

# Guide to reopening safely



At Shield Safety Group, we love the hospitality industry and have supported it for many years by making safety simple. We want to help it return to trading as quickly and safely as possible. This guide is written with that purpose in mind, to help businesses like yours return to work safely.

**The reopening guide is divided into three areas for consideration:**

## **Your products and services**

What products will be offered once reopened? Are they different to those offered previously, recognising any changes in customer behaviour or limitations on your business? Are the products and ingredients still in the business safe to use?

## **Your people**

Are there sufficient team members available and are they trained to undertake tasks safely? How will you support your team in returning to work after a prolonged period of being away from the business?

## **Your property and equipment**

Is the building, the equipment and outside areas ready to start trading again?

The guide does not specifically detail the actions required to control the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). If you would like support with this, then please [register your interest](#) and we will be happy to talk you through our 'Safe to Trade' scheme, our standard for businesses wanting to prove to customers, regulators and other stakeholders they have full controls in place for tackling coronavirus (COVID-19) and reopening safely.



## Your products and services

The products you now offer may well be different from those offered during the lockdown period. These differences could have arisen from situations outside the control of the business, for example restriction in the ingredients that are available from suppliers or a need to reduce occupancy because of social distancing. Other changes may be opportunistic and a chance to develop new revenue, for example offering delivery or click and collect service.

### Examples of changes to the products offered include:

- A reduced menu to recognise the available ingredients and the colleagues available to deliver it.
- Alternative ingredients to dishes, due to certain products being unavailable during the lockdown.
- New dishes added to the menu to use products that have been frozen during the lockdown.
- Allowing a restricted number of customers in the premises, to maintain social distancing.
- Use of mobile apps by customers to order and pay for food and drink, removing the need for printed menus, reduce queuing and handling of cash.
- Diversifying to offer a delivery or click and collect service to increase revenue.
- Increase in room service provision in a hotel, as restaurant capacity is reduced.





**Things to be considered when changing the product or offer are:**

- Does the food safety management system cover the new aspects of the business?
- Is allergy information accurate and recognises changes in ingredients or recipes?
- Are menu descriptions accurate?
- Are there risk assessments for new work activities? And do existing risk assessments for others need to be reviewed?
- Have the team been trained in these changes and understand what they need to do to remain safe?
- Have guests been informed of the changes, for example through websites and social media?
- What authorities and organisations need to be made aware or permissions sought from for proposed changes? Examples include:
  - Local Environmental Health informed if takeaway being offered, or your Primary Authority, if applicable.
  - Application for a Late-Night Refreshment Licence if trading hours are extended.
  - Notification to insurers if undertaking deliveries.
  - Licence amendments if substantially altering the layout of the trading area or offering off sales of alcohol.
  - Local Authority notification for change of use if providing takeaway food.



**When thinking about product, the ingredients already in the business will need to be checked. Check that:**

- All ingredients are within the dates marked upon them.
- Food that has been frozen, is free of freezer burn.
- There is no evidence of pest activity, for example gnawed packaging, moth webbing in dry goods or droppings/insect carcasses on the floor.
- Food may have been frozen longer than the normal business' policy. Prolonged freezing of food does not impact safety, but it will reduce the quality of the product. Consider how this food is used to ensure the finished product to the customer is of the quality expected, for example only using defrosted cheese in sauces. If ingredients are changed in recipes, this must be reflected in the allergen information for the dishes.

If disposing of large amounts of stock, make sure that bin collections have been organised. Food left in bin areas will attract pests. For those businesses with cellars there may well be cask and keg stock that has gone out of date. It is recommended you contact the supplier of the product and discuss collection or if the stock can be destroyed locally. There is a manual handling risk when removing barrels with product in them from a cellar, so co-ordination with the supplier to do this safely is very important.



# Your people

Colleagues will be returning after a long period of not working and new colleagues may be needed to support the business. Personal situations may have changed and these need to be recognised.

## Training

Safety is the responsibility of everyone in a business. Training is invaluable in helping your team to understand their responsibility and how to operate safely. This maybe general food safety, health & safety and training specific to the business and operation.

