



**BUSINESS  
COMPLIANCE  
SUPPORT**

Supporting businesses in Greater Manchester with  
regulation and compliance [www.gmbcs.co.uk](http://www.gmbcs.co.uk)

# **Starting a New Food Business in Greater Manchester**

Information and guidance for new businesses

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# 1. Introduction & Welcome

## Greater Manchester Business Compliance Support

Congratulations on launching your new business!

Greater Manchester provides an excellent environment for food and drink businesses. At Greater Manchester Business Compliance Support, we're committed to working with you to ensure your business is compliant and helping you keep your customers and staff safe.

To help you get started, we've developed this welcome pack to guide you through the necessary steps for business compliance, and to ensure that you are meeting all the requirements to help your business thrive.

Business Compliance Support represents the ten Greater Manchester Councils (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, and Wigan). Together, we're dedicated to helping businesses meet compliance obligations.

The service is designed to support both new and established businesses, fostering a strong relationship between regulatory services and the Greater Manchester business community. We aim to provide a direct point of contact for businesses, ultimately promoting growth and public safety through compliance.



## 2. Your food hygiene rating inspection & score

Local authorities conduct routine inspections of all food establishments to safeguard public health and ensure that high standards are being held. These inspections are typically unannounced, with higher-risk premises receiving more frequent visits than lower-risk ones.

Our Environmental Health Officers are courteous and approachable, offering advice and support where possible. After your food hygiene inspection has been conducted, you will be awarded a Food Hygiene Rating and will be provided with a sticker to display your score within the premises.

### The Inspection

During an inspection, Environmental Health Officers focus on **three main categories**:

#### 1. Confidence in Management or Control Systems

- This assesses how the business manages and documents food safety practices.
- Officers expect a documented/written food safety management system, detailing procedures and processes for maintaining food hygiene and handling issues.
- A documented food safety management system helps to manage the procedures and processes you have in place to ensure food safety and the officer will ask to see this during the inspection
- Many businesses use the Food Standards Agency's (FSA) Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB) pack, which outlines necessary food hygiene considerations. You should ensure you download the correct pack for your business type (e.g., caterers, retailers, specific cuisines, childminders, residential care homes).
- The SFBB pack (or an alternative food safety management system) should be complete and available to view during the inspection.
- The pack can be completed electronically or on paper, and printed versions are available for purchase online.
- Lack of written food safety records will negatively impact your rating, as this is a critical scoring factor, so it is important to get this right
- Officers will also review your compliance history, management's attitude towards hygiene and food safety, and the technical knowledge and food safety training of your team.

#### 2. Food Hygiene and Safety

- This element focuses on the prevention of cross-contamination, one of the most common causes of food poisoning.
- During the inspection, officers will check how food is handled, prepared, cooked, reheated, cooled, and stored. They will review your temperature control monitoring systems and related paperwork (for more information on temperature controls, please visit the Safer Food Better Business Pack under Cooking and Reheating, Chilling, and Hot holding).

- Cleanliness of equipment, work surfaces, and the overall business will be inspected. The officer will also check the appropriateness of chemical cleaning products. Regular two-stage cleaning with a sanitiser meeting British standards (BS EN 1276 or 13697) is expected.
- Personal hygiene is crucial. Hand-washing facilities must be equipped with antibacterial soap, hot and cold running water, and hygienic drying options (e.g., paper towels).
- Officers will examine your pest control procedures. They will look for evidence of infestation, the control measures you have in place and food protection strategies.

### 3. Compliance with Structural Requirements

- Officers will assess the general condition of the premises, including walls, floors, ceilings, drains, and ventilation.
- A separate hand-wash basin in the food preparation area is required, solely for handwashing.
- There should be no risk of cross-contamination from bare wood or flaky paint on ceilings, walls, work surfaces and floors.

Based on the above criteria, you will receive one of six ratings. While displaying your food hygiene rating is not mandatory, it will be published on the FSA website.



## 2.1 The importance of getting a good food hygiene rating.

If you intend to offer your food through delivery platforms including Deliveroo and Uber Eats, you need to maintain a minimum food hygiene rating of 2. For Just Eat you'll need a minimum rating of 3. It is therefore essential to get the best possible rating to ensure your business can trade on these platforms.

According to the latest Food Standards Agency's Food & You survey, 75% of customers check food hygiene ratings before ordering online. A low score could deter customers or even prevent your business from being listed on online food platforms.

### **3. Food Safety Training**

By law, food handlers must receive adequate training, instruction, and/or supervision in accordance with their duties. Although there is no legal requirement to attend a training course, we highly recommend that food handlers are trained to a recognised Level 2 in Food Safety. It is recommended for managers to attain Level 3.

Tameside Council offers a nationally recognised Level 2 course, accessible via the following link: [Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering \(tameside.gov.uk\)](https://www.tameside.gov.uk/level-2-award-in-food-safety-in-catering), You can find similar courses online, available through various providers.

In addition to the Food Safety course, it is advisable for those responsible for the food safety management system to complete Level 2 training in HACCP principles.

### **4. Traceability**

Traceability is defined in law as ‘The ability to trace and follow a food, feed, food-producing animal or substance, through all stages of production, processing and distribution.’

To comply with traceability requirements, you must:

- Keep records from food suppliers (e.g. invoices), to evidence where it has originated.
- Keep records of food you have sold to other businesses, and their contact details.
- Not buy food products unless you can be sure that it originates from a reliable producer.

