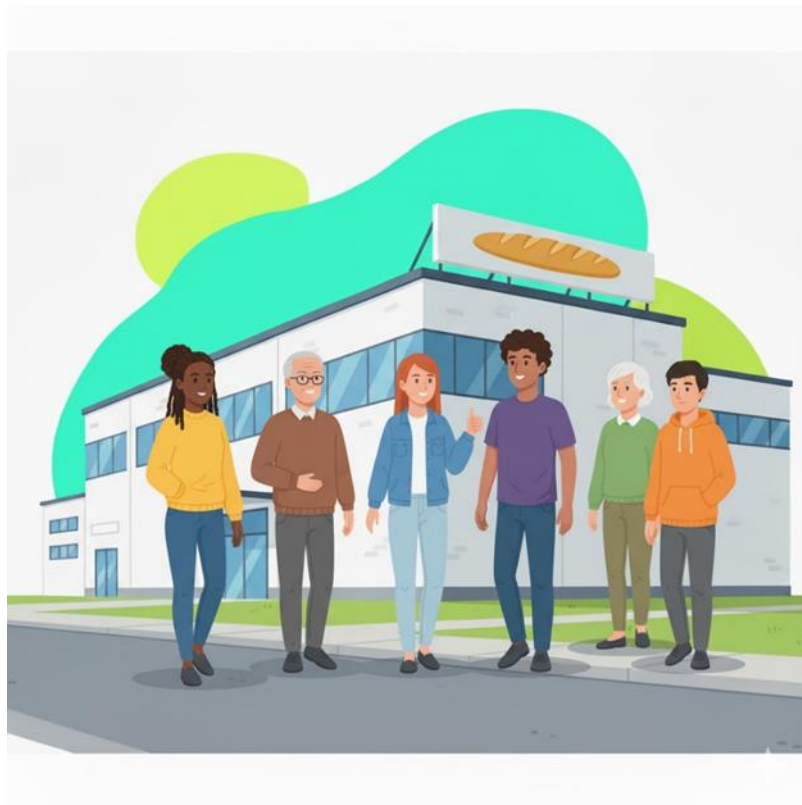




## New employee guide

# Food hygiene and occupational safety in plain English



SUJUVA – How to get immigrants to work in the food industry smoothly



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Table of contents

**1. Introduction.....3**

**2. Checklist before starting work.....4**

    Work permit .....4

    Employment contract .....4

    Health status statement .....6

    Hygiene passport .....6

**3. Successful start of work .....7**

    Leaving for work.....7

    First day of work.....7

    Successful induction into the job .....8

    Working hours and breaks .....9

    Workwear.....10

    Clean hands.....11

    Eating during the working day .....12

    A tidy workstation .....13

**4. Food safety .....14**

    Principles of own-check .....14

    Food temperatures .....15

    Cold chain.....16

    Hygienic handling of products .....16

    Heat treatments.....17

    Garbage disposal.....17

    Caring for the environment .....19

    Reducing waste .....20

**6. Occupational safety .....21**

    Working safely.....21

    Safe access to the workplace .....22

    Disruptions .....22



# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the hygiene and occupational safety guide.

This guide is intended for international workers who have moved to Finland and are new to the food industry.

The guide contains practical information and instructions that can be used to teach safe and hygienic working practices in accordance with food industry requirements.

The guide covers issues related to employment, workplace safety, risk management, personal hygiene, and other matters necessary for food handling.

The aim is to help employees adapt to their new working environment and facilitate familiarization with their work. The guide is designed to be easy for readers to understand and is therefore written in plain English and the first person.

The guide booklet has been produced as part of the SUJUVA – SMOOTH (How to get immigrants to work in the food industry smoothly), which is co-funded by the European Union (ESF+).



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



© [SUJUVA – How to get immigrants to work in the food industry smoothly, which is co-funded by the European Union, Häme Vocational Institute] [2025]

The text and graphic elements of this publication (excluding photographs and AI-generated images) are licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license. You are free to share and adapt the material, provided that the original author is credited.

