

# Norfolk Trading Standards

## Service Standards for Businesses

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This document explains what you can expect of the Trading Standards Service of Norfolk County Council. Whether you run a business, are an employee or a member of the public, we are committed to providing you with an efficient, courteous and helpful service and this document tells you how we aim to do that and what standards we will meet.

### Areas we regulate

We deliver services in a number of areas:

<b>Animal Health &amp; Welfare</b>	<b>Doorstep Crime and Scams</b>	<b>Food Standards</b>
<b>Product Safety</b>	<b>Alcohol and Tobacco control</b>	<b>Fair Trading &amp; e-Crime</b>
<b>Weights and Measures</b>	<b>Business Compliance Advice</b>	<b>Age Restricted Sales</b>

### How we deliver our services

In carrying out our regulatory activities we look carefully at what the law is trying to achieve and ensure we apply the law appropriately and proportionately to meet important outcomes for both people and business. As well as our reactive work, we recognise that preventative measures, ensuring business compliance on core matters and helping the public avoid problems, is key to health, safety and economic prosperity.

### The things we do

1. Provide businesses with access to information and compliance advice, including chargeable, bespoke services; targeting support to start-up, small, high-risk and Primary Authority businesses
2. Provide commercial services, including calibration and safety testing, to the public and private sectors
3. Safeguard vulnerable people and build community resilience with partners; tackling scams, fraud and rogue traders; including through our Norfolk Against Scams Partnership (NASP), No Cold Calling Zones and Trusted Trader scheme
4. Protect consumers and support legitimate businesses by tackling non-compliance, focusing on the most serious fraudulent, illegal and unfair trading, including e-crime
5. Through programmes of intelligence-led market surveillance, education and enforcement activities:

- Safeguard communities and public health by tackling the supply of age restricted products to young people and illegal alcohol and tobacco
- Ensure the safety, standards and quality of the food chain, including food, animal feeds and agricultural fertilisers
- Safeguard the standards of animal health and welfare and reduce the risk of animal disease outbreaks and associated risks to the Norfolk economy and public health
- Ensure the safety of consumer products, fair trading and legal measurement of goods

We determine our activities by assessing the needs of local people and our business community and considering the risks that require addressing. We do this through seeking regular feedback from businesses and through using intelligence, data and other information available to us and our partners. In this way we ensure our resources are targeted appropriately, in the light of these local needs and of national priorities.

[Details of our current service plan, policies and priorities are available here](#)

We are committed to being transparent in our activities. We measure what is important and we publish a range of information about our performance in our service plan so that you can see how we are doing.

We carry out all our activities in a way that supports those we regulate to comply and grow:

- We ensure that information, guidance and advice is available to help you to meet legal requirements (see [Helping you to get it right](#)).
- We carry out inspections and other activities to check compliance with legal requirements, and we target these checks where we believe they are most needed (see [Inspections and other compliance visits](#)).
- We deal proportionately with breaches of the law as set out in our Enforcement Policy, including taking firm enforcement action when necessary (see [Responding to noncompliance](#)).
- We provide a range of services to businesses, including metrological verification and calibration, and animal feed registrations and approvals (see [Requests for our service](#)).

Our services will be delivered in accordance with the requirements of the [Regulators' Code](#).

## **Working with you**

In all your dealings with us you can expect, and will receive, an efficient and professional service. Our officers will:

- Be courteous and polite
- Always identify themselves in dealings with you, and provide you with contact details
- Seek to gain an understanding of how your business operates
- Provide details of how to discuss any concerns you may have
- Agree timescales, expectations and preferred methods of communication with you
- Ensure that you are kept informed of progress on any outstanding issues.

We recognise that your business will receive advice and inspections from other organisations, and we will do our best to work with them to ensure that you receive the best service.

## ***Helping you to get it right***

We want to work with you to help your business to be legally compliant and successful and it is important to us that you feel able to come to us for advice when you need it. We won't take enforcement action just because you tell us that you have a problem.

We make information and advice on meeting legal requirements available, including free leaflets and guidance material to businesses on a wide range of subjects and trade areas. These are available in pdf format on our website:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/advice-for-businesses>. In addition a range of business advice information is available via the Trading Standards Institute [Business Companion](#) resource.

If we cannot help you, we will do our best to signpost you to someone who can.

We also provide alerts to businesses detailing the latest scams and new variations on old scams. To sign up to our business scam alerts by email go to our [Trading Standards Scam awareness and advice page](#).

## ***Provision of information and advice to businesses, on request***

Where you need advice that is tailored to your particular needs and circumstances we will:

- Discuss with you what is required to achieve compliance
- Provide advice that supports compliance that can be easily understood and relied on
- Distinguish legal requirements from suggested good practice
- Ensure that any verbal advice you receive is confirmed in writing if requested
- Acknowledge good practice and compliance.

If we can't help you we will try our best to refer you to someone who can. This includes providing leaflets produced by partner organisations.

In each case, our response will be proportionate to:

- the potential risk to consumers caused by a failure on behalf of the business to understand the information/advice provided
- the experience of the business in question, and
- the impact upon the economic prosperity of the business in not achieving compliance in the respective area(s) of the law.

We will prioritise requests for advice from new Norfolk businesses and [Primary Authority](#) businesses. We will provide free signpost advice and information to ensure that businesses are aware of the applicable trading standards legislation. If a business requires bespoke, more detailed or interpretative advice then we will charge for such advice on a cost recovery basis. More details are available in our [Business Services Policy](#) and in our [Fees and charges document](#)

We reserve the right to refuse to provide advice to third parties whom we believe are (i) likely to charge a business for passing on the advice we have provided or (ii) represent non Norfolk based businesses.