You must keep records to prove you are able to trace where it comes from.

### **5. Pest Control**

While it is not a legal requirement to have a pest control contract, it is a legal obligation for food business owners to ensure their premises are free from pests. Although you can handle pest control yourself, it is highly recommended to seek advice from an expert. Their professional knowledge and control methods enable them to act swiftly and effectively.

For more information on maintaining pest control, you can take a look at the Safer Food Better Business section on the topic via the following link: [Safer food better business caterer’s pest control](#).



## 6. Waste disposal

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, you have a duty of care regarding your business waste disposal. You must have appropriate arrangements in place for the disposal of waste generated by your business. This includes food waste, packaging and waste oil.

Waste should be collected on a regular basis to prevent pest attraction. If you store waste before collection, you must ensure it is stored properly. Ideally, waste storage should be outside your premises, away from dining areas and it should be easy to clean and disinfect.

Waste must not accumulate in food preparation areas. Additionally, there are specific city centre restrictions on waste collection times and it must not be left out for collection outside of these hours.

Waste oil must not be poured down drains (internal or external), sinks, or toilets. Instead, you should collect waste oil in a suitable container and store it until removal. Your waste must be collected by a Licensed Waste Contractor, who will provide a receipt or commercial invoice. There are many licensed waste disposal companies operating in Greater Manchester; search online to find one that suits your needs.

## 7. Labelling

Food labelling provides consumers with essential information about their food, and it's crucial that this information is accurate to help them make informed decisions about the food they buy. The name used to describe your food must not mislead anyone regarding its nature, substance, or quality.

Additionally, it is crucial that you and your staff understand the risks associated with incorrect allergy information. Please refer to the 'Food Allergens' section below for further information.

For more details on food labelling, visit the [Packaging and labelling | Food Standards Agency](#).

## 8. Food Allergens

You must have a process in place for managing allergens to protect customers with food allergies and must be aware of the allergens in the food you produce, and the food products provided by your suppliers. It is essential to understand what to do if you change suppliers or ingredients are substituted and know how to manage cross-contamination of allergenic ingredients.

If you provide food that is pre-packed for direct sale (e.g., sandwiches and salads packaged at the same place they are sold), you should consider the guidelines from the FSA: [FSA Explains - Prepacked for direct sale \(PPDS\) \(youtube.com\)](#)

## **There are 14 allergens:**

- 1. Celery (including celeriac)**
- 2. Cereals containing gluten (wheat, rye, barley, oats)**
- 3. Crustaceans (e.g., crabs, lobster, prawns, crayfish)**
- 4. Eggs**
- 5. Fish**
- 6. Lupin (seeds and flour, found in bread, pastries, pasta)**
- 7. Milk (including lactose)**
- 8. Molluscs (e.g., mussels, whelks, oysters, snails, squid)**
- 9. Mustard**
- 10. Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecans, Brazil nuts, pistachios, macadamia nuts)**
- 11. Peanuts**
- 12. Sesame seeds**
- 13. Soya**
- 14. Sulphur Dioxide (often referred to as sulphites, used as a preservative in dried fruit like raisins, apricots, prunes)**

To comply with regulations, you should ensure customers have access to ingredient and allergen information. This can be provided in writing on menus, menu boards, or in a 'menu allergen folder'. If not provided upfront, there should be signage directing customers to where the information can be found, for example by asking a member of staff.

All staff must be trained on allergens before handling food and understand the consequences of providing incorrect information. Staff should know where to find allergen ingredients and information and be able to handle information requests.

Trading Standards offers a free online training course on managing allergens, which can be accessed via this link: [Trading Standards Allergen Resource](#)



## 9. Other areas to consider

### Planning and Building Regulations

Even if you are taking over an existing business, it's important to ensure that the appropriate planning consent has been obtained. You will likely need planning permission if you intend to:

- Change the use of the existing premises.
- Install a ventilation system in the building.
- Erect an external smoking shelter.
- Make significant structural changes to the premises.

If you are unsure whether the work you plan to carry out requires approval, please visit the relevant planning and building control pages on your local council's website

### Licensing

A licence may be required if you intend to:

- Sell alcohol.
- Supply alcohol by or on behalf of a club, or to the order of a member of a club.
- Provide regulated entertainment.
- Provide late night refreshment.
- Sell food on the street.

**For further advice on licensing, please visit your local council website.**

**You can find the link to the appropriate council page on our website:**

**<https://www.gmbcs.co.uk/licensing/>**

## 10. Contact Us

For advice on Environmental Health (food safety), Licensing, and Trading Standards, feel free to contact us.

You can contact us via our website <https://www.gmbcs.co.uk/contact/> to send an enquiry or a call back request, or email us at [info@gmbcs.co.uk](mailto:info@gmbcs.co.uk).

Alternatively, you can visit our social media pages below for more information, upcoming events, or a quick chat with one of our duty officers.

Facebook: [Business Compliance Support | Facebook](#)

LinkedIn: [Business Compliance Support | LinkedIn](#)

X: [@GMBisCompliance \(twitter.com\)](#)

Instagram: [@businesscompliancesupport](#)

Threads: [@businesscompliancesupport](#) Tiktok: [@gm.business.compl](#)

