



OPERATING A FOOD BUSINESS



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# OPERATING A FOOD BUSINESS

## INTRODUCTION

Starting and operating a food business can be both a challenging and rewarding experience. This booklet is a comprehensive guide to what you need to know about food safety and will be a useful reference for both new and existing retail food businesses.

The guide is also a useful reference for anyone who is re-entering the food industry as there have been major changes in the food laws and new initiatives in recent years. These include the mandatory Food Safety Supervisor training.

The guide refers frequently to the Food Safety Standards because, from a retail business perspective, they are the major component of the national food laws. The Food Safety Standards can be viewed at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

When you operate a food business, you need to understand and comply with the Food Safety Standards. This guide includes opportunities for you to self-assess your work processes, procedures and practices and, where appropriate, make any changes which may arise from the review.

Retail food businesses vary widely, from large restaurants and hotels to take away shops,

smaller cafes, convenience stores or fruit and vegetables shops. They also vary in the type of foods sold, the age of the building and its internal layout, staff numbers and locations. But all have a responsibility to ensure that the business provides safe and suitable food to consumers.

Unfortunately, each year there are a significant number of domestic and commercial food poisoning cases. These have both a direct and indirect impact on the national economy and the overall community. From a business operator's perspective, the real costs can be associated with increased medical/insurance costs, lost productivity, the personal cost and the potential adverse impact on the business associated with negative "word of mouth" publicity.

The advice in this guide is intended to assist people to understand the food safety rules that apply to a permanent retail food business. Separate, more specific guidelines are available for temporary food businesses and mobile food vending vehicles. Information on other matters such as workplace health and safety issues, insurance or other work place issues should be sought from other sources.



## WHAT ARE THE CURRENT FOOD LAWS?

As a food business operator, you need to have a reasonable working knowledge and understanding of the current food laws.

Uniform food laws were introduced in Australia in 2001 in the form of the "Food Standards Code". The Code contains the following four distinct chapters:

- 1 General Food Standards – which includes the detailed food labelling requirements
- 2 Food Commodity Standards
- 3 Food Safety Standards
- 4 Primary Production Standards

The Code can be accessed at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

For retail food businesses, the most commonly used section of the Code is Chapter 3, known as the *Food Safety Standards*. Within this chapter there are five separate Standards:

- 3.1.1 Interpretation and Application
- 3.2.1 Food Safety Programs
- 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements**
- 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment
- 3.3.1 Food Safety Programs for food services to vulnerable person

The Food Safety Standards differ from the previous NSW food laws in that a preventative approach is used. This means the Standards seek to achieve outcomes rather

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than prescribe particular rules. This approach recognises the diversity within the retail food industry; less prescriptive legislation places the responsibility (to comply with the legislation) on operators and food handlers.

Food Safety Standard 3.2.1 deals with the development and implementation of a hard copy food safety plan (sometimes referred to as HACCP, which stands for Hazards Analysis Critical Control Points). A Food Safety Plan is not a mandatory requirement for retail food businesses in NSW.

The use of a Food Safety Program is generally confined to food manufacturers, in addition to those food businesses which are licensed by the NSW Food Authority (the Authority) and businesses that are involved with vulnerable people, such as hospitals and institutions. However, retail food business operators are encouraged to voluntarily implement a Food Safety Program as it can help you manage risk, follow best practice within the industry and, if used correctly, improve food safety for you and your customers.

Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 is the more widely used document from an operational retail perspective. It follows a “paddock to plate” approach to food safety in that the emphasis is on food delivery, storage, processing, display, packaging, transportation, disposal and food recalls.

This standard also provides information in relation to food handler skills and knowledge, and other important issues such as health and hygiene, personal hygiene, hand washing, food temperature requirements, cleaning and sanitising, property maintenance and pest control.

Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 contains the specific construction requirements for both new and existing food premises. This Standard should be read in conjunction with Australian Standard 4674-2004 *Design Construction and Fit-out of Food Premises*, (which deals with the design, construction and fit out of food premises and this Standard is more fully outlined in the relevant section of these guidelines).

At a state level the following legislation applies:

*NSW Food Act 2003*  
Food Regulation 2010

While there are other items of legislation which apply to food businesses, the above form the core of food laws in NSW and the *Food Act 2003* contains the provisions to align state laws with the national food laws (Food Standards Code).

If your business is involved in the manufacture or packaging of food you will also need to comply with the comprehensive labelling requirements in the Food Standards Code. A detailed fact sheet is available on [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

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## WHO IS A FOOD HANDLER?

One of the terms used in the Food Safety Standard 3.1.1 and the *Food Act* is *food handler*. The term food handler does not necessarily mean the physical and direct act of handling food.

The legislation intentionally contains a broad definition of the term food handling to encompass: *the making, manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, storing, transporting, delivering, preparing, treating, preserving, packing, cooking, thawing, serving and displaying (of food or food processing equipment)*.

## WHAT IS A FOOD BUSINESS?

A food business is defined under Food Safety Standard 3.1.1 as:  
*a business (other than a primary food production activity) or other activity that involves the handling of food for sale irrespective of whether the business is of a commercial, charitable or community nature.*

This particular definition includes:

- food stalls, caravans or the like used for temporary events
- mobile food vans
- boats on which catering functions are held
- food premises in shopping centres
- street frontage businesses
- bed and breakfasts and other holiday establishments
- school canteens
- caterers
- sporting kiosks
- hospitals and nursing homes
- wine tastings
- home businesses

Some exemptions are provided for charities and community groups or organizations from complying with some aspects of the Food Safety Standards.

## WHAT IF I'M JUST STARTING OUT?

Before starting a new food business or taking over an existing one, you should ensure that you have some understanding of the relevant health, safety, planning and environmental issues associated with the business.

If you are setting up new premises, you should submit your plans for the proposed layout of the interior, and in particular the kitchen and/or food handling and storage areas, to the local Council which will assess the plans against Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 and in regard to new premises, Australian Standard 4674-2004 *Design Construction and Fit-out of Food Premises*.

Australian Standard 4674-2004 can be purchased from Standards Australia; phone 1300 65 46 46. Assistance may be available from your local Council, however, for copyright reasons, your Council will be unable to give you a copy of the Standard. An easy to read booklet which interprets the requirements of the Australian Standard, *Food Premises – design, construction and fit out guide* is available from some Councils.

When submitting plans to Council, you are encouraged to use an architect, private certifier, shop fitter or appropriate tradesperson who is familiar with the requirements of Australian Standard 4674-2004 and other relevant standards.

For information on other issues relating to starting a food business, visit [www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au](http://www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au)

## WHAT IF I'M BUYING AN EXISTING BUSINESS?

If you are thinking of buying an existing food business, you or your solicitor should write to the local Council seeking information about the business. This request for information should be made under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. Some Councils may charge a fee to provide the information in writing, however, the fee will be money well spent to confirm there are no outstanding maintenance issues associated with the business.

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When you make your application, you should specifically ask whether there are any outstanding notices or letters requiring works to be carried out within a specified time period. This information is important as the work may involve significant costs and, in the more serious cases, possible disruption to the business.

The current business proprietor should be able to provide you with copies of the Council's previous Food Premises Assessment Reports or inspection results.

### CAN I START A HOME BUSINESS?

If you are thinking of starting a food business from home you will find the NSW Food Authority guidelines helpful. *Home Based Food Businesses: Operation, construction and food handling guidelines* can be downloaded from the NSW Food Authority's website –

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

The guidelines cover the important issues such as:

- definitions
- the obligations associated with selling food
- inspections by authorised officers
- approvals and notifications
- design and construction issues with photographs
- health and hygiene issues
- food handling issues
- safe storage
- food processing
- cleaning and sanitising
- labelling
- transportation
- food premises assessment report

The term "home business" covers a broad range of businesses, from the handling or manufacture of lower-risk foods through to potentially hazardous foods.

Using a domestic kitchen (or even a separate purpose-built home kitchen) can pose an increased

food safety risk from factors such as the kitchen's construction, facilities and access to the food preparation area by small children or pets.

However, it is still possible to use a domestic kitchen to produce food for sale. If you are planning to do so, you are strongly urged to read the NSW Food Authority's guidelines and to discuss your proposal with your local Council. You may require planning approval from the Council and, depending on the type of business, you may also require a licence from the NSW Food Authority.

### INSPECTIONS

#### What do I need to know about Council inspections?

The NSW Food Authority and Local Councils have an agreement (known as the Food Regulation Partnership or FRP) that Councils will carry out inspections of retail food premises. These routine inspections (also known as primary or initial inspections) are carried out without any warning to the business operator.

Retail food business inspections are undertaken by authorised officers, who carry a specific authority under the *Food Act 2003*. The officers are required to carry photographic identification clearly stating their authority under the Act and as a food business operator you are entitled to ask to see the officer's identification.

Authorised officers have delegated "powers" under the *Food Act 2003* including the authority to enter and inspect any premises or vehicle or food or equipment. The officer can take samples, look at records, take photographs, ask questions and seize food or equipment. An officer may carry a copy of these "powers"; alternatively you can access a fact sheet on the Powers of Authorised Officers from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or the specific legislation of the *Food Act 2003* at <http://www.austlii.edu.au>

Inspections can occur at any reasonable time, regardless of whether the business is open for trade. However, officers are not entitled to enter any





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residential portion of the premises, unless that area is used for handling food for sale, for example, a domestic kitchen used as a home business.

As the majority of food businesses trade during daytime business hours, the **unannounced** inspection will most likely occur during the day, however, businesses which operate only during the evening/night time, are most likely to be inspected during the evening/night period. Inspection arrangements may vary between Councils.