Illustrations and AI Usage: Illustrations in this publication have been created using Google Gemini AI. AI-generated images are not subject to copyright protection and are not covered by the aforementioned CC BY 4.0 license. These images may be used freely without separate permission.

EU funding logos and organizational trademarks are not covered by the Creative Commons license.



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**



## 2. Checklist before starting work

### Work permit

Before starting work, I make sure that I can work in Finland.

From the residence permit card, I can see that I have a permit to work.

**A work permit is a permit granted by an authority. It allows a foreign person to work in Finland. Further information on work permits is available from the Finnish Immigration Service <https://migri.fi/en/home>)**

### Employment contract

I signed an employment contract before starting work.

In the employment contract, I agree with the employer on work-related matters.

I will make an employment contract in writing.



**The employment contract includes:**

- 1. Employer and employee information**
  - Name, address and contact information
- 2. Start date of work**
  - When the work starts
- 3. A place to work**
  - Where the work is done
- 4. Duties**
  - What kind of work does the employee do
- 5. Applicable collective agreement (TES)**
  - Applies to all employees, even if they do not belong to a trade union
- 6. Duration of employment**
  - The employment relationship can be:
    - i. indefinite (continues until terminated)
    - ii. fixed term (ends on the agreed date)
- 7. Probation**
  - A time when it is easier for both the employee and the employer to terminate the employment relationship
  - Usually up to 6 months
- 8. Working time**
  - How many hours per day and week is worked
- 9. Salary and salary payment date**
  - How much salary is paid
  - The minimum amount can be found in the collective agreement
  - When will the salary be paid?
  - You always get a pay slip of your salary
- 10. Annual leave or holiday compensation**
  - How much vacation is accrued and when can it be taken?
- 11. Notice**
  - How long before the end of the employment relationship must be reported

## Health status statement

Before I start my job in the food industry, my health is checked.

The check-up is done by a doctor or public health nurse.

I get a health status statement that I can work in the food industry.

The check-up will make sure that I do not have any infectious diseases (e.g. salmonella).

**A health status statement is required when handling food that**

- **is served unheated (e.g., salad),**
- **is unpackaged (e.g., restaurant meals),**
- **is perishable (e.g., meat, fish, chopped vegetables).**

**A health certificate must be provided at the start of employment if the employment relationship lasts at least one month.**

## Hygiene passport

I need a Hygiene Passport when I handle perishable, unpackaged foodstuffs in my work.

The Hygiene Passport is proof that I know how to act hygienically.

I can get a Hygiene Passport by passing the Hygiene Passport test.

I must complete a hygiene passport within three months of starting work.



### 3. Successful start of work

#### Leaving for work

I have to be healthy to be able to go to work.

I'm washed and clean.

I don't use tobacco or other nicotine products at work.

I don't use my own phone at work, during working hours.

**Please know that in the food industry, you are not allowed to use:**

- perfumes
- rings
- earrings
- piercings
- watches
- false eyelashes
- long nails or artificial nails
- nail polish
- makeup

#### First day of work

I arrive at the workplace on time, shortly before the agreed time.

I am met by a contact person. I save his name and phone number on my phone.

I am shown the dressing room, given work clothes and work shoes.



I am guided to the correct and safe routes.

I am shown the important places, such as

- the meeting place,
- the toilet,
- the break room,
- the canteen
- and the supervisor's office.

I am directed to a workstation and instructed on what to do.

If I'm sick, I'll call and report it to the contact person at work.



## Successful induction into the job

I am introduced to new tasks and the rules of the workplace.

I am taught how to act at the workplace and how I do my job.

I get so much orientation that I learn my job.

I dare to tell you if I need more guidance.

I can ask for help if I don't understand what I need to do.

I do the tasks that belong to me.



## Working hours and breaks

I know when my shift will start.

I arrive at the workplace on time, shortly before the start of my shift.

I clock in according to the workplace procedure.

I know when I have a break, and I remember to take it.

