

The frequency of food hygiene inspections within the New Forest District Council area is based on a calculation of food safety risk to the consumer. Details of how this is calculated are given below but generally this depends on the type of business, the level of hygiene management control and previous record of compliance. Through this assessment some food premises may be visited at least every 6 months, others may be visited less frequently. Whilst the primary responsibility for ensuring food safety is yours as the business owner, food hygiene inspections by officers of Environmental Health Services have the following purposes:

- To establish whether food is being handled and produced hygienically;
- To establish if food is, or will be, having regard to further processing, safe to eat;
- To identify foreseeable incidences of food poisoning or injury as a consequence of consumption of food.

Officers will be looking for evidence that you have a food safety management system in place, and much of the inspection will focus on the hazards and controls you have identified and how you are monitoring the practices on a day to day basis. Having a well implemented food safety management system will reduce the assessed risk.

In carrying out the inspection you are entitled to expect the officers will:

- be courteous;
- show you official identification;
- give feedback following the inspection on what can be done to improve hygiene and also what practices and hygiene management systems are working well;
- make a clear distinction between what is required by law and what is recommended as good practice;
- give written reasons explaining action they will be taking including the relevant section of the act or regulation;
- give you a reasonable time to comply with any legal requirements, except where there is an imminent risk to public health; and
- tell you the procedure for appealing against their action or for requesting a second opinion.

Note that under The Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2006, an authorised officer can inspect your business at any reasonable time and may visit outside the frequency that has been assessed to investigate any contravention of the legislation. Officers are not required to make appointments to inspect.

As part of the inspection the officer will risk rate your business in accordance with the scoring system from the Food Law Code of Practice. Your assessment can be found in the top right hand corner of the Food Hygiene Inspection Report left with you at the end of the inspection.

The purpose of the scoring system is to ensure a consistent and fair minimum inspection frequency based on a set of criteria. The score is provided for your information and can be used to identify where you may make improvements to reduce your assessed risk. Below are the details of the criteria used and what the score means. If you have any queries please contact Environmental Health Services (023) 8028 5682.

Part 1: The Potential Hazard

Three factors determine the potential hazard:

A. Type of Food and Method of Handling

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
40	Manufacturers of high-risk food that are not subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004. Wholesalers and packers who re-wrap or re-pack high-risk foods. In this context, high-risk foods may be regarded as foods that support the growth of micro-organisms, and/or are intended for consumption without further treatment that could destroy pathogenic micro-organisms or their toxins
30	Preparation, cooking or handling of open high-risk foods by caterers and retailers, except caterers

	that prepare less than 20 meals a day (see below)
10	Handling of pre-packed high-risk foods; Caterers that prepare high risk food but serve less than 20 meals a day; other wholesalers and distributors not included in the categories above; Manufacture or packing of foods other than high-risk; Establishments involved in the filleting, salting or cold smoking of fish for retail sale to the final consumer.
5	Retail handling of foods other than high-risk, such as fruit, vegetables, canned and other ambient shelf stable products. Any other businesses not included in the categories above.

B. Method of Processing

An additional score should be included for processes listed in the table below. If an additional score under this section is appropriate it may only be allocated once; i.e. the maximum score under this section is 20.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
20	Thermal processing or aseptic packing of low-acid foods; Vacuum and sous-vide packing (except raw/unprocessed meat and dried foods); Manufacture of cook/chill food i.e. cooked and prepared meals or foods which may be eaten cold or after reheating (NB: Catering premises should not be included in this category unless they are engaged in the specific operation referred to commercially as the preparation of cook-chill meals. The simple reheating of cook-chill meals is excluded from the scope of this paragraph); Small-scale production of cooked meat products in food business establishments which are not subject to approval under Regulation 853/2004 e.g. by certain retailers including butchers.
0	Any other cases not included above

C. Consumers at Risk

The number of consumers likely to be at risk if there is a failure of food hygiene and safety procedures.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
15	Manufacturers of food that is distributed nationally or internationally.
10	Businesses serving a substantial number of customers including a significant proportion from outside the local area, e.g. superstore, hypermarket, airport caterer, or motorway service area caterer. Manufacturers not included in the category above.
5	Businesses, most of whose customers are likely to be living, staying or working in the local area, e.g. high street or corner shop, high street supermarket, or high street restaurant
0	Businesses supplying less than 20 consumers a day.

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An **additional** score of 22 (in addition to the score above) should be included for establishments such as hospitals, nursing homes, day-care centres, and child nurseries where production and/or service of high risk foods takes place, and where more than 20 persons in a vulnerable group are at risk. In this context vulnerable groups are those that include people who are under 5 or over 65 years of age, people who are sick, and people who are immunocompromised.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
22	Production and/or service of high-risk foods in premises where there are more than 20 people in a vulnerable group at risk.
0	Any other case not included above

Part 2 Level of (Current) Compliance

The food hygiene and safety procedures (including food handling practices and procedures, and temperature control) and the structure of the establishment (including cleanliness, layout, condition of structure, lighting, ventilation, facilities etc) should be assessed **separately** using the scoring system below.

