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Advice for Registered Childcarers on Domestic Premises Operating as a Food Business

The following advice has been prepared by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for registered childcarers on domestic premises providing a food service to those in their care. The advice has been produced in response to questions raised over whether these childcarers should also be required to register as a food business operator.

This advice is aimed solely at registered childcarers on domestic premises, including childminders, and is **not intended** for nannies and home childcarers or care operating from non-domestic premises such as nurseries, care homes and schools.

I don't provide any food services. Am I required to register as a food business operator?

If you provide no more than the following levels of food service as part of your normal business, you **should not** be required to register as a food business operator.

- a. Provision of mains drinking water.
- b. Provision of crockery and cutlery for use by children to eat their own packed lunches.
- c. Provision of chilled storage for packed lunches that belong to the children.
- d. Occasional assistance to children with cutting up their own food in response to individual need rather than as an established service.
- e. Occasional provision of food that is not part of the normal service (e.g. a cake to celebrate a child's birthday or provision of food where a parent/guardian has been delayed).
- f. Operating in the child's own home and serving food that belongs to the child's parent/guardian e.g. nannies or home childcarers.

If I do need to register as a food business operator, how should I do it?

To register as a food business operator you will need to inform your local authority - the authority where your 'business' is based.

Registering as a food business operator is free of charge. The process may differ slightly between local authorities, but it's likely they will ask you to complete a simple registration form confirming your contact and address details and the nature of your business.

To find the contact details of your nearest local authority please see the Food Standards Agency website at <http://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/yourarea/>

What happens once I have registered as a food business operator?

Once you have registered as a food business operator with your local authority, a food safety officer will contact you to arrange a suitable time to visit. The food safety officer will carry out an initial inspection of your 'premises' and will discuss general food hygiene practices to ensure food is being prepared safely.

Will my domestic situation be taken into account?

You have a general duty, in addition to the welfare requirements set out in Ofsted's Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage or the regulations under the Childcare Act 2006, to ensure that food you provide is safe.

However, your local authority food safety officer **will** take your domestic environment into consideration and will help you put in place practical and proportionate measures to ensure food safety.

Helpful Hygiene Tips

Pets should be kept out of food preparation areas due to the risk of cross-contamination - when harmful bacteria are spread onto food from other food surfaces, hands or equipment. You will want to demonstrate therefore that where pets can gain access to food preparation areas, procedures are in place to adequately wash and disinfect work surfaces and cooking utensils before any food handling or preparation takes place.

Baby changing facilities should be kept away from food preparation areas. Soiled nappies should not be brought into food preparation areas and should never be placed on work surfaces. If baby changing facilities are required you will need to demonstrate that you have adequate controls in place to ensure that food preparation areas are not contaminated and that effective cleaning and disinfection procedures are in place.

Laundry facilities should ideally be separate from food preparation areas but this may not be practical in many domestic environments. Where separate facilities are not available, it will be necessary to demonstrate that laundry is not carried out at the same time as food preparation and measures are in place to ensure that detergents and soiled clothing etc do not come into direct contact with work surfaces or cooking utensils. Furthermore you should ensure that procedures are in place to adequately wash and disinfect work surfaces and cooking utensils before any food preparation takes place.

Handwashing – Your hands can easily spread bacteria around the kitchen and onto food. It is important to always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water at each of these times:

- before starting to prepare or handle food
- after touching raw meat including poultry
- after using the toilet or changing nappies
- after touching the bin or laundry etc.
- after touching pets

Food hygiene courses are available from various training providers. However, there is **no** requirement for food handlers to attend formal courses or to acquire food hygiene qualifications. It is important however, that food handlers have sufficient knowledge to prepare and supply food that is safe to eat.

Further advice for childcarers operating as a food business will be made available shortly at www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/enforceessential/startingup/childminders/ . In the meantime some more general advice is available on the FSA Website at www.eatwell.gov.uk . Registered childcarers can also discuss these matters and other concerns with their local authority.