The aim of routine inspections is to assess whether the business is complying with the current food laws. In addition to routine inspections, a Council Officer may visit your food business if a complaint is received from a member of the public. In this instance, you would be informed of the nature of the complaint.

The frequency of routine inspections will depend on the type of business you operate. The FRP encourages Councils to adopt a risk-based approach to how often it inspects each food business, based on the generic type of the business.

Generally food businesses will be inspected at least once each financial year. If any non-compliance issues are identified during the initial inspection, you may be re-inspected. In some Council areas, routine inspections may be carried out twice each year, depending on the risk rating of the business or previous inspection results.

### What does the inspection focus on?

The primary intention of inspections is to assess the compliance of the business with the food laws.

The majority of Councils across the State use the standard Food Premises Assessment Report (FPAR). The Report has been developed by the NSW Food Authority and Local Councils to ensure there is a consistent approach to how businesses are assessed. (Note: the lay-out of the assessment report may vary a little between Councils.)

If any non-compliance issues or specific required works are identified during the inspection, the

officer who completes the FPAR will discuss these with you and ask you to sign the Report. If you are away from the premises when the inspection takes place, any matters will be discussed with the person in charge at the time, who will be asked to sign the Food Premises Assessment Report on your behalf.

A copy of the Assessment Report will be left with you or your representative. This may be a paper or electronic copy, depending on the Council.

If the Officer decides that a re-inspection of your premises is needed, this will be shown on the Food Premises Assessment Report and a specific or general time period indicated, depending on the circumstances.



A routine inspection focuses on the following:

- Food handling controls including the use of reputable suppliers, the sale of safe food and in particular the delivery, storage, processing, temperature controls, display, packaging, disposal, food recalls, and whether the business has notified the NSW Food Authority and appointed a food safety supervisor.
- Health and hygiene matters including correct hand washing, the location of and maintenance of hand basins (including providing soap and paper towels), the wearing of clean clothing, the avoidance of handling ready to eat food, the use of waterproof coverings or bandages and personal hygiene

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- Cleaning and sanitising including the overall cleanliness of the premises and all equipment, appliances, fixtures and fittings, as well as the appropriate facilities such as sinks and/or a dish/glass washing machine for washing and sanitising all food contact surfaces and the associated operational issues.
- The need to provide a probe thermometer to check the temperature of potentially hazardous foods (note that this requirement does not apply to all businesses) and the protection of all single use items such as drinking straws and disposable utensils.
- The absence of any live animals and pests such as flies, rats, mice, cockroaches and weevils
- The general design of the premises including a potable water supply, storage facilities, garbage and recycling facilities, sewerage facilities, lighting, floor, walls and ceilings, fixtures, fittings, ventilation and chemical storage facilities.
- The maintenance of all aspects of the business and the absence of chipped or broken eating and drinking facilities.
- Any labelling issues.

The five most common issues identified during inspections are:

- Unclean premises and equipment
- A hand basin which is either obstructed or without soap or paper towels for correct hand washing.
- Pest control issues.
- Not keeping high risk foods at the right temperatures.
- Not covering food during storage.

### What questions could I be asked and why?

During an inspection, you may be asked a number of administrative and operational questions. These may include the name of the operator of the business and whether you are a sole trader, in a partnership or a company. You may also be asked to provide your ABN/ACN for the business.

The majority of questions will be operational questions so that the Officer can be satisfied that individual food handlers and the business in general is following all appropriate food safety precautions. These may include questions around food suppliers used by the business, the availability of pest control reports, the method of sanitising, steps taken to prevent cross contamination of food etc.

The questions may also extend to the individual staff and their ability to prepare a sanitising solution for use and sanitise a specific piece of equipment. The Officer may ask how and where they wash their hands and how often, what cross contamination control measures are in place, the respective temperatures of hot and cold display cabinets, how staff illness is managed and how they deal with customers with food allergies or intolerances.

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For example, because raw eggs have been associated with large food poisoning incidents, you may be asked to explain the processes your business uses to make aioli, egg butter, mayonnaise, tartare, hollandaise and béarnaise sauces, egg nog / flip, tiramisu or fried ice cream to avoid such incidents.

### Will I be charged an inspection fee?

An inspection fee is charged for each inspection or re-inspection. In addition, some Councils charge an annual administration fee, as permitted under the legislation.

The inspection fee will vary between Councils. In many cases, the inspection fee will be a fixed fee for the particular business such as a restaurant or café or fruit shop. The fee will be determined by the risk associated with the types of food used or sold.

Some Councils charge according to the actual time spent carrying out the inspection using an hourly rate (or part thereof). To ensure consistency across the state, the NSW Food Authority recommends an hourly rate for Councils to charge.

Councils are required to review and advertise their inspection and re-inspection fee schedule annually; any increases become effective from 1 July for the following financial year. Most Councils publish the inspection fees and charges on their websites.

### What is an administration fee?

In recent years, the NSW Food Authority has provided an opportunity for Councils to charge an administration fee.

The imposition of the annual administration fee is intended to cover a wide range of a Council's food related activities which may include some of the following:

- periodic newsletters
- advertising, promoting and implementing initiatives such as the Food Safety Supervisor
- maintaining relevant food premises databases
- development and delivery of training material or seminars
- involvement in any food recall activity
- negotiating with stakeholders such as solicitors, builders, shop fitters or contractors on behalf of an existing or new food business operator
- providing verbal advice on plans for new food business or changes to an existing business
- inspecting food premises that have been the subject of complaint which cannot be substantiated and therefore no inspection fee is charged
- serving letters of an advisory or warning nature
- serving a food or equipment seizure notice on a business operator

- serving a Prohibition Order and the subsequent Clearance Certificate in serious situations where a business is closed in the interests of food safety

In addition, some Councils may, from time to time, be involved in a food sampling program for analysis either alone or in association with the NSW Food Authority (no charge is directed to the businesses involved in these programs). Some Councils may also be involved in water sampling in situations where the business does not have a town water supply and an alternative form of potable water is used by the business operator.



Furthermore, there may be occasions when a Council needs to negotiate with a property owner on behalf of the food shop proprietor, for example, in the case of building repairs or the availability of common staff toilets. In these circumstances, no charge is directed to the business.

As a business operator you may receive telephone calls or a personal visit from sales

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representatives or trades people attempting to sell you a product or service. If it is implied that the telephone call or visit is supported or endorsed by a particular Council, it is strongly recommended that you check with your local Council before purchasing the product or service.

### What about any complaints?

There may be an occasion when an Officer attends your premises in response to a complaint made by a member of the public. While every effort is made to ensure that complaints are legitimate, Council Officers are required to investigate all complaints. The Officer will tell you the nature of the complaint and the outcome of any investigation.

If you, as the business operator, or a member of your staff receive a complaint directly, it is helpful to have a written business procedure or instructions to staff for handling the complaint. A record of the details of the complaint and how it was dealt with will protect the business, should the incident develop beyond one person being involved and the NSW Food Authority conducts an investigation.

These situations could include (but not be limited to) an alleged food poisoning incident, poor service or physical contamination of food or equipment. A written record of any incident will assist you to respond to any investigation, particularly if a reasonable period of time has passed.

If poorly handled, customer complaints can have serious implications such as increased medical / insurance costs and loss of productivity while dealing with a matter. It is therefore strongly recommended that you have appropriate public liability indemnity insurance.

Dealing directly with an unhappy customer can be a delicate issue from a public relations perspective. Many customers believe they understand the basics of food borne illness and are quick to blame a particular food for their illness. Investigation has shown, however, that it is very difficult to correctly attribute a specific food as the cause of illness.

The reality is that customers infrequently identify the correct source for a number of reasons. The following statements and responses, which are extracted from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) may assist you in dealing with a customer who is upset.

**1. "I was sick after eating a certain food so it must have been that food that made me sick".**

Symptoms of food borne illness, particularly vomiting, can occur within a short time after the consumption of contaminated food. The last meal you ate may well have made you sick. But it is also possible that the illness was due to another food consumed prior to your last meal. Onset periods after consumption of the contaminated food will vary according to the type of pathogen so you will need to consider all the foods eaten over the past 3 days.

**2. "I can get diarrhoea within a few hours after eating contaminated food".**

Usually diarrhoea from a contaminated food does not start until at least 4 to 6 hours after having eaten that food and can be as long as 3 days after consumption. So if you experience diarrhoea in less than 4 hours of eating it is most unlikely to be that meal which made you sick as a result of "food poisoning". You need to consider the previous meal or even food you ate the day before.

**3. "The food which I brought up when I vomited must have been responsible for my illness."**

The food material present when you vomit is not always an indication of the food responsible for your illness. It is merely the stomach content at the time of onset. The food responsible for your illness may have been consumed a day or so before the symptoms appeared.

**4. "I was sick after eating so it must be "food poisoning".**

Contaminated food can be the cause of gastrointestinal illness, but it is not the only cause.



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Contaminated water can also cause similar symptoms, such as during exposure at a contaminated swimming pool or the drinking water source at the food business.

Viral illnesses are also a common cause and can be contracted from family and friends. Viral gastroenteritis which can cause vomiting and diarrhoea for about 2 days can be spread from one person to another. Viral gastroenteritis is very contagious and can be transmitted while you are at dinner with them, visiting friends or living in the same house as someone who is already infectious.

Good hand washing and personal hygiene can help reduce the risk of person to person spread of viral illness.

### 5. *“The food must have made me sick because it smelt or tasted bad”.*

It is a common misconception that in order to get sick from food it must look, taste or smell bad or be “off”. In fact, most food poisoning bacteria do not cause foods to appear bad. There can be enough harmful bacteria in food to make you sick even though the food still seems normal in appearance, taste and odour.

