. functions at village halls, Community and Social Clubs, sandwich makers, small bed and breakfast or Guest houses etc.

Legal Requirements

If you are handling or preparing food at home as a commercial business you must follow the provisions of the Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006 and ensure that the food is safe, supplied hygienically and any hazards are properly controlled.

Enforcement

Home caterers, like other food businesses will be inspected by the local Environmental Health Department. These visits may be pre-arranged but can be unannounced, particularly when investigating food poisoning cases, complaints or significant concerns about a particular food business.

Inspection

On inspection a discussion will take place to identify: -

- The type of food being prepared
- The nature of all food handling and processing activities
- The quantity of food being produced
- The frequency and timing of food operations
- Storage and transportation conditions
- Overall hygiene control systems
- The level of training of the proprietor

Guidance on Hygiene

The key areas of concern relate mainly to difficulties of controlling food safety hazards in the home, including: -

- Lack of commercial grade equipment, particularly refrigeration
- Access to food rooms by persons not involved in the food operation (including children and by pets)
- The use of food rooms for other activities e.g. washing dirty clothes, storage of pet food and feeding of pets and family eating.
- Limitations of the size, layout and design of domestic kitchens and decorative or structural finishes not normally found in commercial food premises
- Inadequate washing facilities for hands, equipment and food
- The presence of extraneous items such as pot plants
- Members of the family suffering from certain infectious diseases

Remember ! DANGER

- ***Don't*** take chances with people's health
- ***If*** you are thinking of catering from home contact your local Environmental Health Department to fully discuss the requirements and your responsibilities
- ***If*** you haven't got the facilities to cater safely from home, ***don't*** do it
- ***If you can't do it safely – don't do it at all***

**For further Advice/Information contact
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