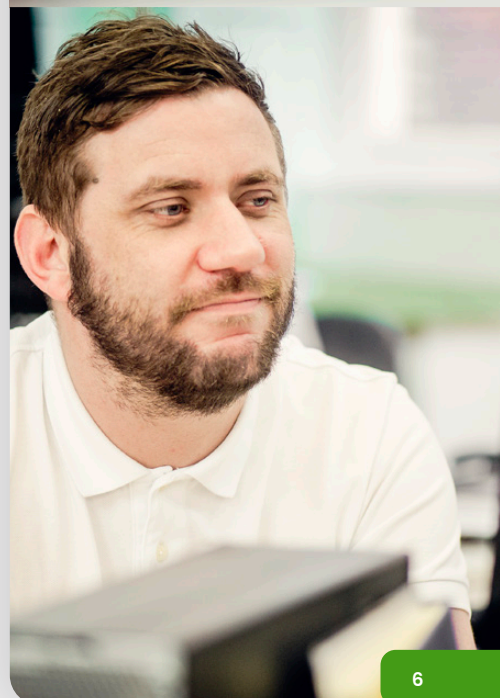
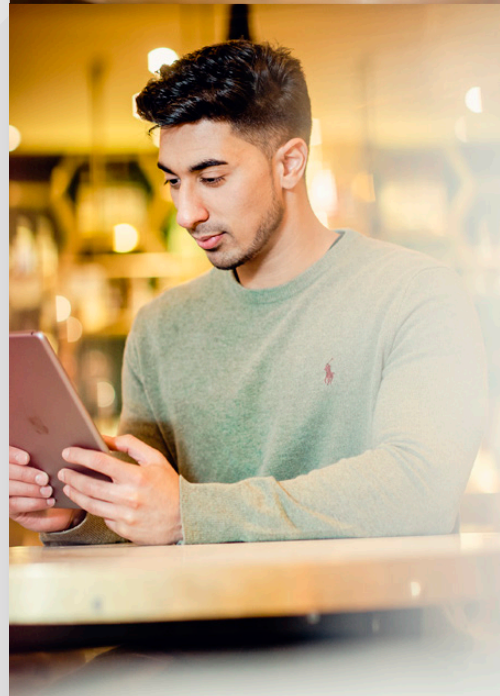
### Things to consider with training:

- Is all food safety, health and safety and fire safety training up to date?
- Have all new starters completed all the training required?
- Have the team been trained in new practices that have been implemented due to coronavirus (COVID-19)?
- Do first aiders require refresher training? Ensure they are trained on any special controls for Coronavirus. This must include any personal protective equipment they are to use and guidance on providing mouth to mouth resuscitation.

Your training may be up to date, but because colleagues have not worked for some time, they may have forgotten the safety expectations in the business. Daily and weekly routines are no longer second nature. To aid this, increased supervision should be considered to ensure that good safety practices are followed and become re-established in the business.

Frequent hand washing is key to preventing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). This is an opportunity to remind team how and when to effectively wash their hands. To support training, targeted use of posters can help with changing and then maintaining positive safety behaviour.

Training must also include fire safety. Your scheduled fire drill may now be overdue, so consider completing a refresher on this activity. If your social distancing controls make a full evacuation drill too much a risk, your fire safety responsible person should consider a desktop review of the procedures. There are more details on fire safety at the end of this document.





## Personal Circumstances

Whilst away from the business the personal circumstances of colleagues may have changed. This might be due to a greater need to care for relatives, childcare arrangements, they have become pregnant or there has been a family or friend bereavement.

### Things to consider for personal circumstances:

- The availability of colleagues. Do you need to hire additional team members to cover shifts? Does the product offered need to be changed to reflect the availability of team? Do any of your newly considered shift patterns as part of social distancing rule out any particular colleague unable to work these new hours?
- If a colleague is pregnant, has an expectant mothers risk assessment been completed (or reviewed) and followed?
- If colleagues have experienced bereavement, are managers equipped with the necessary knowledge to fully support their team?
- For food handlers who have been away from the business for a prolonged period, have they completed a new Fit for Work form? Remind team of the symptoms of COVID-19 and self-isolate if they or a household member is displaying them.
- Have colleagues been asked to complete different tasks or use different equipment because of diversification on offer?





## Returning to Work

Colleagues will be returning to work after many weeks or months of being furloughed. This prolonged time away from work may mean the skills they had honed previously are not as sharp as before or their fitness levels have dropped.

### Examples of safety issues are:

- Chef knife skills reduced as they have not been working in the kitchen.
- Colleagues strength reduced, so routine carrying tasks are harder and unable to safely lift the same weights as before.
- Colleagues have been less active, meaning they could tire quicker and lose focus on a task.
- Colleagues have not driven a motor vehicle for a long time and their perception of speed and spatial awareness has altered.

