

ACS Best Practice: Home News Delivery

This guidance is designed to inform convenience retailers about best practice on home news delivery (HND) to inform procedures and provide reassurance during the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Department for Education's position on HND by young people is: "It is for authorities to decide on individual cases, and safeguarding children's wellbeing is rightly their priority. They should, however, also take account of employers' measures to safeguard young workers and whether these are enough to address any safeguarding concerns, and decide case-by-case rather than impose a blanket ban. We hope that authorities and distributors can find ways for young workers to work in safe conditions."

COVID-19

The World Health Organization is advising that the risk of contracting COVID-19 from receiving letters and parcels is low. COVID-19 does not survive long on objects, such as letters or parcels, and this will be the same for newspapers and magazines.

Reducing the Risk of Spreading COVID-19

The following best practice applies for consumer and business home news deliveries.

Hygiene

- Transport must have all hand contact surfaces, for example handles and steering wheel, cleaned at the start and end of the round.
- HND colleagues must wash their hands before leaving the store to begin deliveries.
- HND colleagues must wash their hands as soon as possible when returning to store after completing deliveries.

Managing Deliveries

- Deliver news as normal via letterboxes and agreed alternative delivery points such as doorsteps.
- If colleagues would ordinarily knock a door, continue to do so but leave deliveries on the doorstep.
- Follow all restricted delivery requirements, for example businesses asking for papers to be left outside.
- Never enter customer property. If a colleague is concerned about a customer's welfare, contact the store for advice.

Employing U16 Workers

Retailers considering employing colleagues aged 13 - 16 to complete HND should follow the government's existing social distancing advice in workplaces and be aware of the following:

- The worker may need an employment permit issued by the education department of the local council. If a child is working without a child employment permit, there's a risk the employer will not be insured against accidents involving the child.

- School-aged workers are not entitled to the National Minimum Wage.
- Workers aged under 16 do not pay National Insurance, so only need to be included on payroll if their total income exceeds their Personal Allowance.
- Law refers to children 'of compulsory school age' which would include the 16 y-o who had reached 16 during the current school year.

There are also restrictions on working hours:

- Children cannot work; during school hours, before 7am or after 7pm, for more than one hour before school in most cases, and without having a two-week break during the school holidays in each calendar year.
- During term time children can only work a maximum of 12 hours per week. This includes a maximum of two hours on school days and Sundays and a maximum of five hours on Saturdays for 13 - 14 year olds and 8 hours for 15 year olds.
- During school holidays 13 - 14 year olds are only allowed to work a maximum of 25 hours per week. This includes a maximum of five hours on weekdays and Saturdays and a maximum of two hours on Sunday.

Local councils may have other restrictions on permits, working hours and conditions of work. Local council education departments will be able to provide more information.

For more information, please contact Steve Dowling via steve.dowling@acs.org.uk