The reverse situation is also true: there are some types of bacteria that will spoil food but will not make you sick if you accidentally eat it. The best option is “if in doubt about the condition of the food then don’t eat it”.

### WHAT IS FOOD POISONING?

Food poisoning is the broad term used to describe an illness associated with the consumption of food which, as already indicated, can look and smell quite normal.

Food borne illness can be caused by chemical or microbiological contamination by bacteria or virus. Bacteria are generally all around us, including on our bodies, in the soil, water, air and the food we eat, and may not be harmful. However, given the right conditions some bacteria can become harmful. The key components which bacterial food poisoning need to flourish are time, the

right temperature and type of food (particularly potentially hazardous foods), the presence of water, oxygen and the pH (acidic/alkaline) level of the food.

General symptoms of food poisoning may include stomach pains, cramps, nausea, fever, vomiting, diarrhoea and headaches. Food poisoning can be incorrectly blamed on the last item or meal eaten whereas it can be up to some days or weeks before the illness is noticed. This is commonly known as the incubation period. The seriousness of the illness will depend on the type and number of harmful bacteria present and the general well being of the consumer.

Most food poisoning cases can usually be traced to poor food handling practices.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS AND TEMPERATURE CONTROL?

Food poisoning incidents are often associated with high risk foods, known as potentially hazardous foods. The Food Safety Standards make frequent references for the need to keep potentially hazardous food under temperature control. The term “temperature control” is defined in Clause 1 of Standard 3.2.2 as “food that has to be kept at certain temperatures to minimize the growth of any pathogenic micro-organisms that may be present in the food or to prevent the formation of toxins in the food”.

Under the right conditions, food poisoning bacteria multiply and grow to the point of being dangerous within certain foods. Managing this has become more important in recent years as a result of some consumers now eating raw or only lightly cooked foods, the wider variety of foods available and the considerable delivery distance sometimes travelled from the food source.

The storage of food between 5°C and 60°C, which of course includes room temperature, is commonly known as the **temperature danger zone**.

Temperature control means that potentially hazardous foods need to be kept below 5°C for



cold foods and above 60°C for hot foods, or at another temperature which will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food. This aspect is more fully explained in the Section dealing with the 2 hour/4 hour rule.

The processing of food which is outside the temperature danger zone should not adversely affect the food, however, it should be noted that certain bacteria form heat resistant spores (which is like a protective coating) that are not killed by routine cooking or reheating temperatures.

Regular temperature checks should be undertaken to ensure that foods remain outside the “danger zone”. The need for a probe thermometer for some businesses can be found in the relevant section of these Guidelines.

Examples of potentially hazardous foods are

- raw and cooked meat (including poultry and game) or foods containing raw or cooked meat such as casseroles, curries and lasagna
- small goods such as Strasbourg, ham and chicken loaf
- dairy products, for example, milk, custard and dairy-based desserts such as cheesecakes and custard tarts
- seafood (excluding live seafood) including seafood salad, patties, fish balls, stews containing seafood, fish sticks
- processed fruits and vegetables, for example salads and cut melons
- cooked rice and pasta
- foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich foods such as egg butter, tiramisu and quiche
- fresh pasta and soy bean products
- foods that contain the above foods, such as sandwiches, rolls and cooked and uncooked pizza.
- foods that contain uncooked eggs such as tiramisu chocolate mousse and egg ahal.

The preference by some customers for lightly cooked foods such as meat and eggs can create

additional food poisoning risks (thorough cooking kills most, but not all, harmful bacteria).

### UNSAFE OR UNSUITABLE FOOD... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The community's expectation is that any purchased food will be safe and suitable for consumption. It is an offence for a food business to sell unsafe or unsuitable food, regardless of whether or not the business knew the food was unsafe.

The words “unsafe” and “unsuitable” are widely used in food laws throughout Australia but they each have different meanings.

Food is considered to be “unsafe” if consumption results in actual harm to the consumer, whereas “unsuitable” food includes food that is damaged or deteriorated or perished or contains a foreign object but may not necessarily cause harm.

For example, if a food business incorrectly handled or processed food before sale to the consumer resulting in high bacterial levels and the consumer did not cook the food before eating it, then the food item would be considered to be “unsafe”.

Similarly, it may be considered “unsafe” to sell improperly prepared sandwiches, which have not been held under temperature control for a significant period of time.

However, someone having an allergic reaction to a particular food, does not necessarily make the food “unsafe” since the majority of the public are not affected by consuming the food item.

An example of an “unsuitable” food would be food into which an insect had been cooked. Consuming the food will not generally cause illness, but would be considered unacceptable.



## FOOD PREMISES ASSESSMENT

The following section provides information around the process of the Food Premises Assessment Report used by Council Officers when carrying out inspections of food businesses (a copy of the Food Premise Assessment Report is included as Appendix A at the back of these Guidelines).



### WHAT BUSINESS NOTIFICATIONS PROCESSES ARE INVOLVED?

There are a number of notification processes which you, as the business operator, are required to complete.

1. Each food business operator in NSW is required under Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 Clause 3 to register the business with the NSW Food Authority on [www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au) or by hard copy form at some Councils.

The electronic notification process is encouraged as no fee applies whereas some Councils may charge a fee for processing the hard copy form.

Note: that the business notification requirement does not apply to not-for-profit organisations in NSW.

2. The details of the Food Safety Supervisor for the business (or any change of details such as person's name, address, telephone number etc) need to be notified to the NSW Food Authority on [www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au) or by hard copy form at some Councils.

Note that the requirement to appoint a Food Safety Supervisor does not apply to all food businesses.

A Council may undertake regulatory action on a business that fails to appoint a food safety supervisor.

3. The registration of the actual **Business Name** and the display of the appropriate Certificate provided comes under the jurisdiction of the Department of Fair Trading and enquiries should be made in Sydney on 13 3220 or the relevant regional or country contact numbers.

### WHAT IS A FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR?

Since 2010, the majority of food businesses are required to appoint a Food Safety Supervisor. The Food Safety Supervisor, who is not required to be the business operator, is required to have completed a specific training course delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (who must be approved by the NSW Food Authority). The course can be completed on-line or by attending a one-day training session.



## FOOD PREMISES ASSESSMENT

### WHO NEEDS A FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR

A Food Safety Supervisor is required in certain businesses including restaurants, cafes, takeaway shops, caterers and mobile caterers, bakeries, pubs, clubs, hotels, supermarkets that sell hot foods, temporary premises and mobile food vendors.

However, Food Safety Supervisors are not required in businesses selling pre-packaged food only, businesses licensed by the NSW Food Authority, not-for-profit community/charity organisations, school canteens, childcare centres, correctional centres, supermarkets (which do not sell hot food), delicatessens, greengrocers (fruit and vegetables only), seafood retailers (raw products).

The role of the Food Safety Supervisor should be carried out by a person who can have a positive impact on the activities of the business. It should be noted that the Food Safety Supervisor is not expected to be on the premises at all times when the business is trading. If your Food Safety Supervisor leaves the business, you have 30 days in which to appoint a replacement.

**If an operator trades at more than one premise, a separate Food Safety Supervisor is required for each business.**

After attending the required course, each Food Safety Supervisor is issued with a specific certificate which is valid for 5 years and is required to be kept at the business premises and be available for inspection by an authorised Officer.

A business operator may see some commercial benefit in displaying the certificate to the public; however, the display is not a mandatory requirement.

Business operators are encouraged to keep up-to-date with the requirements for a Food Safety Supervisor as penalties may apply for non-compliance.

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

### WHAT IS MEANT BY “SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE”?

Regardless of whether your business requires a Food Safety Supervisor, each food handler is still required to have the necessary skills and knowledge relevant to their particular role in the business (Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 Clause 3).

There are a number of ways for food handlers to gain the necessary skills and knowledge such as in-house induction, on-going training or external training, fact sheets, written operating procedures, hiring a consultant to provide training, attending Council-provided training, appropriate signage within the business, staff meetings and the like.

One of the expected functions of the Food Safety Supervisor is to assist in upgrading the general skills and knowledge of all food handlers in the business.

The expected skills and knowledge vary between businesses; for example, a fruit and vegetable shop will require different standards than a restaurant. They will also vary within the same business; for instance, the skills of waiting staff will be different to the chef and kitchen hand. See Appendix 1.





# FOOD PREMISES ASSESSMENT

## ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS TO THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS?

The issue of skills and knowledge is one of the areas in which some exemptions apply to charities and community groups, provided that the food sold is:

- not potentially hazardous food; or
- consumed immediately after cooking e.g. barbeques, sausage sizzle

## WHAT ABOUT PRACTICAL AND OPERATIONAL SITUATIONS?

Depending on the type of business, the safe delivery, storage, processing and handling of food can vary and yet certain aspects will remain constant.

Although the requirements of Food Safety Standard 3.2.1 (in terms of the need to implement a written Food Safety Program) generally do not apply to retail food businesses in NSW, the “flow pattern” of food in any business from the delivery of food (from reputable suppliers) through to the final sale (to the customer) is reflected in Food Safety Standard 3.2.2.

One of the responsibilities of a food business operator (and staff) is to ensure that the business complies with these requirements.

### Food Delivery

From a safe food **delivery** viewpoint, you should give some thought to ensuring that food is purchased from reputable suppliers and orders are of a manageable quantity. There needs to be a system in place for checking the condition of the food, the actual packaging and any labelling including “use by” dates. In addition, potentially hazardous foods should be received under temperature control (less than 5°C) and checked by the use of a thermometer, frozen food should be approximately –18°C with no signs of thawing.