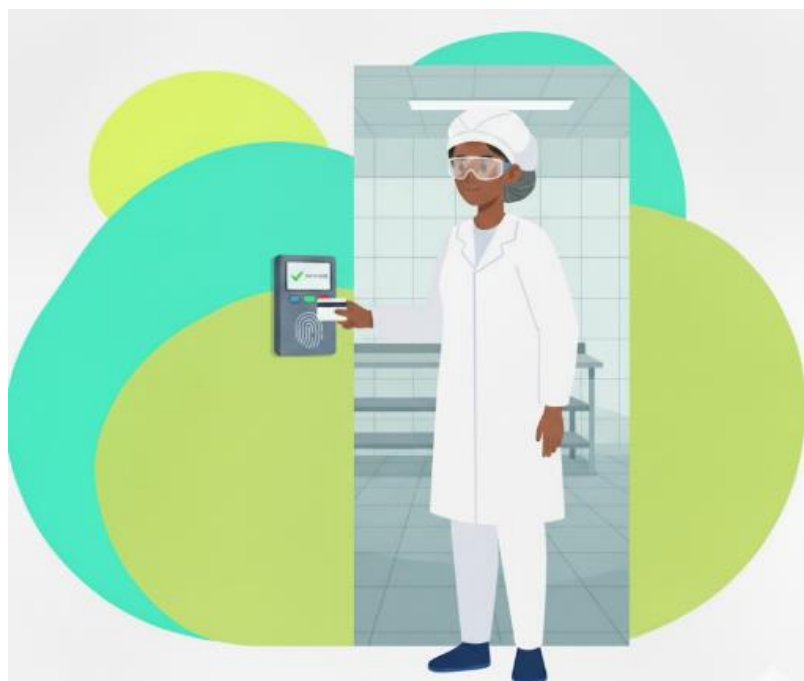
I return to my workstation in time after a break.

I work as many hours as mentioned in the employment contract.

If I work overtime, it is always agreed separately. I can also refuse overtime.

I take care of my own affairs in my free time.

After a day at work, I clock myself out of the workplace.



## Workwear

I know where to find workwear for myself.

I only wear work clothes at work.

I always put on work headgear first. I make sure that it is put in according to the instructions.

Next, I put on a work jacket, work pants, and shoes.

I always wear socks in my shoes.

If I work in the cold, I wear warm clothes under protective clothing.

I know where to put my used work clothes and how often I change them.

**Other necessary protective equipment, in addition to work clothes, may include a beard cover, apron and sleeve guards.**

**Please remember to leave your own things in the locker. These items may include phones, jewelry, pens, wallets, chewing gum, lozenges, tobacco and other nicotine products.**



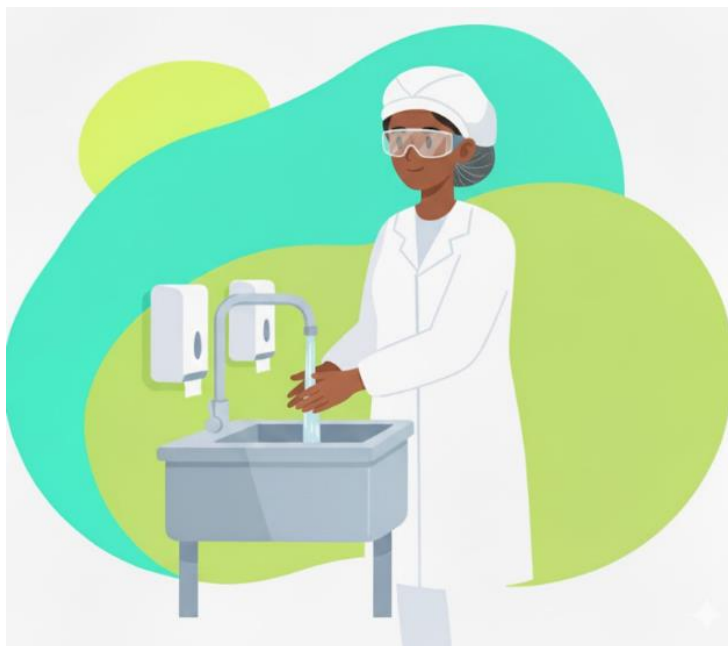
## Clean hands

I wash my hands whenever they are dirty.

