



Comhairle Ceantair
**an Iúir, Mhúrn
agus an Dúin**
**Newry, Mourne
and Down**
District Council

NEW PREMISE INFORMATION LEAFLET



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Preface

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council is the third largest Council area in Northern Ireland, comprising more than 10 per cent of the total land area, including more than 100 miles of coastline. The Council serves over 176,000 residents (10 per cent of the population) and is one of the fastest growing areas of population.

In addition to Newry City, the principal towns within the District are Downpatrick, Ballynahinch, Kilkeel, Newcastle, Warrenpoint and Crossmaglen.

There are currently 2333 food businesses registered with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. These businesses include primary producers, manufacturers, transporters and distributors, restaurants and caterers, retailers, hotels and hospitals. We have 54 EC approved premises, the highest number in Northern Ireland, and many of those are fishery premises.



1.0 An introduction to food safety

The aim of the Food Safety section is to protect consumers by ensuring that all food manufactured, prepared or supplied by food businesses within the district:

- complies with food safety requirements and is of the nature, substance and quality demanded; and
- is of an acceptable quality and composition and is accurately labelled, presented and advertised.

This is done through risk rated inspection program, planned initiatives, the investigation of complaints and where necessary appropriate enforcement action.



1.1 The role of an EHO

Environmental Health Officers conduct routine inspections of food businesses including retail, catering and manufacturing establishments. The aim of inspections is to ensure that food business operators understand their legal responsibilities, ensure that the food they supply is safe and to check compliance with the law. Officers may also visit premises because of a complaint, an alleged food poisoning investigation or to obtain samples of food for testing in a laboratory.

1.2 Powers of an EHO

Our first approach is to educate food businesses on food safety matters however occasionally we do have to take enforcement action.

Under food safety legislation Officers have a right to enter and inspect food premises at all reasonable hours. They do not have to make an appointment and will usually come without giving notice. Officers have the power to take samples, photographs, inspect records and seize or detain food.

Officers may write to you informally asking you to put right any problems they find during an inspection. Where breaches of the law are identified that must be put right they may serve an improvement notice. In serious cases officers may recommend prosecution and where there is an imminent health risk to consumers, officers can serve an emergency prohibition notice which prohibits the use of premises or equipment.



2.0 Register your food business

When you start a new food business or take over an existing business, you must [register your food business](#) with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council.

You may have already registered your business with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council but if not, you should do this at least 28 days before opening. Registration of your food business is free and can't be refused. If you are already trading and have not registered, you need to do so as soon as possible.

Once you have registered your business via the link above The Health and Wellbeing Department will automatically receive your application and you will be allocated an Environmental Health Officer (EHO). Your EHO will be in touch via telephone or email to offer you advice on operating a food business. Once registered you will receive your first inspection no later than 28 days after opening. This inspection will be used to issue you with your food hygiene rating score which must be displayed.

These leaflets produced by the Food Standards Agency may answer some questions about starting up a food business.

[Starting Up – Your first steps to running a catering business](#)

[Food Hygiene – A guide for businesses](#)

3.0 Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS)

The FHRS has been operating since 2011 and is a Food Standards Agency (FSA) and Council partnership initiative. New legislation came into force in 2016 making the scheme mandatory.



The FHRS provides consumers with information about the hygiene standards of your premise. Following a food hygiene inspection, you will receive a rating from 0 (urgent improvements necessary) to 5 (very good).

The purpose of the scheme is to allow consumers to make informed choices about the places where they eat or shop. The scheme also encourages businesses to improve their hygiene standards.

You **MUST** display your statutory rating at a prominent position at all public entrances to your premises (additional stickers can be requested).

You **MUST** also ensure that your rating is declared to any prospective customer enquiring about your rating by any means e.g. in person or by telephone.

Further information on the scheme can be found [here](#).



4.0 Hazard analysis and critical control point (HACCP)

HACCP is a way of managing food safety hazards and is a legal requirement for a food business. Food safety management procedures should be based on HACCP principles.

HACCP involves:

- looking closely at what you do in your business, what could go wrong and what risks there are to food safety
- identifying any critical control points the areas a business needs to focus on to ensure those risks are removed or reduced to safe levels
- deciding what action, you need to take if something goes wrong
- making sure that your procedures are being followed and are working
- keeping records to show your procedures are working

It is important to have food safety management procedures that are appropriate for your business.

Several HACCP documents are available for you to easily download.

4.1 Safe Catering pack



Safe Catering is our food safety management guide for Northern Ireland. It helps catering businesses and retailers with a catering function to comply with food hygiene regulations.

You can download the full guide or individual sections and forms as you need them.

The guide is a useful tool to help food businesses produce a food safety management plan based on the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles and keep appropriate records.

It will enable you to:

- comply with food hygiene regulations
- show what you do to make food safely
- train staff
- protect your business's reputation
- improve your business
- improve your food hygiene rating score

[Download your safe catering pack here](#)

[Download your record pack here](#)



4.2 Safer Food Better Business (SFBB)

This pack include information on:

- cross-contamination
- cleaning
- chilling
- cooking
- management
- using the diary



Commented [TS1]: includes

The practical and easy-to-use packs will help you to:

- comply with food hygiene regulations
- show what you do to make food safely
- train staff
- protect your business's reputation
- improve your business
- improve your food hygiene rating score

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For childminders, residential care homes and training resources for college - each individual SFBB pack has specific information for the different requirements that you will need to know.

