

 West Lothian Council	Environmental Health		SUBJECT: FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING
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		Public Health	
STATUS: TRADE ADVICE Data label: Public		Pollution Control	
		Pest Control/Dog Warden	

Information Sheet FH16

Food Hygiene Training

Introduction

Anyone who works with food must have the knowledge and skills they need to do it safely. Lack of the right knowledge and skills is the cause of many cases of food poisoning, prosecutions, complaints, and business closures. Good training in food hygiene has many benefits, and minimises the risks to business and customers. Just one person making a simple but crucial mistake through lack of training can ruin a whole business, so it is vital that **all** staff are properly trained.

This Information Sheet deals with the legal and practical aspects of providing a good level of training for food workers.

Legal Requirement

The Food Hygiene Regulations say that the person or company running a food business must make sure that all their food handlers are supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene to a level which is appropriate to their job.

This means that someone like a chef or cook, making high risk food, needs to know more about food safety than someone who only waits on tables or washes dishes. It also means that we expect the person in charge to know about the safety aspects of the whole operation, so that they can check how everyone else is doing. All this is just common sense, but failing to make sure that staff are properly trained is an offence, and can mean legal action and heavy fines.

Training Requirements

Training should be structured to provide the right information at the right time to the right people. Some people may already have done a good deal of training, and others will need to start from the very beginning. The level of training needed will depend on the duties of the job, and the level of risk to food.

Before deciding on a training plan, you should find out:-

- What level of training each different member of staff needs for their job.

- What training staff have already had, and when.
- What additional training or refresher training is needed in each case.
- What are the priorities, and who should be trained first.
- Whether you can offer the training in house, or if you will need to use external courses, consultants etc.

A Training Plan

Much of the training can be provided by the business itself, and need not be complicated. There are many good books, and other online materials, available to help with "in house" training.

There are also formal training courses at different levels, and these are now widely available. These can be very useful, especially for managers and supervisors who need to know enough to monitor the performance of others.

Induction Training

All food workers should be given **induction training** before they start work so that they understand at least the basic methods to follow. They will need extra supervision and instruction until they gain more experience.

All staff will need to understand the basics of food hygiene as part of their induction. Before starting food related work for the first time you must ensure they understand the following:-

- The correct hygiene precautions for the work they will be doing, including any written procedures that the company may have.
- What conditions prohibit them from working with food.
- What to do in the event of suffering from diarrhoea and/or vomiting.
- What practices are prohibited in a food room.
- What protective clothing should be worn, how it should be put on, when it should be removed, when it should be changed and where to obtain replacements.
- When, where, and how they should wash their hands.
- What first aid dressings must be worn and where they are kept.
- How they can cause food to be contaminated - microbiologically, physically and chemically, and how to prevent it.
- Why temperature control is important with regard to the food products they handle or prepare.
- How to handle and deal with waste.
- How to clean and avoid risk to the product.
- Their legal obligations.
- The consequences of food complaints/food poisoning.
- The procedures for reporting problems and taking corrective action.
- How to complete records satisfactorily.

On-the-job training is also critical in developing the correct attitude and behaviour of new food handlers. Staff must be shown the most hygienic method for preparing safe food. To make sure that staff understand the importance of good hygiene, they should be told the reasons behind carrying out a task in a particular way.

Records should be kept, dated and signed to show what training has been done.

Regular refresher training should be undertaken by staff to ensure work practices are commensurate with food hygiene and safety standards.

Formal Training

Formal training should follow induction training within 3 months. The Industry Guides say that all those handling open food should be trained in food hygiene to at least the equivalent of the Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate Level, and that those in a managerial or supervisory position be trained to at least the Intermediate Level.

The Royal Environmental Health Institute for Scotland offer a range of courses :-

- **Elementary Food Hygiene Certificate** – basic course intended for all people working in food sector.
- **Intermediate Food Hygiene Certificate** – more detailed course intended to provide sound training in food hygiene, including how to carry out hazard analysis.
- **Advanced Food Hygiene Diploma** – advanced course intended for managers, specialists and trainers who wish to teach the Elementary course.

A number of other professional bodies offer similar courses. Contact numbers are given below. A list of training providers, and sources of training materials is also given at the end of this leaflet.

Training Providers

A number of consultants are able to offer training in your own premises and may be found through a web page or yellow pages.

A range of courses are available at Colleges and training organisations throughout Scotland with the closest being **West Lothian College, Livingston**. For details of course contents and times, contact West Lothian College on 01506 418181, or enquiries@west-lothian.ac.uk

The Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland will be able to provide you with details of training centres that run Food Hygiene Courses. They can also provide details of trainers who run courses in languages other than English. Their telephone number is 0131 229 2968, or contact@rehis.com

Other accredited courses are run by the:

- The Royal Society for Public Health (Tel. 020 7265 7301)
- The Society of Food Hygiene & Technology (Tel 01827 872 500)
- The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (Tel. 020 7928 6006)

Further help

Remember it is your responsibility to ensure that the food served to your customers is safe. If you would like help, or need any further advice, then please contact us on 01506 280000 or environmentalhealth@westlothian.gov.uk