I wash my hands before putting on protective gloves.

I wash my hands thoroughly:

1. When I come to work and go to my workstation
2. Before starting work
3. When I move from one work phase and workstation to another
4. After the breaks
5. After going to the toilet
6. After blowing your nose
7. After handling dirty items
8. After waste and garbage disposal



## Eating during the working day

At work, I can eat in the canteen or break room.

I wash my hands before eating.

I keep my own snacks in the right place.

I follow the instructions given at the workplace regarding meals.

### Allergens

**The workplace may prohibit the bringing of certain foodstuffs into the workplace premises. For example, nuts and peanuts can be strong allergens and they can cause an allergic reaction that is dangerous to health. The workplace wants to prevent allergens from getting into the food being prepared, which is why allergens must not be brought into the workplace.**



## A tidy workstation

I familiarize myself with the equipment and supplies at my workstation.

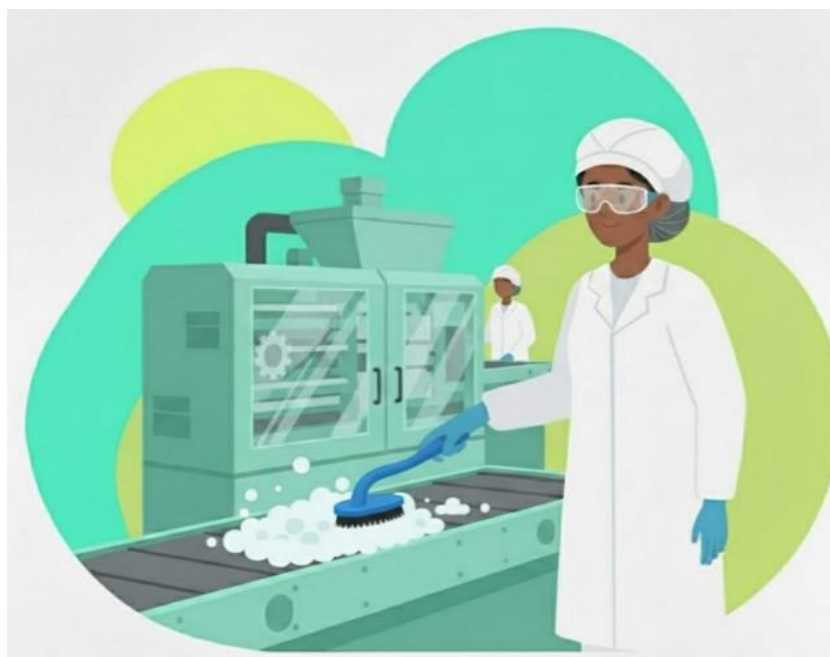
I know where the right places are for the tools.

I return the tools clean to their right places after use.

I put the trash in the trash can.

I clean my work environment whenever it gets dirty.

"When I leave, I always leave my workstation in a cleaner condition than it was when I arrived."



## 4. Food safety

### Principles of own-check

Principles of own-check:

- Before starting work, I make sure that the workplace is clean
- I measure that the temperature of the incoming raw materials is correct
- I measure that the temperature of the cooked products is right
- I check that the labeling on the packaged products is correct, especially the date
- I'll let you know if the result doesn't comply with the instructions. It's good that I noticed that.

- **Own-check is important. This means that everyone supervises their own work.**
- **Own-check is carried out where foodstuffs are prepared or stored.**
- **Own-check is carried out by measuring things, such as temperatures. The own-check inspections and measurements carried out are recorded and stored so that they can be reviewed later.**