Deliveries should be received when the business is open to avoid food being left unattended and in an inappropriate location (where the food may be out of temperature control or exposed to various contaminants).

It is not suggested that every delivery be checked (although the checking of every delivery would be considered best practice) but rather periodical checks until you are satisfied there is a pattern of acceptable service.

In NSW retail food business are not required to have a food safety program, however many businesses are keeping records of any food deliveries (regardless of whether the order was accepted or rejected). However, it is desirable to keep some records around temperature monitoring and any food which may have been rejected for whatever reason eg. outside temperature control, damaged packaging, not correctly labelled or with out sufficient supplier details.

Without written records it is difficult for a business to demonstrate that all reasonable precautions and due diligence are being taken by the business to provide safe food to their customers.

### Food Storage

Adequate food **storage** facilities, for dry goods, cold storage and frozen items, must be provided to protect food from potential contamination and to keep it under the correct environmental and temperature control conditions. To achieve these conditions, it is necessary to keep storeroom(s) clean and free from personal belongings, cleaning chemicals, dirty linen or pests. Raw foods should always be stored separately from ready to eat foods.

It is wise to adopt a food rotation system, which is commonly known as “*First in First out*” to ensure freshness. Foods should also be stored in sealed food grade containers and be above the floor (to allow for easy cleaning). The *First in First out* system can be aided by simple in-house labelling including the name of the item and either the prepared or expected use by date (also of use is information regarding whether any allergenic ingredients are involved). Some general knowledge of the shelf life of each particular food item would be helpful.

It is important that relevant food items are placed in the refrigerator/s, cool room or deep freezer/s quickly to avoid spending time in the danger zone.



## FOOD PREMISES ASSESSMENT

When storing items in a cool room or refrigerator:

- Store ready to eat food on top, then dairy foods, then raw vegetables and then raw meats on the bottom – this method minimises the likelihood of cross contamination from raw food to ready to eat foods.
- Don't overload the shelves.
- Don't store food on the floor.
- All items, other than (whole i.e. not processed or prepared) fruits and vegetables, should be stored in covered containers.

Refrigerators and cool rooms used to store high risk foods should be kept at or below 5°C while freezers should be about -18°C. Regular checks with a probe thermometer are recommended.

It is not compulsory to keep records of dry goods, refrigerated or frozen items, but is considered good practice. Regular checks on food quality, "use by" and "best before" dates, temperatures, food storage and protective coverings are recommended. **If in doubt, throw it out.**

### Food Processing

Food **processing** can involve some or all of the following stages;

thawing, washing, chopping, weighing, mixing, peeling, battering, placing on trays, grilling, garnishing, marinating, glazing, crumbing, slicing, cooking (including steaming, grilling, poaching, baking, microwaving, basting, boiling, frying or stewing), heating, decorating, cooling and plating

It is important that you are aware of the potential food safety issues associated with the differing processing steps. These issues vary, depending on the type of business and the foods involved.

Potential contamination can occur through the actual food or dirty equipment or food handlers or pests and is dealt with in greater detail under Cross Contamination.

For example, it is critical that adequate and appropriate vegetable washing facilities are available, particularly for ready-to-eat items such as lettuce and tomatoes.

In relation to the cooling of potentially hazardous foods, Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 requires potentially hazardous foods to be cooled from 60°C to 21°C in 2 hours, then from 21°C to 5°C within a further 4 hours. This can be achieved by removing the item/s from the oven or stove, separating into shallow containers (if necessary), and covering with a lid and placing them in a refrigerator or cool room, as soon as practicable. Items should be separated to allow cold air to circulate around containers. To satisfy this requirement some monitoring with a probe thermometer is essential.

Often thawing will form an important component of any food business and it is essential to prevent cross contamination by not allowing the thawing liquid from certain foods to drip onto other foods, surfaces or equipment.

It is considered good practice to thaw by placing the food (which is stored in covered/wrapped containers) from the deep freezer into a refrigerator or cool room. Depending on the size of the food item, this process may take some days, so some forward planning is essential. Alternatively, food may be defrosted in a microwave oven. Food defrosted in the microwave should be used immediately. If thawed food is left out of refrigeration, harmful bacteria can multiply.

Similarly, when cooking food it is essential to ensure that the food is cooked all the way through. If the centre has not thawed completely there is potential for bacteria to multiply. Throw away any food which has been left to stand at room temperature for 4 hours or more and throw away any food which has been frozen more than once.

It is advisable to plan ahead and not prepare too much food in advance. Return the food to the refrigerator or cool room if not in use.

It is important in the actual cooking process to ensure that the core temperature reaches at least 75°C (unless cooked to order). Core temperatures can be checked with a probe thermometer (care should be taken to ensure that the thermometer is correctly cleaned and sanitised between uses).



Staff should be able to recognise the various signs of thorough cooking which will vary between foods such as chicken, steak, sausages, fish, stir fries, curries, rolled joints such as lamb, prawns etc. This skill will vary from checking the colour of the flesh (absence of pink/red flesh) and juices in chickens and steaks through to checking that internal surfaces are piping hot or bubbling or that the colour/texture has changed.

### Display

If your business involves the **display** of ready to eat foods (other than whole fruit and vegetables) on a counter or as a self-service arrangement, the food is required to be protected from contamination in an effective manner. It is critical that potentially hazardous food (which are commonly found in either hot or cold cabinets of a take away food business or cold food in terms of a delicatessen) are kept under temperature control (at or below 5°C or above 60°C). Again, in order to ensure displayed food is under appropriate temperature control routine checks using a probe thermometer should be undertaken.

If a self-service food arrangement exists, effective protective barriers and clean utensils should be provided as well as additional supervision of the customers' food handling to minimise contamination.

Specifically Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 Clause (8) requires certain foods to be protected from contamination. This requirement is particularly relevant to food which is consumed in the same form as it is displayed and sold. That is to say, the food is not subject to a further process such as cooking, peeling or washing prior to consumption.

This requirement applies to self-service buffets, smorgasbords and the like in order to protect the food from a number of potential contamination sources including droplet infection (nose and mouth) from staff and fellow consumers.

The self-service food appliance should be designed for easy cleaning and maintenance, constructed of durable impervious material incapable of introducing a health or safety risk, and incorporate

features which maximise the protection of self-service food from dust and droplet contamination. It is desirable to have a conspicuous sign indicating as follows:

CUSTOMERS - USE ONLY THE SERVING UTENSILS PROVIDED - IT IS AN OFFENCE TO HANDLE FOOD WITH YOUR FINGERS.

### Packaging

Changing consumer demands in recent years has seen an increase in food transportation, with more businesses involved in home deliveries or food deliveries to other businesses. In these instances, care should be extended to the actual **packaging**. When packing food for transport you should ensure that the package is free from possible contaminants such as dirt, grease, chemicals and foreign objects. Many businesses also consider the sustainability and environmental impacts of the packaging.

The term "packaging" includes take away food containers, disposable items such as cups, knives and forks, pizza boxes and paper bags, all of which should be stored in a clean location and free from potential contamination.

### Transportation

If your business is involved in food **transportation** (using vans, cars, trucks, carts, trolleys, hot boxes etc) for deliveries within a building or to sporting venue off site, catering off site, home deliveries or providing room service, you need to make sure that the food is under temperature control (if required) and protected from contamination during transportation.

### Food Recalls

From time to time some businesses are involved in food recalls or the food has deteriorated within its shelf life. In these situations, the recalled or unsuitable/unsafe food items need to be identified and stored separately prior to **disposal** or returned to the supplier.

The term **food recall** applies to businesses involved in the manufacture, wholesale supply and importing of food. More detailed information on this issue is available on



## FOOD PREMISES ASSESSMENT

[www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au) however, the following limited information is provided:

A recall plan is a written document that outlines in detail the procedures to be followed when conducting a recall. The current food recall system has been developed to stop the distribution and sale of food products that pose a potential health risk and to remove from the marketplace any product which is potentially unsafe.

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions about food recall.

Q: Do food service or retail businesses such as a supermarket or restaurant need a recall plan?

A: No, wholesale suppliers, manufacturers and importers are responsible for the recall of food products. However, retail businesses may need to remove recalled stock from shelves and return it to the manufacturer, wholesaler or importer in which case the businesses must follow specific requirements for holding the stock in a separate clearly identified area. Under no circumstances should the product be sold and the recalled items identified and stored separately.

Q: What are the reasons for food recalls?

A: Food recall action may be taken for various reasons such as the presence of potentially harmful microorganisms, foreign material such as glass, metal or chemicals. Other reasons may include incorrect labelling on products that could pose a potential health risk such as a failure to declare allergens.

Q: Do I need a food recall plan if I prepare food (for example, packaged biscuits or jams) from home?

A: Yes, however, the size and level of detail in the plan may vary depending on different factors including the size of the business.

More information on writing your own business or company's recall plan and how to conduct the recall are outlined in the "Food Industry Recall Protocol" booklet which can be obtained from:

Food Standards Australia New Zealand  
PO Box 7168 Canberra Business Centre  
ACT 2610

Alternatively, by contacting 6271 2241 or  
[www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)





## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

In addition to the personal hygiene issues, there are a number of food safety issues which, depending on the type of business, require special attention. These include important issues such as cross contamination, temperature control, cleaning and sanitising.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY “CROSS CONTAMINATION” AND HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

As the operator it is critical that you have an understanding of the term “cross contamination” and be aware that the contamination of food can occur during various stages of food processing. This includes during preparation, storage, via poor personal hygiene, unclean equipment, rodents (and other pests), uncovered food or contact between raw and ready to eat cooked foods by cutting boards, utensils or other appliances.

