

City of York Council – Food and Safety Unit

A Guide to Food Safety Management Systems

What does the law require?

Regulation (EC) No 852/2004, Article 5, requires you to do the following;

*Food business operators shall **put in place, implement and maintain** a permanent procedure based on the HACCP principles.*

What is HACCP?

HACCP stands for 'Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point'. It is a management system for ensuring that safe food is produced and served by a business, and it has an emphasis on preventing problems happening. There are 7 principles of HACCP, which are;

1. Identifying food safety hazards - the things that might go wrong
2. Identifying the step(s) at which controls are essential to prevent things going wrong. These steps are called critical control points
3. Establishing limits at critical control points – what is acceptable and unacceptable
4. Carrying out monitoring at critical control points, to make sure that the limits are not exceeded.
5. Establishing corrective actions to be taken when monitoring shows that the critical control point is not under control – what are you going to do if something goes wrong?
6. Verify or check that the system is working effectively in your business
7. Keep documents and records which show that the system is working effectively

How do I comply?

a) 'Putting in place a system'

You need to decide how your system for ensuring safe food is going to work in practice. This will include what could go wrong, how to stop things going wrong (controls), corrective actions and what checks you do to make sure the system works properly. In some cases, you will already be doing all these things now, in other cases you might want to improve on what you already do. A systematic approach will be needed, and there are different systems that you can use to achieve this;

- a) 'Safer Food Better Business' is published by the Food Standards Agency. This is a system based on HACCP principles. The pack is free and is also available to download on to computer.

- b) The company which you work for may already have a system in place. If so, you will need to read all the documentation and put into practice what it says. If you don't follow the company's system, you will be contravening the law.

- c) There are other management systems available on the Food Standards Agency website, including 'Cooksafe' and 'Safe Catering'. Some of these have been translated into other languages including Chinese and Punjabi. These publications are also free of charge.

b)'Implementing and maintaining the system'

Once you have decided upon your arrangements, you need to implement or put into practice what you have said, and make regular checks to ensure your system works. Examples of this might include;

- Training staff in any specific duties which they are responsible for
- Providing any equipment e.g. cleaning cloths, date labels
- A manager making regular checks that staff are doing tasks which they have been asked to do
- Taking action when things go wrong
- Reviewing the system every now and then or when things change e.g. when you change the menu
- Continually looking at how things can be improved
- Encouraging feedback from staff

Documentation & Records

Whichever system you use, you will need to write down your food safety management system for yourself and officers to look at. You should use this recorded information to train new staff as well.

Where you have identified controls in your written system, records must be kept. How you do this will depend upon which system you have put in place. For example, if you complete the Safer Food Better Business pack, you will need to keep the diary up to date and also fill in the 4 weekly reviews, staff training record and cleaning schedule. Other systems may require you to complete temperature monitoring records.

Training

Regulation (EC) No 852/2004, Annex II, Chapter IX, requires you to do the following;

'Food business operators must ensure that food handlers are supervised, instructed and/or trained commensurate with their work activity.....and that those responsible for the development and maintenance of the food safety management system have received adequate training'

The person(s) who are responsible for putting in place, maintaining and implementing the food safety management system will need an up to date knowledge of food hygiene. The minimum level of training would be equivalent to the Foundation Certificate in Food Hygiene (previously called the Basic Food Hygiene Certificate). If you would like advice about training courses, please contact a member of the Food and Safety Unit.

All staff will also need training in the system to enable them to put it into place. Depending on their role, some staff members may need training on the whole system, others only on the parts that apply to their job. You should keep a record of who has been trained in which parts.

What help is available?

When your business is due for a routine food hygiene inspection, an officer **may** make an appointment in order to discuss which system is suitable for you and what you need to do to comply (in addition to looking at the structural condition of your premises). After 3 months, they will make a revisit to check your progress. In rare circumstances, we will take formal action in order to ensure compliance with this legal requirement. Examples of situations where formal action would be considered are available in our enforcement policy, a copy of which is available on request.