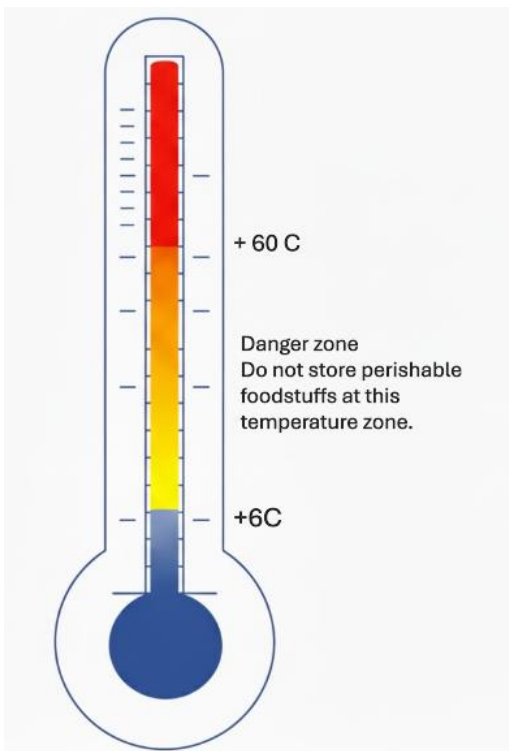


## Food temperatures

I know the temperatures at which different foods are stored.

I do not store perishable foods at a temperature of +6 to +60 °C.

Perishable foods include, for example, meat, fish, dairy products, eggs, and chopped vegetables.

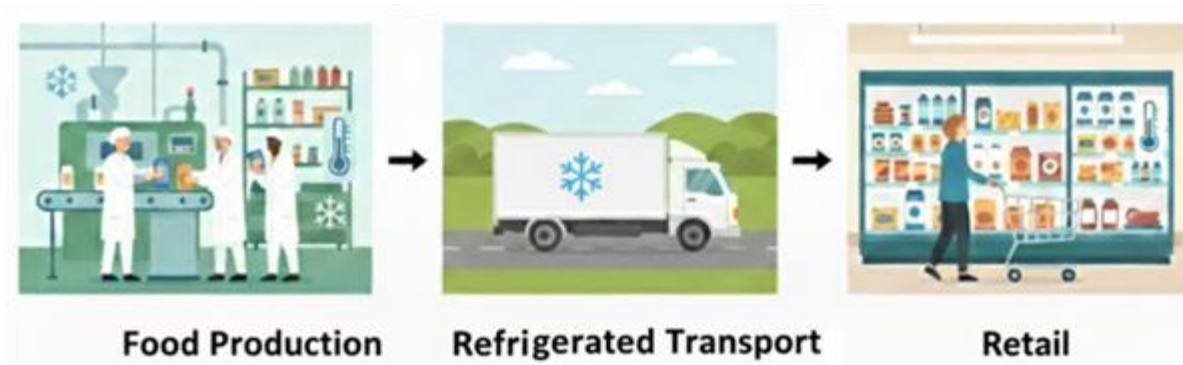


### Temperatures

- **Microbes grow best at temperatures between +6 and +60 °C.**
- **Perishable foodstuffs should be stored at a maximum temperature of +6 °C.**
- **If the food is served hot, the temperature must be above +60°C.**

## Cold chain

The cold chain means that the food remains cold throughout the journey of the product.



I transfer the raw materials and products to the cold as quickly as possible.

By measuring the temperature, I make sure that perishable food stays cold at all times.

## Hygienic handling of products

I store ingredients in the right places and cover them with a lid or wrap them up.

I use clean utensils when I dose or take ingredients.

I don't touch the raw materials or the finished product unnecessarily.

## Heat treatments

I make sure that the food stays clean after heating.

I handle raw and cooked foods separately and with different utensils.

I store raw and cooked food in different places.

After heating, I cool the food quickly and store it in the cold.

- **Food is safe when it is heated to at least +72 Celsius degrees.**
- **Some foods need to be heated even more, for example, poultry meat to +75 Celsius degrees.**
- **Heating destroys dangerous microbes such as salmonella and listeria.**

## 5. Sustainable development

### Garbage disposal

I recycle the rubbish according to the instructions of the workplace.

When I handle rubbish, I remember to take care of good hygiene.

**Recycling and sorting at the workplace mean that the rubbish is taken to different containers.**



**The garbage to be sorted includes:**

- **Plastic**
- **Paperboard**
- **Metal**
- **Glass**
- **Biowaste**
- **Energy waste**
- **Mixed waste**

**Differences between energy waste and mixed waste:**

Energy waste is dry waste from trade and industry. It is used to make recycled fuel.

