**Q. WILL WE BE ABLE TO ARRANGE COMPENSATION FOR YOU?**

**A. No.** Once the investigation is finished you may wish to pursue an independent claim for compensation, but we can’t help you with this.

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**HOW WE INVESTIGATE FOOD COMPLAINTS**

- Food complaint received
- Details taken from complainant
- If best dealt with by other local authority or Trading Standards complaint passed to them
- Investigation by Officer of the Food Safety Team
- Officer will keep you informed of progress
- End of investigation

**No formal action**

**Prosecution**

**Written warning**

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If food purchased is outside South Staffordshire the matter is dealt with by local council where food was bought or by Trading Standards.

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**FOOD COMPLAINTS**

Food Safety Team  
South Staffordshire Council  
Council Offices  
Codsall  
South Staffordshire  
WV8 1PX

Phone: 01902 696000  
Fax: 01902 696219  
Email: env.commercial@sstaffs.gov.uk

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**A Guide to how we investigate food complaints**

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Mouse in loaf of bread
Q. What might happen then?
A. There are a number of possible outcomes which include:

1. No formal action is taken.
   This might happen if,
   • The complaint is found not to be justified
   • The complaint is the result of a misunderstanding, or

At the end of our investigation, if we are happy that the manufacturer/supplier has proved that they have taken all reasonable steps to prevent a complaint of this nature happening and that formal action isn’t appropriate on this occasion.

2. We can issue a formal written warning.

3. We can take the matter to Court for a Magistrate to decide the outcome.
   This will take place if the matter is serious or the offender has received previous warnings. At this stage, you will be expected to provide a written statement and attend court to give evidence, if necessary.

Q. What details will the Food Safety Team need?
A. You will be asked a series of questions about the complaint, such as where and when you bought it, the nature of the problem etc. You will also be asked if you are willing to provide a witness statement or give evidence in court in the event of a prosecution. This is a routine question and does not mean that formal action will automatically follow.

Q. What will the Food Safety Team do?
A. We’ll start our investigation by contacting the retailer or manufacturer to discuss the complaint with them. If the manufacturer is sited outside of South Staffordshire we may also contact the local council for that area and ask them to comment on the premises. We’ll also try to photograph your complaint where we can.

The food may also be sent to the laboratory for scientific examination.

Q. Will I be kept informed of what is happening?
A. The complaint will be passed to a dedicated Officer of the Food Safety Team for investigation. The investigation could take some time but you will receive regular progress reports from us until the matter is finally resolved.