The term cross contamination also has relevance in relation to allergies in that certain foods like peanuts, nuts, milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, soya, gluten, sesame seeds, celery etc have the potential to cause a reaction in customers if inadvertently in contact with other food items. It often only requires a very small amount or trace elements of the allergen for contamination.

Some examples of cross contamination and how it happens are:

#### Equipment to Food

- using knives and cutting boards to cut up raw meat then using them for cooked food, salad items and fruits
- failing to clean and sanitise benches, utensils and food contact equipment properly; not cleaning and sanitising equipment including the thermometer, the utensils, preparation benches and sinks correctly between batches and at the end of production
- using cracked or chipped crockery
- using tea towels or dirty cloths for multiple tasks in the kitchen such as wiping hands, placing under cutting boards, covering food and wiping equipment.
- contamination from cleaning chemicals or small foreign objects like wire or money.

#### Food Handler to Food

- handling raw meats then carrying out other tasks such as handling cooked foods, and preparing salads and fruits without washing hands or changing gloves
- not following good personal hygiene and having good personal habits.
- not washing hands with soap and water or changing gloves after carrying out different tasks

# HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

## Food to Food

- placing raw meat on the top shelf of cold rooms or refrigerators where blood can drip down to cooked food and raw fruits and vegetables stored on lower shelves
- not washing raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly to remove soil and contaminants before cutting
- not storing food in clean containers and covering open food with lids
- not storing and preparing raw products and cooked or ready-to-eat products away from each other to prevent contamination

## Environment to Food

- not reporting any sightings of pests or pest droppings to your supervisor

## WHAT DOES THE 2 HOUR/4 HOUR RULE MEAN?

In order to minimise the opportunity for food poisoning bacteria to multiply in potentially hazardous foods, Standard 3.2.2 requires such foods to be kept under temperature control. However, studies have shown that potentially hazardous foods can be kept outside temperature control for a relatively short time without any adverse food safety impact and the Food Safety Standards recognise this situation. Consequently, with the appropriate skills and knowledge, a business operator can utilise this allowance (subject to certain conditions which are outlined in 3.2.2 Clause 25).

Business operators can choose to use an accepted alternative method of compliance known as the 2 hour/4 hour rule and information is available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

Briefly the rule allows for potentially hazardous food to be displayed outside the temperature control zone (between 5°C and 60°C) under the following conditions:

### Under 2 hours

refrigerate or consume immediately,

### Over 2 hours and less than 4 hours

consume immediately,

### Over 4 hours

throw away.

It is important to remember that the above time periods are cumulative, that is to say the time encompasses the total time that the food has been at room temperature including delivery, preparation and display or transportation. To ensure that the food does not exceed the time limitations of the 2 hour/ 4 hour rule some form of record keeping and temperature monitoring is required. More detailed information can be found in the "Food Safety guidelines on applying the 4 hour/2 hour rule for temperature control" available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)



# HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

## WHAT ABOUT LEFTOVER FOODS?

Most businesses will have some food leftover from time to time. These foods can be used provided they are handled safely to decrease the potential for harmful organisms to grow. The following tips are essential to minimising any food safety risks

- Wash your hands before and after handling leftovers.
- Clean and sanitise all utensils and food contact surfaces.
- Cool leftovers quickly by dividing into small portions using shallow containers. Alternatively, frequent stirring hastens the cooling process.
- Cover food and place in refrigerator or cool room. Meat and other foods should be transferred to refrigeration once steam stops escaping. Ensure good air circulation around containers.
- Once cooled, foods can be put in freezer if required.
- Date leftovers to ensure that food is not stored for too long.
- Don't mix leftover foods with fresh foods.

## WHAT ABOUT REHEATING FOOD?

It is important to reheat food correctly to kill any harmful bacteria which may have grown since the food was initially cooked.

- Reheat to an internal temperature of 75°C for about 30 seconds using appropriate equipment.
- Use a probe thermometer to check the internal food temperature, particularly with rolled or seasoned meats. Ensure that food is cooked thoroughly throughout.
- Remember cooking does not necessarily kill all bacteria and some bacteria may have been previously present and will resist the cooking process.
- If leftovers remain uneaten after reheating, throw them away.

## ARE THERE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS/ CONSIDERATIONS FOR "READY TO EAT" FOODS?

In order to prevent contamination from harmful bacteria (particularly from the direct handling of food via the use of hands), Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 requires that unnecessary contact with ready to eat food be avoided. To this end utensils should be used when handling ready to eat food.

Ready to eat food includes all food which will not be subject to further cooking or reheating or some other process before being eaten. Examples include salads, sandwiches and fillings, delicatessen items, cakes, bread, desserts, cheese, plated meals and takeaways.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HEALTH & HYGIENE MATTERS?

If you operate a food business you need to advise all food handlers of their health and hygiene responsibilities. These responsibilities, which are stipulated under Clauses 13 to 15 of Standard 3.2.2, are:

As the business operator it is your decision to take the required steps to ensure that staff are informed of the relevant requirements. Often business operators install signage within the food handling areas and/or undertake introductory/ongoing staff training, raise the matters in team meetings, or provide staff with an operating manual (or another effective alternative arrangement).

## HAND WASHING AND WHEN SHOULD HANDS BE WASHED?

Because we all carry bacteria on our bodies, it is important that hands should be regularly washed but particularly;

- Before commencing or re-commencing handling food;
- Immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and



- After touching the hair, scalp or a body opening.
- Whenever hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food including after handling money, the garbage, mops, brooms, chemicals, dirty equipment etc
- Immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food; and
- Immediately after using the toilet.

### WHAT ABOUT CORRECT HAND WASHING?

A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands:

- Use the hand washing facilities provided
- Thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water
- Rub the hands thoroughly for about 10 to 15 seconds
- Make sure that all surfaces of the hands including wrists, fingers and fingernails are cleaned
- Rinse well in clean warm water
- Thoroughly dry hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.

Note that air dryers can take more than 40 seconds to dry hands and from a practical perspective some people may tend not to wait the full period consequently hands are not completely dry.

### WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH FOOD HANDLER?

A food handler is required to:

- Inform the supervisor if she/he knows or suspects that food may have been contaminated.
- Take all practical measures to avoid food being contaminated by:
  - Ensuring his/her body, anything from his/her body, and anything he/she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food

- Taking all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready to-eat food; this would include the use of gloves, tongs or other suitable implement
- Ensuring that outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted; this would include the use of a uniform (if required), the absence of jewellery and use of appropriate items such as a cap or hair net, keeping fingernails clean
- Only using on exposed parts of his/her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering; This would include cuts, sores and the like being covered with a distinctively coloured band aid
- Not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- Not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food
- Not spitting, smoking or using tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled
- Not urinating or defecating except in a toilet
- Reporting any illness\* to the supervisor

\*For your assistance, the illnesses which would cause serious concern in this context are Hepatitis A, Norwalk viruses, Typhoid, Shigellosis, a Staphylococcal disease, a Streptococcal disease, Campylobacter, Amoebiasis, Diarrhoea, Giardiasis, Salmonellosis, Rotaviral enteritis, Taeniasis, Cholera and Yersiniosis.

Any staff member suffering from any of these illnesses should be excluded from working with food until a medical clearance is provided.

You should also note that as the business operator there are privacy provisions within the Standards regarding the disclosure of information provided to you by an employee regarding an illness.

It would be useful in this context that a business keeps sickness records including the nature and length of the illness.



## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

### ARE THERE ANY OTHER PERSONAL HYGIENE ISSUES?

As the business operator, you are not only required to inform staff of their health and hygiene obligations under Clause 13 to 15 of Food Safety Standard 3.2.2, but also of their additional responsibilities under Clauses 16 to 18 of the Standard relating to food safety precautions including maintained hand wash facilities.

This requirement includes ensuring the hand wash basins in the kitchen and toilets are accessible, supplied with warm running water, soap and single use towels (paper towels are considered the industry standard) for washing and drying.

In addition, there is an expectation that food handlers will:

- maintain fingernails clean and trimmed, and
- use jewellery appropriately in the context of the food handler's activity.
- wear clean clothing.
- wear an appropriate hair restraint or cap/hat to avoid contamination if the food handler has long hair.

It is an offence under Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 if a food handler engages in any of the following behaviours:

- smoking (in the food premise)
- spitting
- sneezing over food
- working with uncovered cuts, boils or sores
- blowing into paper bags or glassware or other utensils
- scratching or touching hair or face or ears, eyes or nose etc
- biting fingernails
- handling money and food
- working if suffering from an illness with symptoms such as diarrhoea, gastro, flu, or vomiting
- unnecessary handling of ready to eat food

Although it is not mandatory, it is useful to have a written policy or guidelines incorporating the

responsibilities of the staff and managers or supervisors.

The development of such guidelines (or Standard Operating Procedures,) will clearly outline your expectations of staff in areas such as: clothing, uniforms and aprons, personal hygiene, hand washing and fingernails, handling of money and soiled tableware, wearing of make up and jewellery, cuts/sores and bandages, acceptable hair length and containment, smoking, storage of personal belongings, the use of gloves and thermometers, meal breaks, following safe work practices, the handling of drinking glasses, cups/eating utensils, sickness standards, incident reporting and recording responsibilities, privacy expectation, pest control, staff training, responding to customer complaints etc.

Your business guidelines could also include your expectations in regard to contractors or visitors attending the business, particularly if entry to food handling area/s is involved.

### DO FOOD HANDLERS NEED TO WEAR GLOVES?

It is not a compulsory requirement for a food handler to wear disposable gloves, however, it is an offence for food handlers to handle food in a manner which may result in the likelihood of contamination. As a result many businesses find gloves a quick and easy method to reduce the risk of food contamination by food handler contact.



## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

Clean gloves help prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food. However, gloves can become torn or contaminated from particular tasks such as putting out the garbage, sweeping or touching your face or other parts of your body, sneezing, coughing or handling money. In all these circumstances, you should wash your hands and use new gloves.

If a food handler chooses to use gloves, hands must be washed before putting them on and the gloves must be clean at all times. Gloves should be discarded when you leave the work area. You need to distinguish between single use gloves and washing up gloves. Never handle money with gloves and then re-handle food.

As even healthy people carry bacteria on their bodies and particularly their hands, Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 requires a food handler to take all practical measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready to eat food such as cakes, sandwiches, bread and plated meals.

Disposable gloves are only one of a number of options available to avoid contact with ready to eat food.

You can also use additional protection barriers such as tongs, spoons, forks, spatulas, paper or other similar implements can be used to reduce direct contact of food.

### DO I NEED A SICKNESS POLICY?

It is not a legal requirement that your business has a written sickness policy, however, the implementation of a sickness policy indicates that you have attempted to take all reasonable precautions within the business, should a food poisoning incident/investigation occur which could be attributable to a sick worker.

Depending on the type and size of your business the following suggestions could be included in any sickness policy, and can be adapted to suit your businesses needs.

- All food handlers who have any symptoms of gastro type illnesses such as vomiting,

diarrhoea, upset stomach, coughing, sneezing, sore throat or the like are required to report any health issues prior to starting a shift and, depending on the illness, may be excluded from handling unpackaged or ready to eat food.

- A register of staff illnesses is kept and the following details are recorded - the food handler's name, the type of symptoms, the date and time that the food handler reported the illness and the time when the food handler was excluded from handling unpackaged food.
- The privacy of staff members shall be respected and any disclosure of any health issue information regarding an illness provided to the business operator by a food handler shall not be disclosed to another person without the authorised consent of the food handler other than to an authorised officer of an enforcement agency.
- Any medication must be stored with personal belongings away from any food preparation areas.
- Any bandages worn by staff should be clean and dry and covered with a distinctively coloured waterproof dressing.
- A copy of the relevant health and hygiene responsibilities shall be displayed in a conspicuous location within the business.
- Staff should only be allowed to return to food handling activities on production of a doctor's certificate stating they are no longer contagious.
- A full return to work for a person who has suffered/is suffering from a food borne illness will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, which may involve a food handler not returning to work until he/she is free of symptoms for 48 hours after suffering from vomiting and/or diarrhoea.



## CLEANING AND SANITISING

A vital part of any food business from a food safety perspective is the need to clean the premises, all equipment (large and small) including cutlery, crockery and utensils, as well as benches and all other food contact surfaces.

While the need for cleanliness is consistent across all food businesses, the reality is that businesses such as restaurants and take away shops will require more detailed cleaning than a fruit and vegetable shop or a supermarket selling packaged, bottled and tinned products.

It is important therefore that the different terms **cleaning and sanitising** are fully understood.

### Cleaning

Cleaning refers to the removal of visible items such as food particles, dirt, dust and grease and is usually carried out using warm water and detergent. Cleaning is not designed to remove all microorganisms but merely removes the visible items such as dust, dirt, food spillage, food particles and grease.

### Sanitising

Sanitising refers to the process which reduces the number of microorganisms to a safe level and this is usually undertaken using hot water and/or chemicals such as a sanitiser.

Remember that a detergent is not a sanitiser. Detergents are chemicals which remove grease and dirt, detergents do not kill bacteria whereas a sanitiser will kill bacteria. However both a detergent and a sanitiser are needed for an effective cleaning program.

It is accepted good practice that cleaning should involve a pre-cleaning process using a clean cloth and hot water and detergent to remove dirt, grease, grime, waste food scraps or other physical matter. The surfaces are then rinsed with a clean cloth and a spray-on sanitiser is used. You should follow the manufacturer's directions, which may include dilution strengths, kill times or wipe off or air drying requirements. Cloths should be regularly washed and be sanitised by being soaked in a sanitising solution such as bleach.

Food Safety Standard 3.2.2(Clause 20) requires a food business to ensure that certain equipment is in a clean and sanitary condition. This requirement applies to the following:

- Eating and drinking utensils immediately before each use, and



## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

- The food contact surfaces of equipment wherever the food is likely to be contaminated.

This requirement is particularly important in regard to eating and drinking utensils such as cutlery, crockery and drinking glasses as well as food contact surfaces including counters, preparation benches, meat slicer/s, cutting boards and the wide variety of other equipment and appliances.

Sanitising can be completed using any of the following processes:

1. Hot water: this can be achieved by immersing the article or equipment in hot water at a temperature of 80°C for at least 30 seconds.
2. Hot water in a commercial dishwashing machine.
3. Domestic dishwasher (subject to achieving the temperature requirements).
4. Food grade chemical sanitisers which are generally either chlorine-based products, quaternary ammonium compounds or iodine based compounds. The use of chemical sanitisers should be in accordance with the manufacturer's specification in regard to the dilution rate, contact time and safety precautions as well as safe storage arrangements. The articles or items should then be allowed to air dry.

A comprehensive fact sheet on "*Cleaning and Sanitising*" is available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

### IS A DISH WASHING MACHINE COMPULSORY?

A dish washing machine is not compulsory. Cleaning and sanitising can be effectively carried out using two adjoining sinks, provided a food grade sanitiser is used in accordance with the manufacturer's direction as it is unlikely that the hot water supply will reach a temperature (75°C -80°C) normally required to sanitise.

### CAN THE BUSINESS WASH UP MANUALLY?

Food businesses can wash by hand, but in restaurants, cafes, take away shops and the like which have double sinks for washing and sanitising, a food grade sanitiser must be used in the second sink because the standard hot water supply to the business is more likely to reach about 60°C rather than 75°C to 80°C achieved by commercial dishwashing machines. This applies especially to large items which commercial dishwashers may not accommodate.

Food grade sanitisers are usually obtained from commercial suppliers and not standard supermarkets.

Some business operators choose to use bleach, which is a form of chlorine, as a sanitiser. If you are considering this practice, it is recommended that you understand the type of bleaches involved and obtain more information concerning dilution rates and contact times by accessing the fact sheet on *Cleaning and Sanitising* on [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

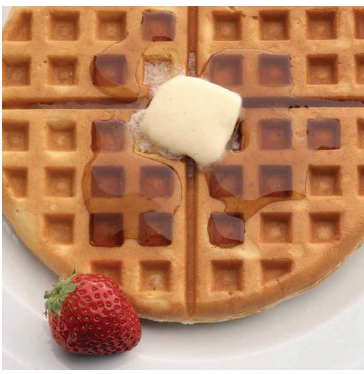
If you do decide to use bleach, you should note the following guidelines for using bleach safely.

- Do not use hot water to dilute chlorine.
- Wear gloves and appropriate protective clothing when handling chlorine.
- Add bleach/chlorine to water not water to chlorine/bleach.
- Chlorine in high concentrations is corrosive to most metals.
- Store chlorine and all cleaning substances and equipment in a designated area and follow the manufacturer's guidelines

### WHAT ABOUT ROUTINE CLEANING?

It is important that a food business maintain all fixtures, fittings, equipment and appliances in a clean and sanitised condition in order to minimise the potential contamination the food.

While you are not legally required to have a written cleaning and sanitising schedule, it is helpful



## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

to have a schedule specific to your premises. The schedule should ideally be displayed in a conspicuous location so that all staff know their individual cleaning responsibilities.

The primary aim of a cleaning schedule is to prevent accumulations of grease, food wastes, dirt, dust, garbage and other miscellaneous items.

### HOW DO I DEVELOP A CLEANING SCHEDULE?

There are many ways of developing a cleaning schedule or program, but a good idea is to list the various pieces of equipment within the business, whether it is in the kitchen or food preparation area, the coolroom/s, storeroom/s, dining area, the bar including drinking glasses, the glass washing machine, rear yard, toilets, garbage/recycling areas, staff clothing area, cleaning cupboard/s, computer keyboards, telephones, door handles etc.

In regard to the kitchen, make a practical assessment as to how regularly the particular items need cleaning and sanitising. For example, a food contact surface such as a preparation bench and cutting boards may need cleaning and sanitising a number of times per day whereas the floor is likely to require daily cleaning and shelves in a dry goods storeroom or the grease filters in a range hood of the electrical insect zapper will need less regular cleaning.

Your cleaning schedule should include the name of the person who is responsible for cleaning each item or area and realistic time periods allocated. The cleaning schedule becomes a what (to clean), who, when (how often) and how (using what cleaning agent) document that is clear and easy to understand for all staff.

Whether all the cleaning and sanitising is carried out by one person or is allocated to a number of people will depend on the size and type of business, but all items should be included on the written cleaning schedule.

You should ensure staff use protective clothing/gloves if required and know the correct procedures if an accident occurs. Material Safety Data Sheets

(MSDS) for the various chemicals used should be maintained in a known location. All cleaning chemicals and equipment should be stored in a designated location generally not in the kitchen (to avoid any risk of chemical cross contamination).

Remember that any cleaning schedule is only as good as the follow up supervision, so each business operator should undertake regular checking of the cleaning program.

### DON'T FORGET CLEANING CLOTHS AND TOWELS

It is important that any cloths and towels used to wipe cutlery or dishes or the like should be cleaned, sanitised and thoroughly dried before reuse. The need for clean equipment also extends to mops, buckets, brooms, dust pans, steel wool and cleaning gloves. In addition any waste water should not be disposed of in the wash up sinks.