Waste that cannot be recycled is taken to mixed waste.



## Caring for the environment

I use only the water I need.

I turn off the tap as soon as I stop using water.

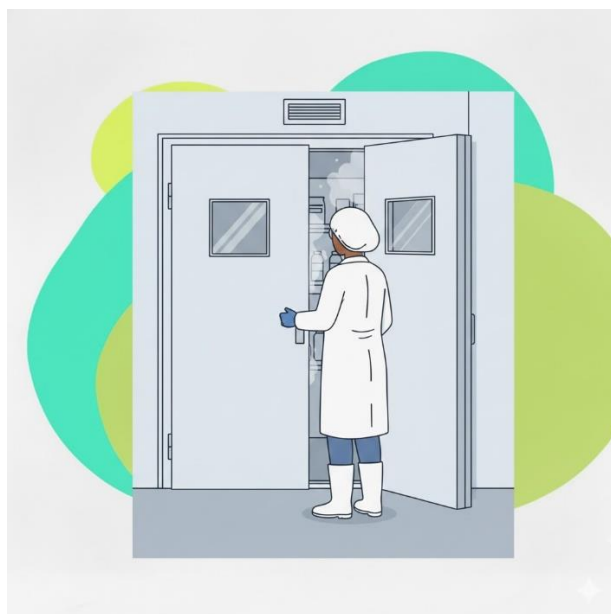
I dose the detergent according to the instructions. Increasing the amount of detergent does not clean better.

If raw material falls on the floor, I clean it up and put it in biowaste –  
I don't flush it down the drain.

I turn off the machines according to the instructions if they are not in use.

I'll keep the doors closed:

- Exterior doors
- Freezer doors
- Cold storage doors
- Thermal room doors
- Oven doors
- 



## Reducing waste

I do my work carefully so that no raw material or anything else is wasted.

I use the ingredients and packaging in the right order.

I use the oldest products first.

I only open a new package when the previous one is gone.

**FIFO = First-in first-out –  
principle**

**Products circulate and do not  
expire in stock.**

**Waste (Hävikki in Finnish)**

**Waste refers to goods, food, or  
other things that are lost or  
spoiled and can no longer be  
used.**



## 6. Occupational safety

### Working safely

I have the right to work safely.

I am taught safe working methods when I start a new job.

I know the dangers associated with my own work, and I know how to protect myself from them.

If I'm not sure about something, I'll ask before I do it.

At work, I can ask for help from my coworkers, supervisor, or the occupational safety and health representative.

I don't put my hand in a dangerous place, even if there is a malfunction in the machine.

I always wear the necessary protective equipment for my work.



**Protective equipment may include:**

- **Protective gloves**
- **Respiratory protection**
- **Hearing protection**
- **Helmet**
- **Safety glasses**
- **High-visibility vest**
- **Safety shoes**

## Safe access to the workplace

When I walk on the stairs, I hold on to the railing.

I don't walk under or over the conveyors.

I watch out for forklifts and other machines.

I wear a high-visibility vest in places according to the instructions.

I walk carefully and only on marked routes.

I watch out for the slippery floor, so I don't fall over.

I remember walking carefully outside as well.



## Disruptions

I work safely.

I don't take unnecessary risks. Human safety and health are always the most important things.

If I notice that something is wrong, I will report it to my supervisor as soon as possible.

I always follow the instructions, even in the event of a disturbance.

Even in the event of a disturbance, I don't put my hand in a dangerous place.

I only do the equipment repair tasks that belong to me.

In an emergency, I go to the assembly point when I hear the alarm.

I know the name and address of the workplace.

### **Disruption**

**Disruption means that something goes wrong or in a different way than it should.**

**A disruption is a situation where work cannot continue normally, and something needs to be fixed immediately.**

**For example, the machine breaks down, the power goes out, or the packaging has incorrect**



### **A gathering place**

**A gathering place is an agreed place where people go in case of an emergency or an alarm. An emergency can be, for example, a fire or other danger. By gathering in the same place, it can be ensured that everyone is rescued and safe.**

