

Warwickshire Trading Standards

Our Service Standards

What you can expect from Warwickshire Trading Standards Service

This document explains what you can expect of the Trading Standards Service in Warwickshire. 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. This document tells you how we aim to do that and what standards we will meet.

Areas we regulate

We deliver services across a number of areas, including

- product safety
- food standards
- fair trading
- sales of age-restricted products to children
- safe storage of petroleum & explosives
- business advice & information
- scams & rogue trading
- animal health & welfare
- weights & measures

We adopt an intelligence-led approach to prioritise these areas of work; targeting our limited resources to areas causing greatest concern.

How we deliver our services

We carry out all our activities in a way that supports legitimate businesses to thrive and protects consumers from those who deliberately or persistently breach consumer protection laws.

- We provide a range of services to businesses to help them meet legal requirements and for consumers to resolve problems.
- 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.
- We deal proportionately with breaches of the law, including taking firm enforcement action when necessary, as set out in our Enforcement Policy.

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.

Helping consumers when things go wrong

We work in partnership with the Citizens Advice Consumer Service to ensure all Warwickshire residents have ready access to consumer advice via telephone or email. Further information can be found at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/if-you-need-more-help-about-a-consumer-issue, or by telephoning the helpline on 0808 223 1133.

The helpline will provide you with advice on your rights and pass details of your complaint to Trading Standards. Even if Trading Standards do not contact you directly about your case, we use the information we receive from the helpline to make sure businesses are behaving fairly and not breaking the law.

Warwickshire Trading Standards has very limited resources to assist vulnerable people. We will assess the circumstances of each complaint on a case-by-case basis. In all cases our assistance is subject to available resources.

Helping businesses get it right

We want to work with businesses to help them be compliant and successful. It is important to us that businesses feel able to come to us for advice when they need it.

A wide range of information and guidance available at www.businesscompanion.info to help businesses meet legal requirements.

We offer tailored advice to Warwickshire-based businesses on how the law applies to their particular circumstances. This service is currently provided free of charge.

We issue licences for petroleum, explosives and performing animals. We also register and approve animal feed businesses operating in Warwickshire. Further details can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/licences-businesses.

We offer a wide range calibration and metrological services. Further details can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/calibration.

Our fees and charges are reviewed and updated annually.

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 businesses notice that we intend to visit unless we have specific reason to believe that an unannounced visit is more appropriate.

When we visit our officers will:

- Explain the reason and purpose of the visit
- Carry their identification card at all times, and present it on request
- Exercise discretion in front of customers and staff
- Have regard to the businesses' approach to compliance, and use this information to inform future interactions
- Provide information, guidance and advice to support businesses in meeting their statutory obligations, if required
- Provide a list of any items seized for examination or testing
- Provide details of the results of any tests carried out
- Where appropriate, provide details of the appeals procedure against local authority decisions

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.

Having your say

Complaints and appeals

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. The officer dealing with the issue will discuss this, but if you are not satisfied with the explanation you can contact the Trading Standards Duty Manager (see "how to contact us" below).

We manage complaints about our service, or about the conduct of our officers, through Warwickshire County Council's Complaints Policy, details of which are available at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/complaints.

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 conduct regular customer satisfaction surveys but we welcome your feedback at any time.

All feedback that we receive will be considered and acted upon as appropriate.

How to contact us

By post: Trading Standards Service, Old Budbrooke Road, Warwick, CV35 7DP

Telephone: 01926 414040

Email: tradingstandards@warwickshire.gov.uk

Web: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards

Performance against our Service Standards

We are committed to ensuring our approach to regulation is transparent. We publish the following data about our performance:

- Outcomes of customer and business satisfaction surveys
- Outcomes of complaints about our service (incl appeals against our decisions)
- Outcomes of cases brought before the Courts
- Undertakings given to us by businesses
- Our use of surveillance or covert human intelligence sources under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

We review and update our published information every 12 months. As part of this review we assess whether continued publication of the information is appropriate.