There are several different packs for specific types of premises and are also available in different languages.

[Download your SFBB pack here.](#)

5.0 Training

As a Food Business Operator, you must make sure that your staff are adequately supervised, instructed and trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities. People involved in the development and maintenance of the food safety management system (HACCP) must receive adequate training in relation to this.

Obtaining a qualification or attending formal training, provided either by an external training body or in-house, is not a legal requirement, though many businesses may want their staff to follow this route. Adequate supervision and instruction /on the job training may meet food safety training requirements.



Evidence of staff training will be examined during the inspections. You should keep records of all training received by staff in-house, online or through a registered trainer.

5.1 Free online food safety training

Free online training courses are available from the Food Standards Agency Website and these can be accessed by the links below;

- [Allergen training](#)
- [Labelling training](#)
- [Traceability training](#)
- [Vacuum packing training](#)

6.0 Food standards

EHOs carry out food standards inspection and interventions in food businesses to look at the quality, composition, labelling, presentation, advertising of food and the materials and articles in contact with food.

The aim of a food standards inspection is to assess systems used by a food business to demonstrate that the food being produced is of the correct composition and is fairly described and labelled. The food offered for sale should not mislead the consumer.

Officers also ensure that food sold to the customer is of the nature, substance or quality expected;

"Nature" covers a product sold as one thing, but which is in fact another, e.g. haddock sold as cod;

"Substance" covers situations where the food contains foreign bodies (e.g. insects) or damaging residues or where there is statutory or other standard for the food and the substance falls below it, for example milk powder with below minimum milk protein level. The necessary substance for products is set through compositional standards in commodity regulations for which separate guidance exists;

"Quality" covers commercial quality, having regard to any statutory standards of composition in the food, so an example of food which would not be of the quality demanded would be stale cake.

6.1 Packaging and labelling

Officers also check for compliance with the Food Information Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 which introduced a requirement for food businesses, including manufacturers, restaurants, takeaways, retailers, bakeries and sandwich bars, to inform their customers if any of fourteen specific allergens are contained in the food they serve or sell.

Allergen information must be highlighted in the ingredients list on pre-packaged food.



These regulations mean that:

- Allergen information must be made available to consumers for non-pre-packaged foods (including catering).
- Country of origin or place of provenance: origin requirements will tighten and will also be extended to fresh and frozen meat from pigs, sheep, goats and poultry.
- 'Back of pack' nutritional labelling information will become mandatory on the majority of pre-packed foods. It will be possible to voluntarily repeat on 'front of pack' information about on nutrients such as fat, sugar and salt which affect public health. It will also be possible to provide voluntary nutrition information in the 'front of pack' format on food sold loose (such as on deli counters) and in catering establishments.
- Added water in certain meat and fishery products must be shown in the name of the food if it makes up more than 5% of the final product.
- There is a minimum font size for mandatory information taking account of labelling sizes.
- The types of vegetable oil used in food, such as palm oil, must be stated on the label.
- Date of freezing must be shown on frozen meat, frozen meat preparations and frozen unprocessed fishery products.
- Drinks with high caffeine content must also be labelled as not recommended for children or pregnant and breastfeeding women, with the actual caffeine content quoted.
- If distance selling (for example online or to order) all mandatory information must be provided both before the purchase is concluded (except for durability date) and at delivery.

For further information on allergens, please click on the links below;

[Allergen guidance for businesses](#)

[Allergen signage](#)

[Allergen matrix](#)

6.2 Prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) foods

From **1 October 2021**, the requirements for prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food labelling changed in Northern Ireland. The new labelling changes will help protect your consumers by providing potentially life-saving allergen information on the packaging. You may have heard of these changes referred to as 'Natasha's Law'.

Any business that produces PPDS food will be required to label it with the name of the food and a full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised within the list.



[Labelling guidance](#) for Food Businesses for prepacked direct sale (PPDS)

You need to check if your products require PPDS labelling and what you need to do to comply with the new rules.

The following information leaflet gives a summary of the new requirements.

[Introduction](#) to Allergen Changes

6.3 PPDS Toolkits and Sector Specific Guidance.

The PPDS toolkit and sector-specific guidance will help you identify whether you provide PPDS food and what changes you may need to make.

See [sector-specific PPDS guidance](#), including information for:

- [Bakers](#)
- [Butchers](#)
- [Event caterers](#)
- [Fast food and takeaway restaurants](#)
- [Mobile sellers and street food vendors](#)
- [Restaurants, cafés and pubs](#)
- [Schools, colleges and nurseries](#)

Multi lingual allergen information is available the at:- <https://www.tradingstandards.uk/practitioners/food-allergen-resource>



7.0 Environmental Health contact details

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Newry Office
Monaghan Row
Newry
BT35 8DJ

Oifig Dhún Pádraig
Downpatrick Office
Downshire Civic Centre
Ardglass Road
BT30 6GQ

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