### ***Inspections and other compliance visits***

We monitor and support compliance in a number of different ways including through inspections, sampling visits, test purchases, advisory visits and complaint investigations. These visits will always be based on an assessment of risk – we won't visit without a reason.

We will give you notice that we intend to visit unless we are required by law to visit unannounced or we have specific reason to believe that an unannounced visit is more appropriate.

When we visit you our officers will:

- Explain the reason and purpose of the visit
- Carry their identification card at all times, and present it on request when visiting your premises
- Exercise discretion in front of your customers and staff
- Have regard to your approach to legal compliance, and use this information to inform future interactions with you
- Provide information, guidance and advice to support you in meeting your statutory obligations, if required
- Provide a written record of the visit.

### ***High-risk businesses***

Inspection of all high-risk businesses in Norfolk is carried out on an annual basis. Individual businesses are deemed to be high-risk by virtue of:

- the Food Standards Agency (FSA) risk schemes for food and feed businesses, or
- the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) risk scheme for animal health businesses, or
- our own risk scheme (based on the FSA risk scheme) for other businesses, and
- previous trading history, when businesses have demonstrated significant noncompliance with trading standards and we are concerned that they might not comply in the future.

We plan and deliver an inspection programme to ensure that all these businesses are inspected by allocated officers during the service year.

### ***Charges for inspection visits***

There are currently no charges made in relation to inspection visits by Trading Standards, but we do charge where the visit is at the request of the business. Full details of all of our fees and charges are available [here](#).

### ***Responding to non-compliance***

Where we identify any failure to meet legal obligations, we will respond proportionately, taking account of the circumstances, in line with our [Enforcement Policy](#).

Where we require you to take action to remedy any failings we will:

- Explain the nature of the non-compliance

- Discuss what is required to achieve compliance, taking into account your circumstances
- Clearly explain any advice, actions required or decisions that we have taken
- Agree timescales in relation to any actions required
- Provide in writing details of how to appeal against any advice provided, actions required or decisions taken, including any statutory rights to appeal
- Explain what will happen next
- Keep in touch with you, where required, until the matter is resolved.

## Requests for our services

We clearly explain the services that we offer in our [Business Services Policy](#), including details of any fees and charges that apply.

In responding to requests for our services, including requests for advice, we will:

- Acknowledge your request within 3 days
- Tell you whether your request attracts a charge and what that charge will be
- Tell you when you can expect a substantive response
- Seek to fully understand the nature of your request
- Explain what we may or may not be able to do, so that you know what to expect
- Keep you informed of progress throughout our involvement
- Inform you of the outcome as appropriate.

## How to contact us for information or advice

You can contact us by:

Telephone: 0344 800 8020

Email: [trading\\_standards@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:trading_standards@norfolk.gov.uk)

Web: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

By post: Trading Standards Service, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich. NR1 2DH.

We will seek to work with you in the most appropriate way to meet your individual needs. We can make information available in different formats, and have access to translation and interpretation services.

If you contact us we will ask you for your name and contact details to enable us to keep in touch with you as the matter progresses. We treat all contact with the service in confidence unless you have given us permission to share your details with others as part of the matter we are dealing with on your behalf or there is an operational reason why we need to do so. We will respond to anonymous complaints and enquiries where we judge it appropriate to do so.

More information on how we handle your data can be seen [here](#).

## Our Team

We have a dedicated team of officers who have the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience to deliver the services provided. We have arrangements in place to ensure the ongoing professional competency of all officers.

Where specialist knowledge is required in an area outside of our expertise we have arrangements in place, with both neighbouring authorities and other regulatory organisations, to call on additional resources as necessary.

## **Working with others**

We work closely with other council services such as Planning and Economic Development and our aim is to provide a streamlined service to you.

We are part of a much wider regulatory system in Norfolk. We have good working relationships with other regulators such as local Environmental Health Services and this enables us to deliver a more joined up and consistent service. This includes sharing information and data on compliance and risk, where the law allows, helping target regulatory resources.

Our officers are familiar with the work of our partners and can signpost you to the advice and guidance you need.

## **Having your say**

### ***Complaints and appeals***

Where we take enforcement action, there is often a statutory right to appeal. We will always tell you about this at the appropriate time.

We are always willing to discuss with you the reasons why we have acted in a particular way, or asked you to act in a particular way. You can contact Sophie Leney, Head of Trading Standards, Trading Standards Service, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich. NR1 2DH.

We manage complaints about our service, or about the conduct of our officers, through Norfolk County Council's Corporate Complaints Policy. Details can be found at [www.norfolk.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/complaints), or by telephone on 0344 800 8020.

### ***Feedback***

We value input from you to help us ensure our service is meeting your needs. We would like to hear from you whether your experience of us has been good or in need of improvement. This helps us to ensure we keep doing the right things and make changes where we need to. We use customer satisfaction surveys from time to time but we would welcome your feedback at any time. You can provide feedback in the following ways:

Telephone: 0344 800 8020

Email: [information@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:information@norfolk.gov.uk)

Web: [www.norfolk.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/contactus)

By post: Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich. NR1 2DH.

Any feedback that we receive will be acknowledged, considered and responded to.

**Dated: 20 August 2019**

**Name: Sophie Leney**

**Job title: Head of Trading Standards**

**Review date: 21 August 2020**