

FOOD SAFETY CONVERSATION

Allergen Awareness for Drinks with Milk or Alternatives to Milk



WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO LEARN

In this Food Safety Conversation we are going to discuss the controls we must have in place when serving drinks made with milk or alternatives to milk. This includes coffees and similar hot or iced drinks, as well as blended drinks such as smoothies, shakes etc. You will learn about the process that must be followed when customers place orders, when communicating orders to your colleagues and when handing drinks to customers. By following the below steps we can be sure that customers are served drinks that are suitable for their specific dietary requirements and requests.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Background

Where we are preparing and serving drinks that contain milk and alternatives to milk, such as soy, almond, oat and coconut milk, it is essential that there is clarity around the customer's requirements and that there is effective communication from the point of order, through to the point of service.

Always follow the below process to make sure that drinks prepared are suitable for the customer and accurately reflect what they ordered.

Service Process

1. You must ensure you have the approved **Compass Ireland sign available** at each beverage counter directing customers to consult the allergen folder / tablet.
2. This sign will advise them **that they need to consider all components** of the drink(s), including syrups or base powders, such as hot chocolate mixes, as these can contain milk or other allergens.
3. Remember that **you must not advise the customer** on the products that may be suitable for their specific food allergy or intolerance. It's the responsibility of the customer to specify their own drink order.
4. Make sure you **always communicate the details of the order**, including the type of milk or alternative to milk, and any other ingredient additions or omissions, clearly to the colleague making the drink(s) and on to the colleague serving them.
5. When a customer asks for their **'usual' drink**, clarify clearly with the customer what their specific drink order is.
6. If you are preparing the drinks make sure you **follow the exact requirements** of the customer's specific order, ensuring the drink(s) are free from any allergens communicated by the customer.
7. When handing a customer their prepared drink(s), **verbally communicate each drink** to the customer to confirm it is correct for their requirements. When doing this, **state the milk or alternative to milk type first**, for example: soya flat white, cow's milk flat white, coconut latte, oat latte, almond cappuccino, black americano etc.
8. Make sure the **customer confirms** that the drink order is correct and accurately reflects what they have ordered.
9. If the customer tells you that any of the drinks that have been made are incorrect and are not what they ordered, the drink(s) must not be handed over to the customer, but must be **disposed of immediately**.
10. If the drink order is incorrect, **apologise to the customer for any inconvenience**, reconfirm their order, and follow the process again.

If there is any doubt at any point and there is a risk that drinks prepared are not what was ordered you must not serve the drink. If a colleague taking the order, making the drink(s) or serving the customer their order is not absolutely sure of the order at point of service, or has any concerns that the drink order is not accurate, they should not serve the customer until they have sought the guidance, advice and support of their line manager. For more detail, refer to the [Drinks Service Process guidance document](#) which is available on the Ireland Section of the Compass HSE Website.