

Advice for food businesses considering the temporary provision of food delivery

If as a food business, you are concerned about the latest Government guidance on not visiting restaurants during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic you may be considering advertising and providing food from your normal menu, or new dishes, for delivery.

This is fine to do but there are a few additional steps you should consider:

Ordering and delivery

Allergies: If you have a website you should put a clear sign on this stating “Please speak to a member of staff if you have any food allergies”

When customers phone to place an order, you should ask them if they or any of the people eating the food have any allergies. If they do, make a note of their requirements and ensure their food is prepared safely for them then clearly labelled. Any food prepared for allergenic customers should be stored separately for and during delivery.

Allergic reactions to ingredients can be fatal. Please see the [full list of 14 allergens](#) for further information.

Food should be put into food safe containers for delivery.

Try to take payment over the phone to avoid handling cash upon delivery. If you do need to take a cash payment, ask the customer for exact change or consider pricing your dishes to even prices, eg £8.00 instead of £8.20 to minimise the need for change. If you can, ensure your driver has some alcohol gel to clean their hands after handling money.

Government advice is to keep a distance (at least three steps away) from others. You may want to have a system whereby you leave the food delivery on the step of the house then telephone the customer, or similar.

Consider the time and distance for delivering and try and keep both to a minimum to maintain food quality.

Vehicles must be fit for purpose and food must not be subjected to potential contamination. Keep the interior of the vehicle clean and do not transport food with animals or chemicals such as fuel, oil and screen wash.

Check your vehicle insurance to ensure you are covered for business use.

Preparation

As per your normal operation food should always be prepared hygienically to prevent cross contamination. The Food Standards Agency consider it very unlikely to transmit Coronavirus through food, however extra and vigilant hand hygiene should be employed during food preparation.

You will need to update your food safety management system if any of your normal cooking processes have changed to provide delivered food, e.g. if you now cook → chill → reheat food to make food preparation quicker upon delivery, where before you used to just cook → serve. It's important to update your procedures on these changes to demonstrate you have considered any risks to food safety. Ensure any staff are made aware of these changes.

For food safety and quality, you want to ensure hot food is delivered piping hot. You will need to consider how to do this. Insulated cool boxes / bags are a good way to keep the heat in food. Also deliver the food as quickly as possible after preparing.

If you or any of your staff are displaying the symptoms of Coronavirus, you should not prepare food and should be self-isolating.

Premises Licensed under the Licensing Act 2003

You can only offer take away / delivery of alcohol if your premises licence covers you for "Off-sales" or "both on and off sales". You can check your Licence summary to confirm if you are covered under the heading "Licensable activities authorised by the licence"

When selling/delivering alcohol always ensure that ID checks are still carried out and that alcohol is not given to anyone under the age of 18.

You can only provide takeaway of hot food and drink until 23:00hrs unless you have "Late Night Refreshment" on your licence, if you are offering late night delivery, payment would then need to be taken over the phone or via an online delivery service portal.

Should you require further clarification on this or wish to make a variation to your premises licence, please visit the Premises Licence Page of the website <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Business/Licences/entertainmentandalcohollicences/premiseslicence> or email the Licensing Team at: licensing@solihull.gov.uk