### To address these challenges, consider

- Would a phased return to work improve safety? Do not expect efficiency to be the same as before.
- Have risk assessments been reviewed, recognising the colleague's current capabilities?
- Have return to work interviews been completed and plans written to ensure the colleagues can undertake tasks safely?
- Has supervision of colleagues been increased to help identify any issues?



# Your property and equipment

Property includes the building and the equipment in both the back and front of house. It is likely that statutory inspections should have occurred during the closure period and these must be addressed before opening. Also, the normal preparations for outside areas that would be undertaken during the Spring may not have happened and these must be picked up before these areas are used.

**The following outlines areas for consideration to ensure the premises and equipment in it are safe and ready to trade:**

## Legionnaires Disease

The risk from Legionnaires Disease is increased significantly when water systems have been left stagnant for a period of time. If the water system has been routinely run, at least weekly during lockdown, the following actions should be sufficient and must be undertaken before any colleague returns to the workplace:

- Run all hot and cold taps for at least 5 minutes.
- Flush all toilets.
- If there are shower heads in guest bedrooms, team accommodation or welfare facilities, the heads should be placed on the shower tray and the water run on the tray. If the heads cannot be moved, then place a bag over them and run the water into the bag.
- Follow the businesses standard practice for recording temperatures of the hot and cold-water systems and take action if out of range.

If the system has not been flushed through on a weekly basis, then specialist advice should be sought.





## Kitchen Equipment

Kitchen equipment has sat idle for a long time. Once businesses are able to trade again, it is imperative that the kitchen kit is working, safe and ready to be used.

### Things to consider for kitchen equipment:

- Is all statutory testing for equipment up to date and all remedial actions completed?
- Have repairs required pre-closing been completed?
- Does all kitchen equipment start up correctly? Fire up kitchen kit one at a time and make sure it is working. Then fire up following the normal routine for the kitchen.
- Have fridges and freezers been turned back on in plenty of time to make sure they are working properly and at the correct temperature to accept deliveries?
- Does the dishwasher run above 82°C, are chemicals correctly dosing and is there a sufficient stock of them? The washing of cutlery, crockery and equipment is key to preventing the spread of bacteria and will be just as important in reducing the risk from coronavirus (COVID-19).
- Has time been scheduled to make sure the equipment has been cleaned again ready for opening?
- Are all temperature probes working and accurate? Check the batteries as these may have run down during closure.



## Cellar and Bar Areas

Cellar and bar areas present their own set of risks that need consideration. It is also a great opportunity to deep clean an area that is normally full of stock and can sometimes be difficult to access.

### In the cellar, check that:

- If fitted, are CO2 gas detectors on and working?
- Are lifting aids, such as beer hoists and cellar lifts working? Is the inspection certificate in date?
- Are beer lines are fully cleaned? Hopefully they were thoroughly cleaned and blown through with air before closing, but an extra thorough clean would be beneficial.
- Cellar cooling and remote coolers are working properly? Check for leaks on the remote cooler and drink pythons, as these could cause slip hazards.
- If a sump pump is fitted, is it clear of debris and the pump working?

If stock has been removed and you are awaiting a new delivery, it gives you a chance to deep clean the cellar, including the stillage and other hard to reach areas.

As with the dishwasher, the glasswasher is an important piece of equipment to control the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Ensure the glasswasher is working correctly, is clean and has a sufficient supply of chemicals.

Glasses are likely to have sat in shelves or boxes during the closure. All glasses are to be washed again before they are used. Again, use this time to get to those difficult areas, so strip and disinfect all shelves in the bar area.

The public will have heightened expectations for cleanliness once trade starts again. Dirty glassware will not be tolerated and may lead to complaints and loss of trade. A properly working glass wash machine is important for both safety and customer experience.

### Ice machines have long been identified as a potential source of bacteria. Before using the machine, ensure :

- The machine has been thoroughly cleaned and disinfected inside and out.
- The first batch of ice made should be disposed of and the machine cleaned again inside.
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for the servicing of the machine if it has been sat unused for a period of time.





## Customer Areas

This includes any bar areas, seating areas, toilets, lifts, leisure facilities, golf courses, outside seating and gardens. As with the kitchen, there might be statutory testing that is due and checks needed to ensure the areas are safe and ready to trade.

