

In a nutshell: To ensure that employees handle food safely, food businesses should efficiently and regularly train and supervise their staff. Customer feedback is an important indicator of how effectively food premises are run.

Staff training

Food businesses should train their employees on all Good Hygiene Practices (GHPs) pertinent to their work. Food handlers need to be watched over to ensure they are appropriately practising GHPs.

Before training

- Make good use of the “[Food Safety Guide](#)” or the contents on this website for food safety training.
- Training can be conducted by an experienced Hygiene Supervisor or Hygiene Manager, or an external food safety consultant company. The Centre for Food Safety also organises [regular training talks on GHPs](#).

During training

- Make sure that every employee is aware of the GHPs for all the duties they perform.
- Food businesses should be aware of the training that each employee has received and, when appropriate, should regularly offer refresher training (e.g. every two years).
- Keep a staff training log.

After training

- Trainers could observe the food handlers as they work as part of their job. When a food handler completes a task, inquire about how they adhered to the GHPs to see whether they performed it appropriately.
- To assist a food handler in improving their work, offer comments and observations. Reward good performance by providing encouraging feedback when a food handler follows the GHPs correctly.

Managing complaints

The success of a food business depends on keeping customers satisfied and safeguarding their health through proper food handling. Customer complaints can highlight potential problems in the food production process.

Types of complaints to expect

Any complaints must be taken carefully in order to determine whether faults have been made and to prevent them from occurring again. These complaints may reveal a food safety issue within the operation that needs to be fixed.

Complaints could include customers who have:

- experienced food poisoning symptoms after visiting;
- had an allergic response while or after visiting; or
- discovered something in their food that rendered it unfit for consumption.

Identify problems

Food businesses could do the following to identify the problem:

- Review the daily logbook for information on any food safety issues
- Look around the workplace and speak with employees to ensure that applicable GHPs are being followed.
- Check any records for food safety practices (such as temperature records)
- See if any other complaints of a similar nature have been received.
- Check to see if any employees have reported illness in the days prior.

During an investigation, it could be appropriate to stop selling any items from the same batch of food that was consumed. If the issue might have originated at the food supplier's level, it could also be appropriate to alert them.

Remedial actions

- Review the protocol of food preparation to address the issues.
- Record any modifications to the protocol in the diary.
- Retrain food handlers as appropriate.