

Criteria for allergy-friendly Companies

BACKGROUND

Allergies can have a major impact on life and significantly reduce well-being and performance, even in a company.

The European Centre for Allergy Research Foundation (ECARF) certifies allergy-friendly companies in order to make the everyday working lives of employees with allergies as stress-free as possible, maintain their quality of life and at the same time avoid economic damage.

Rooms in the company are defined as offices in which workstations and technical office equipment such as printers, photocopiers etc. are located, as well as a company restaurant (canteen).

An allergy-friendly company must fulfil the following criteria:

1. CRITERIA

1.1. Interiors

- Avoid allergenic green plants that release pollen
- Potted plants only in hydroponics to avoid fungal spores
- If an air conditioning and ventilation system is present, it must be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines and the filters must be changed regularly.
- Smoke and pet-free environment
- Files, folders and office materials are stored in closed cabinets, roller containers or display cabinets wherever possible to minimise dust deposits. Alternatively, open shelves are dusted weekly.
- Carpet-free floors are cleaned daily with a Hoover with dust emission class A (according to the EU energy label) or Hoover with HEPA filter class H13 (dust/mite reduction). Floors are damp mopped every two days OR short-pile floor textiles are cleaned daily with a Hoover with dust emission class A (according to the EU energy label) or Hoover with HEPA filter class H13.
- Printers and photocopiers must be set up in a separate room where no permanent workstations are set up.
- The office emergency pharmacy has modern antihistamine tablets (e.g. cetirizine), adrenaline pens and latex-free gloves.
- If air purifiers are available, they fulfil the requirements of the ECARF allergy-friendly seal.

1.2. Company restaurant (canteen)

- If the company has a staff restaurant, it is mandatory that it fulfils the ECARF criteria for allergy-friendly canteens.

1.3. Cleaning the office space

- The offices are cleaned regularly and according to use with allergy-friendly cleaning products that do not contain irritating fragrances and similar substances.
- There are only clean waste baskets in work areas.
- All work and storage surfaces are damp wiped at least once a week.
- Regular cleaning of office chair covers at least once a year

1.4. WC, kitchen and food storage

- Food must be stored in airtight containers in a separate room. Do not store open food directly at the workplace.
- Used crockery and cutlery must be cleaned immediately after use or placed in a dishwasher.
- Soap and disinfectants suitable for allergy sufferers are available in the washrooms as standard.
- No room fragrance/room freshener products in the sanitary and kitchen areas
- The kitchen is cleaned regularly and according to use with allergy-friendly cleaning products and latex-free work gloves.

1.5. Training

- The company appoints an allergy-friendly officer - if available, the company doctor - who receives intensive training from ECARF.
- In addition, all employees take part in a short training course organised by ECARF to find out about the needs of allergy sufferers in everyday company life.

2. QUALITY CONTROL AND COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT

The operator has established a functional system of quality control that effectively documents, processes and follows up complaints. The system ensures the following:

- The operator's contact details, such as telephone number and/or email address, are documented;
- Complaints are handled and followed up in an appropriate manner by qualified and experienced personnel of the operator;
- The assessment of complaints and, if applicable, any inferred areas of improvement are integrated into product quality and safety. The operator agrees to make this data available to ECARF on an ongoing basis.