The score should reflect compliance observed during the inspection according to the guidance set out below. Adherence to any relevant UK or EU Industry Guide to Good Hygiene Practice should be considered when assessing compliance.

Conformity with relevant national guidelines or industry codes of recommended practice will also be necessary to score 0 or 5.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
25	Almost total non-compliance with statutory obligations
20	General failure to satisfy statutory obligations – standards generally low
15	Some major non-compliance with statutory obligations – more effort required to prevent fall in standards.
10	Some non-compliance with statutory obligations and industry codes of recommended practice. Standards are being maintained or improved.
5	High standard of compliance with statutory obligations and industry codes of recommended practice; minor contraventions of food hygiene regulations. Some minor non-compliance with statutory obligations and industry codes of recommended practice
0	High standard of compliance with statutory obligations and industry codes of recommended practice; conforms to accepted good practices in the trade

Part 3 Confidence in Management/Control Systems

The actual performance of management is scored in Part 2 on the basis of the results achieved and observed. A management that achieves good food hygiene performance, well understood by the workforce, should have achieved a good standard in Part 2, and consequently a low score for that factor.

Confidence in Management is not meant to reconsider this aspect. It is to elicit a judgement on the likelihood of satisfactory compliance being maintained in the future.

Factors that will influence the inspector's judgement include:

- the "track record" of the company, its willingness to act on previous advice and enforcement, and the complaint history;
- The attitude of the present management towards hygiene and food safety;
- Hygiene and food safety technical knowledge available to the company (internal or external), including hazard analysis/HACCP and control of critical points;
- Satisfactory documented procedures and HACCP based food safety management systems.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
30	Poor track record of compliance. Little or no technical knowledge. Little or no appreciation of hazards or quality control. No food safety management system
20	Varying record of compliance. Poor appreciation of hazards and control measures. No food safety management system
10	Satisfactory record of compliance. Access to and use of technical advice either in house, from trade associations and/or from Guides to Good Practice. Understanding of significant hazards and control measures in place. Making satisfactory progress towards a documented food safety management system / procedures commensurate with type of business.
5	Reasonable record of compliance. Technical advice available in house or access to and use of technical advice from trade associations and/or from Guides to Good Practice. Have satisfactory documented procedures and systems. Able to demonstrate effective control of hazards. Will have satisfactory documented food safety management system. Audit by food authority confirms general compliance with documented system
0	Good record of compliance. Access to technical advice within the organisation. Will have satisfactory documented HACCP based food safety management system which may be subject to external audit process. Audit by food authority confirms compliance with documented management system with few/minor non-conformities not identified in the system as critical control points.

PLUS

An **additional** score of 20 (in addition to the score above) should be included where there is a significant risk:

- Of food being contaminated with *Clostridium botulinum* and the micro-organism surviving any processing and multiplying; or
- Of ready-to-eat food being or becoming contaminated with micro-organisms or their toxins that are pathogenic to humans, e.g. *E. coli* O157 or other VTEC, *Salmonella* sp.; *Bacillus cereus*;

In this context, significant risk means the probability that an incident is more likely to occur than not. The following matters should be considered when assessing this factor:

- The potential for contamination or cross contamination by the specified micro-organisms;
- The likelihood of survival and growth of the specified micro-organisms;
- The existence of procedures based on HACCP principles and confidence in their implementation including documentation and records of monitoring of controls;
- The extent and relevance of training undertaken by managers, supervisors and food handlers;
- Whether intervention by the Food Authority is necessary to reduce the probability of an incident occurring.

The additional score must only be applied on a case-by-case basis, must not be applied generically to whole categories of food business establishments, and must be removed at the next primary inspection if the significant risk no longer exists.

The additional score must also be consistent with the baseline assessment of Confidence in Management/Control Systems. If confidence in management is assessed as 0 or 5, and there is also assessed to be a significant risk of contamination of food with one of the specified micro-organisms, then one of the assessments cannot be correct and each should be reviewed. Establishments should not pose a significant risk if there is high or moderate Confidence in Management/Control Systems.

Score	Guidance on the Scoring System
20	Significant risk of food being contaminated with <i>Cl. Botulinum</i> , and the organism surviving any processing and multiplying; or Significant risk of ready-to-eat food being contaminated with micro-organisms or their toxins that are pathogenic to humans
0	Any other cases not included above

Food Hygiene Inspection Frequencies

The total score for your premises corresponds to a Risk Category. This dictates a minimum time period between inspections. The scores (and Risk Category) will be reviewed at each subsequent routine inspection.

Category	Inspection Rating	Minimum Frequency of Inspection
A	92 or higher	(at least) every 6 months
B	72 to 91	(at least) every 12 months
C	42 to 71	(at least) every 18 months
D	31 to 41	(at least) every 2 years
E	0 to 30	Alternative enforcement strategy every 3 years

If you have any concerns about the way in which your business has been assessed or would like any further information on food safety in general please contact the inspecting officer or send your query to:

New Forest District Council, Environmental Health Services, Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 9ZG. Telephone (023) 8028 5682