

Trading Standards Service

What to Expect When We Visit Your Business

The purpose of an inspection visit to a business initiated by the Service is to check compliance with any trading standards legislation. If an inspection service is delivered well, it can be helpful and practical in assisting your business to comply with the law.

We understand that the majority of businesses based in Leicestershire are honest, legitimate enterprises who comply with the law. We will ensure that non-compliant businesses understand their regulatory requirements and we will provide advice and guidance to encourage compliance.

We will not close your business down during or following a visit. An inspection will not be undertaken solely for the purposes of discussing a consumer complaint unless the complaint details suggest serious non-compliance with trading standards law.

What You Can Expect of Us

In all our dealings with businesses you are entitled to expect our staff to:-

- Provide you with a notice when they enter your premises, which explains the purpose of the visit and informing you of your rights and our powers if we are using for them.
- Identify themselves by name and produce their authorisation.
- Be courteous and helpful.
- Give clear and simple compliance advice and clearly distinguish between what you must do to comply with the law and what is recommended as best practice. We aim to minimise the cost of compliance by requiring proportionate action.
- Provide you with a notice explaining the non-compliance and identifying what action is required and providing you with a reasonable time-scale (unless immediate action is necessary in the interest of health, safety or to prevent evidence being lost). An Officer may also provide this information in writing to you following the visit.
- Explain why a test purchase is being made or why a sample is being taken. If the Officer has cause to seize or detain items you will be provided with a list of these items.
- Provide you with a contact point for any further dealings.
- On request, we will consider providing language interpreters, including for sign language, translation of written materials into other languages, materials in large print, on tape or in Braille.
- Contact you following the visit if we decide that further action is required, or to advise you of the outcome of testing or analysis carried out on items we have sampled or test purchased.

Officers' Powers

Our authorised officers have a number of powers. These powers may vary slightly under different legislation, which reflects the variety of business sectors that we have dealings with, from farms to food businesses to product safety and rogue trading.

Officers have the power to:

- Observe the carrying on of a business
- Make test purchases and take samples
- Inspect products and services
- Request information
- Require documents to be produced
- Access electronic devices to obtain information
- Test weighing and measuring equipment
- Seize and detain goods and documents
- Break open containers
- Require assistance from persons on the premises

Where an authorised officer has cause to exercise their powers during a visit to your business, they will always explain why they believe it is required. If it is not practicable or safe for an officer to provide an explanation at the time the power is used, this will be provided in writing after the visit.

Officers may take colleagues and equipment to assist them when they enter your business premises.

We ask that you provide a safe environment for our Officers to carry out their duties and that you provide assistance where requested.

Important

It is an offence for an individual or business to obstruct an authorised officer(s). This means our officer(s) must be allowed entry to your business premises and co-operation must be provided as requested by our officer(s).

The Trading Standards Service is required to comply with codes of practice, as we carry out our activities. For more information please visit:-

- **Regulators' Code** - www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code
- **Home Office's Code of Practice - Powers of Entry** - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/powers-of-entry-code-of-practice>
- **PACE Code** – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/police-and-criminal-evidence-act-1984-pace-codes-of-practice>
- **Our Enforcement Policy** - <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/business-and-consumers/trading-standards/business-advice>

Comments and Contact Details for further information:

The Head of Regulatory Services
 Leicestershire County Council
 Trading Standards Service
 County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire LE3 8RA
Telephone: 0116 305 8000
Email: tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk

Calls to the above number may be recorded for accuracy and information.

In addition, information regarding the authority's formal complaints process may be found at <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/about-the-council/contact-us/complaints>

If you would like any of the information in this leaflet in an alternative version, e.g. large print or an alternative language please telephone 0116 305 8000.

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