Unclean cloths can be the cause of cross contamination in your business. Where possible, it is recommended you choose single use cloths which are thrown away after each use. If using reusable cloths it is vital to ensure that the cloths are thoroughly washed in hot water, sanitised, and dried between tasks.

### WHAT ABOUT STORING CLEANING CHEMICALS?

Cleaning products such as detergents and caustics can be harmful to humans so chemicals should be used and stored carefully in a designated area well away from food. It is also important to follow directions on the label and to store the product/s in the original container (not transfer the contents to an empty food container e.g. old milk or sauce bottle). A First Aid kit should be available to all staff onsite of a suitable size for the business.

Cleaning products, in addition to smaller containers such as spray bottles, cleaning gloves, measuring cups and the like should be stored in a designated cupboard well away from food preparation areas.



## HIGH RISK FOOD SAFETY ISSUES

### DO I NEED A THERMOMETER?

If you handle potentially hazardous foods, you must have a probe thermometer accurate to +/- 1°C on the premises. You must also ensure that it is readily accessible and staff have the required skills and knowledge to use the thermometer correctly.

The thermometer is intended to be used to measure the internal temperature of high risk foods at various stages including delivery, storage, cooking and display.

Between uses, the thermometer must be cleaned and sanitised to avoid cross contamination. Use hot soapy water then alcohol wipe, air or wipe dry with a clean paper towel.

The accuracy of the thermometer needs to be checked (calibrated) from time to time. You can do this with a couple of simple steps. Insert the thermometer into a mixture of ice and water and leave for a short time – this will verify the 0°C mark. Similarly, insert the thermometer into boiling water to verify the 100°C reading.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM 'SINGLE USE ITEMS'?

The term single use items is used to describe items which are only used once because they lack durability or are unable to be effectively cleaned and sanitised after use. These items include straws, serviettes, pizza and cake boxes, disposable drinking cups, disposable knives, forks, spoons,

stirring rods, paper bags, plastic film wrap, delivery containers etc.

Single use items should be kept in protective wrapping in a clean area free from potential contamination.

### WHAT ABOUT PEST CONTROL?

Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 requires food businesses to take all practical measures to prevent and eradicate the presence and infestation of pests on the premises, including flies, cockroaches, rats, mice, weevils, moths, ants, ferment/vinegar flies or other insects.

A regular pest control service by a licensed operator is recommended. A hard copy or electronic record of the servicing should be kept on the premises for viewing, if required, by a Council Officer. The frequency of the pest control servicing may vary, depending on your type of business and seasonal or weather conditions.

A pest control service should complement routine cleaning and sanitising and the service will not be effective unless appropriate daily and on-going cleaning is in place.

Any pesticides or baits kept on the premises should be properly used, labelled and stored appropriately to ensure they do not contaminate food, appliances and equipment.

In addition, precautionary measures need to be taken to prevent harbourage of pests.

These measures may include physical barriers such as fly screens on windows and doors, self-closing doors, sealing all gaps or holes, installing electric fly zappers, air curtains or strip curtains, ensuring lid/s are closed on garbage bins (which also minimises breeding/feeding places for pests). If using an electrical fly zapper, the location should be away from food preparation area/s to prevent potential contamination from dead flies.

Ferment/vinegar/fruit flies are very small, and difficult to eradicate. If you have these flies, you need to find and remove their source eg rotten or waste vegetable or fruit material or liquid wastes like wine residue.

Staff should be able to recognise signs of pest activity and encouraged to report any incidents. They should also have an understanding of the possible breeding locations; for example, they should know not to let food wastes accumulate around refrigeration motors, hot water heaters, sinks, drains or wall signs. They should also be able to identify what cockroach, rat or mice droppings (or gnawing) actually look like.

Good pest management involves recognising any signs, taking measures to exclude access to pests and ensuring that food sources and breeding locations are minimised.

An informative fact sheet on pest control is available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)



## THE PREMISES AND FIXTURES

### WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS?

There are construction and maintenance requirements which apply to all food businesses irrespective of size, type and location. In new premises these requirements need to satisfy Australian Standard 4674-2004 (*Design, construction and fit-out of food premises*).

The general requirements for existing food businesses can be found under Food Safety Standard 3.2.3. The intent of both these standards is to ensure that food premises are built (and maintained) in a manner that is as easy as possible to clean (and sanitise, if required).

This aim is achieved by providing surfaces which are smooth and impervious and easy to clean. Larger items of equipment are either on wheels, to allow for moving, or on legs of sufficient height and to make cleaning easier.

Thoughtful design of the internal layout (in regard to fixtures and fittings of the food premises) can be financially beneficial for the business as your staff will spend less time cleaning.

### Water supply

Most food businesses in city and regional areas are provided with a town water supply. Some businesses in more isolated areas may rely on their potable water supply (for human consumption) from a rainwater tank or some other source such as a dam, water carter or underground bore.

In these situations the business operator needs to ensure that the water supply is safe. The business operator should also be aware of the requirements in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and the Private Water Supply Guidelines published by the NSW Health Department. Details of the frequency and extent of water testing is available in these publications or from your local Council.

In all cases, the water supply should be adequate for the activity of your business, including having a hot water heater of sufficient capacity for all cleaning and sanitising activities. New businesses can obtain advice about the required capacity of a hot water heater from a reputable supplier.

### Sewage and waste water disposal

Most businesses are located in sewered areas, but in less populated locations the business may have or need a commercial septic tank system to process the waste water on site or remove the waste water by tanker. These systems require a separate approval from your local Council and may be subject to ongoing inspection/s to ensure that the system is operating satisfactorily.



## THE PREMISES AND FIXTURES

### Garbage and recycling facilities

Each business is required to provide adequate garbage facilities. In some locations such as a shopping centre, the garbage and recycling bins are likely to be shared. Irrespective of the size of the garbage bin, the lid should be kept closed to minimise possible odour and pest problems including vermin and flies.

Depending on the type of business, the bin/s may need to be internally cleaned or changed from time to time. If you are establishing a new business, your local Council may require a designated garbage room of sufficient capacity with suitable vehicle access and internal bin washing facilities and drainage.

Odour and potential vermin/pest problems are minimised by placing the waste in garbage bin liners and ensuring the bins are emptied and cleaned regularly. Separate storage facilities for waste oils (depending on the type of business) and recyclables are recommended.

The frequency of garbage removal will depend on the type, size and location of the business and the type of garbage bin use, but as guide twice per week should be the minimum.

### Ventilation and lighting

Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 under the Food Standard Code contains the design and construction requirements for food premises.

One of the requirements is that food premises be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation to minimise the likelihood of airborne contamination of food and provide a safe working environment by effectively removing fumes, smoke, steam and vapours.

The requirements for natural ventilation are contained in the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Contact your local Council or a private certifier or architect for advice.

Exhaust ventilation usually refers to a kitchen or food preparation area in which cooking or heating equipment is located. In order to remove the grease, fumes and aerosols from the atmosphere, a commercial exhaust hood (including filters) is required to be installed together with a fan, ductwork and motor.

To determine whether a mechanical exhaust ventilation system is required, you will need to read the relevant sections of Australian Standard 1668.2 1991 (*The Use of Mechanical Ventilation and Air Conditioning in Buildings*).

In summary, cooking equipment which exceeds 8 kilowatts (electrical) or 29 megajoules (gas) should be provided with a commercial exhaust system in accordance with the Standard. The above ratings can either be provided by the supplier of the equipment or obtained from the small compliance plate usually found on the back of the appliance.

If the kitchen or food preparation area is completely internal, that is, there are no windows or doors which open to the external environment, then a make up supply air system is likely to be required to provide air for food handlers and balance the air being removed from the room via the exhaust hood.

Mechanical ventilation exhaust systems require routine cleaning to ensure that premises are maintained in a clean condition from a hygiene perspective, to minimize the potential for vermin or odours and to reduce the risk of fire.

The frequency of cleaning of the various components of the system will vary from business to business depending on the type and regularity of cooking.

The business cleaning schedule should include the various components of a ventilating exhaust system including:

- the internal and external surface of the canopy hood
- the exhaust filters
- the condensation gutter
- any light fittings



## THE PREMISES AND FIXTURES

- the void behind the filters
- the internal surfaces of horizontal and vertical ductwork

While some of the above can be cleaned by the business operators and/or staff, some of the more difficult areas to access should be cleaned by specialist trades people.

These specialist areas include the internal surfaces of the horizontal and vertical ductwork, which need to be cleaned at regular intervals for both fire safety and hygiene reasons.

The lighting should be adequate for the particular activity within the business and where open food is handled, the light fittings should be covered to contain any glass should the globe shatter.

### Floor, wall and ceiling finishes

The finishes on floor, walls and ceilings in food handling areas are meant to be capable of being easily cleaned. The appropriateness of the required finish will depend on the particular use of a room or work area, for instance, whether it is a cooking area, storeroom, food preparation or dining area.

For existing businesses the general requirements for the finishes on floor, walls and ceilings come under Clauses 9-11 of Food Safety Standard 3.2.3. Briefly the finishes should be appropriate for the use, able to be effectively cleaned, unable to absorb grease, food particles or water, pest proof and graded/drainage as required.

### Fixtures, fittings and appliances

The requirements for new premises can be found in Australian Standard 4674.2004 which contains the specific details for finishes and type of construction. The requirements are intended to facilitate ease of cleaning by making large items of equipment movable or alternatively fixed in position.

It is very important, particularly in regard to new premises (with the expectation that a new food business is likely to remain in place for a considerable time), that the installation and fit out is undertaken correctly which will assist in minimising the time and therefore the cost of the daily/weekly/monthly cleaning tasks.