### Things to consider are:

- If required, is the coffee machine pressure system test up to date?
- If there are passenger lifts, for example to hotel floors, are examination certificates in date and servicing complete?
- Is all furniture in good repair? Remember to check the furniture in outside areas.
- Has a deep clean been scheduled so all hard surfaces have been cleaned and disinfected?
- Is there a sufficient number of menus to allow them to be disinfected before being reused? Is the menu presented in a way that it is easily cleaned and disinfected or replaced with blackboards, disposable paper or electronic menus, meaning the risk of coronavirus (COVID-19) contamination is reduced?
- Do you have a children's play area and if so, does that need to be taken out of use, due to the ability to enforce social distancing measures with children?
- Is all signage in place, for example CCTV and play area?
- Does the lighting work throughout the property, including outside areas?

## Pest Control

With properties being unoccupied for a long time, there is the possibility of increased pest activity.

### Recognising this increased risk, has the action been:

- Has a thorough check inside and outside been completed to identify any sign of pest activity?
- Has the routine pest control visit been undertaken and all actions required completed?
- Have outside areas been checked to ensure no harbourage for pests?
- Are bungs fitted to bins and collection been organised?





## Licensing

During the period of closure there may have been changes to the management or colleagues at the business. Any changes that could impact the licence need to be addressed, and action taken to make sure other licensing requirements are met.

**To ensure the licensing requirements are being adhered to, consider the following:**

- Are the DPS details correct?
- Have all necessary team signed the Authority to Sell Alcohol record form?
- Is the team training on the sale of alcohol up to date?
- Is the correct signage on display, including any age verification posters and a summary of the premises licence?
- Is the CCTV system fully operational and recording for the required number of days? Are external cameras unobstructed by bushes or trees?
- If layout changes have been made to facilitate social distancing, does the CCTV system adequately covers the business, for example cameras are not obstructed or key areas have coverage, e.g. AWP machines?

## Company Vehicles

Some businesses will operate company vehicles, for example a team car, a delivery van or a hotel shuttle.

**The vehicles must not be forgotten and a number of checks undertaken, these include:**

- Does each vehicle have a valid MOT certificate and has it been serviced?
- Is the vehicle adequately insured?
- Have pre-use safety checks been completed before the vehicle is used again? Look at tyres, oil, water, screen wash, lights, brakes and hand brake.



## Fire Safety

Under normal circumstances businesses must perform regular fire safety checks. These checks must be undertaken with sufficient time prior to reopening to allow any remedial action to be completed.

### Fire safety controls to be:

- Is a new Fire Risk Assessment required if your social distancing controls have altered layout, usage, occupancy, responsible person or entrances and exits to the building?
- Have all call points been tested to ensure alarm is activated?
- Do all emergency lights work?
- Do all automatic door closers release on the activation of the alarm?
- Are fire extinguishers in place, the correct type and in date?
- Are there accumulations of material that could cause fire hazards?
- If furniture has been moved in order to meet social distancing requirements, are fire exits kept clear?
- Are all fire exit points free from obstruction?
- Is all fire safety training up to date?
- Has a fire evacuation drill been completed with all colleagues and the outcome documented?

This guide is not exhaustive and its completion does not mean all legal requirements on the business have been achieved. The guide has been provided to support businesses in reopening and consider the safety issues in doing so.

Should you require further guidance on any part of this document, please do contact us. If you are a current customer, please contact your account manager. If you are not yet a customer, simply complete the form on our contact page [shieldsafety.co.uk/contact](https://shieldsafety.co.uk/contact).





# Introducing the Safe to Trade Scheme

COMING SOON

Shield Safety Group, in collaboration with a panel of industry experts, have created the 'Safe to Trade' scheme. Designed to restore consumer confidence and ensure that staff are protected, 'Safe to Trade' is the ultimate safety standard. It's an expert guarantee that proves a location has been rigorously assessed by a team of Environmental Health Practitioners, and that the business has been deemed 'Safe to Trade'.

Sign up in 3 simple steps and you'll be able to clearly demonstrate a commitment to reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission, protecting both customers and staff whilst improving business efficiency and increasing revenue.

Clearly communicate to the outside world that you are 'Safe to Trade' by proudly displaying your approval sticker in the window.

## What's in it for you?

- Demonstrate that staff and customer safety is key.
- Be guided by the 'Safe to Trade' scheme's industry experts.
- Prove that your business is safeguarded against COVID-19.
- Keep manager's knowledge current with our eLearning courses.
- Undergo a food safety audit whilst maintaining social distancing.
- Access our specialist Helpline.
- Keep staff levels to a minimum by using our Riskproof app.



## Want to join the scheme?

Pre-register your interest today

[shieldsafety.co.uk/safe](https://shieldsafety.co.uk/safe)