The requirements for existing premises follow a similar theme of providing finishes, materials, design and construction to ensure ease of cleaning and suitability for the production of safe food and can be found in Clauses 12-13 of Food Safety Standard 3.2.3.

### Grease trap

Whether a new or existing business requires a grease trap (which usually consists of a concrete or fibre glass structure to restrain greasy liquids from entering the sewerage system) will be depend on the type of business.

In Sydney, "Sydney Water" is the government agency which determines grease trap requirements, whereas in regional or country NSW the role could be the local water control authority and/or a Council.

The extent and type of cooking carried out will usually determine whether a grease trap is required.

Grease traps are required to be periodically cleaned/pumped out by a licensed contractor in accordance with the requirements of the particular regulatory agency.

### Hand basins and access to toilet accommodation

The requirement for hand basins can be found in Clause 14 of Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 (and Section 4.4 of AS 4674.2004 for new premises). These stipulate that hand washing facilities must be located where they can be easily accessed by food handlers and within areas (including toilets) where hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food.

Both of the above Standards stipulate the need for the hand wash basin to be of sufficient size, accessible, designated and located at bench height (for new premises). Importantly basins in kitchens and toilets must be provided with a supply of warm water through a common mixing spout and, in the case of new premises, to have hands-free operation.

All hand basins must have a supply of soap and single use towel (paper towels or air dryer). Depending on the size and configuration of the



business, more than one hand basin may be required in the food preparation area and, as a guide, a distance of 5 metres between hand basins is used.

All hand basins are intended solely for washing hands and no other purpose. It is recommended that you install signage showing they are for hand washing only.

Each food business should have access, either on a shared basis or sole use, to suitable toilets for all food handlers. The toilets must have a hand basin with a supply of warm water through a common mixing spout. Importantly a supply of soap and paper towels is required at the hand basin and the toilets should be kept clean.

Businesses such as warehouses, general storage/delivery/loading areas involving just packaged food are not expected to have hand washing facilities.

### **Storage facilities**

Separate and sufficient storage facilities should be provided in all food businesses for staff clothing, cleaning chemicals or pest control substances and food items/equipment.

### **Food transport vehicles.**

Food transport vehicles are expected to be designed and constructed in such a way as to minimise the likelihood of food being contaminated. The vehicle is also meant to be capable of being easily cleaned and sanitised, if required. Furthermore, vehicles may also be required to maintain certain temperatures if potentially hazardous foods are involved.

### **WHAT ABOUT ON GOING MAINTENANCE?**

It is inevitable that the premises will suffer from wear and tear over an extended period and will require some maintenance. Maintenance issues include broken floor or wall tiles, flaking paint, leaking pipes, cracked or broken surfaces, cracks or crevices starting to appear in previously sealed surfaces such as joints in stainless steel or adjoining pieces of equipment. The urgency to fix the defect will depend on the type of business and the actual location of defect.

Maintenance is the responsibility of the business operator. You will need ongoing maintenance to eliminate gaps where food particles or grease can accumulate or small crevices which may provide a breeding area for pests such as cockroaches.

Food Safety Standard 3.2.2 Clause 21 requires that all aspects of the business be kept in good repair and working order.

# LABELLING

## WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LABELLING?

Food labeling in this context refers to the mandatory requirements under the Food Standards Code (FSC) and not to the recommended hand written or printed labels and dating put on leftover foods stored in the coolroom, refrigerator or storeroom.

The mandatory food labeling requirements will generally only apply to food manufacturers and may not be applicable to the majority of retail food businesses. Food supplied to the business to be directly sold or to be used in food preparation must be labeled accordingly.

A business operator needs to be aware that food items such as cakes, slices, herbs and deli items which are repackaged on the premises into a more convenience size for customers still need to be correctly labeled using the information already provided on the larger or commercial sized container or package from which the item comes.

The following mandatory requirements are found within Chapter 1 of the Food Standards Code and should be disclosed on a food label used or sold in a retail food business:

The name of the food, the lot identification, the name and address of the supplier, any mandatory advisory and warning statements, any mandatory declaration of certain substances, ingredient statement, date marking, storage condition statement, directions for use, nutrition information panel and the characterizing ingredients.

There are some exemptions to the above requirements and these include:

- Food sold not in a package
- Food in an inner package not designed for sale without outer package
- Food made and packaged on premises
- Food packaged in presence of consumer (assisted sale)
- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Food delivered for ready consumption by requested of consumer
- Food sold at fund raising events (some conditions apply)

## IN ADDITION THERE ARE SOME SPECIFIC EXEMPTIONS INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

### Date marking

Small packages, individual portions, bread with shelf life >7 days can have "baked on" date.

### Ingredient statement

Milk, cream, eggs, beer, wine, small serves (<100 sq cms), small portions of butter, jam





### Nutrition information panel

Meat, poultry, fish that comprise a single ingredient, fruit & vegetables, alcoholic beverages, herbs / spices, vinegar, salt, tea/coffee, fund raising events, additives, processing aids, small packages, gelatine, water (mineral / spring), prepared rolls, sandwiches, bagels, jam setting compounds.

### CHARITY EVENTS

Information on food or ingredients that are known to cause an allergic reaction must be given to the customer upon request. A complete list of known or potential allergens is available in the FSC.

All exceptions to the labeling exemptions are listed in clause 2 (2) of Standard 1.2.1 Application of Labeling and Other Information Requirements, in the FSC. The Code can be accessed from Food Standards Australia New Zealand on [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

If any of these exceptions apply, the information must be provided to the purchaser upon request or displayed next to the food.

### OTHER LABELING ISSUES IN RETAIL BUSINESSES

Specific "Country of Origin" labeling applies to certain businesses such as fruit and vegetable (including nuts) stores, fresh fish vendors, and meat outlets. Operators of these types of businesses are urged to access [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) for further information.

Since February 2012 certain larger 'fast' and snack food chains in this State have been required, for

the benefit of consumers, to disclose the amount of energy in the food on their menu boards, and an average daily intake reference value for adults. This requirement commonly referred to as "Fast Choices" labeling, only applies to those chains with more than 20 stores within New South Wales and 50 stores nationally.

The space constraints within this Guide do not allow for a full explanation of the complex labeling laws and appropriate food business operators are invited to access either

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au) for more specific information or fact sheets in regard to their particular business.

### "USE BY DATE" OR "BEST BEFORE".... WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

An important consumer protection component of the food labeling laws is that certain products are required to have a date mark on the label.

Depending on the food item, the date mark will enable consumers to determine the relative freshness of the food and this will be important, particularly when dealing with short shelf life items such as milk and other dairy products or infant formula.

Depending on your type of business, it is likely that you and your staff will handle food which has either a "use by" or "best before" date and some understanding of the terms will be useful. Unless your business is involved in the manufacture of food/s no more than a general knowledge of "use by" and "best before" dates is required.

Under the Food Standards Code, packaged products (with some exceptions), are required to show either of the following:

**"Best before date"** if the food has a shelf life of less than two years, or

**"Use by date"** if the food is considered a risk for health or safety reasons.

The Food Standards Code requires that certain short shelf life foods; for example, milk, yoghurt and

packaged small-goods (such as ham) have a use by date placed on the item by the manufacturer. It is an offence to sell past the estimated “use by” date for health and food safety reasons.

All food with a shelf life of less than 2 years such as canned foods, cereals, biscuits, sauces, chocolate, sugar, flour and frozen foods must be date marked. The ‘best before’ date simply indicates that the product may have lost some of its quality after this date passes.

Foods can be legally sold after a “best before” date (as long as they are not damaged, deteriorated or perished). You can expect these foods to retain their colour, taste, texture and flavour provided that they have been stored correctly.

A slight variation to these terms occurs with bread which can contain the words “baked on”.

It would also be useful to have a good understanding of the storage conditions such as ‘Keep refrigerated’ and “Store in a cool place”, or “Store in a dark place’s” shown on a label by the manufacturer.

This advice from the manufacturer could also include important details for any preparation or cooking instructions, including heating and defrosting times which have been included to assist you to kill any harmful bacteria which may be present naturally in some foods.

## ALLERGIES

### What do I need to know about allergies and intolerances?

As the business operator you will be aware that some customers will have allergies or intolerances to certain known substances which, if consumed, can have serious health implications. Your staff should be aware of the need to disclose relevant information to a customer if requested in relation to the presence of any allergen in an item of food or meal.

The most common allergens include egg and egg products, fish and fish products, milk and milk products, peanuts and soybeans and their

products, tree nut and their products such as walnuts, almonds, pistachios, hazel nuts, pine nuts, brazil nuts, macadamia nuts, cashews, sesame seeds, in addition to shellfish and shellfish products, cereals containing gluten and their products such as wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt, which is a variety of wheat.

Furthermore, food items with added sulphites (food additive numbers 220-228 on the ingredient list) as a preservative in concentrations greater than 10mg/kg or more are included. The latter is commonly found in wine and dried fruits and should be disclosed on the package products supplied to you.

Allergies also include royal jelly (a secretion from the salivary glands of honey bees), bee pollen (pollen collected from the legs of bees) and propolis (a substance collected by bees).

Bearing in mind the above extensive list, it is recommended that on-going staff training and procedures (to ensure that the correct information is clearly communicated in response to any customer enquiry) are in place to ensure the customer has an enjoyable and safe experience at your business.

Information on allergies regarding knowing your products, educating staff, good food preparation and hygiene including avoidance of cross-contamination and listening to your customers in addition to recognizing the symptoms and knowing what to do in an emergency is available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or 1300 552 406 for your assistance.

## POWER OUTAGES

Both business operators and householders are often uncertain about how long food can or should be kept safely in the freezer, cool room or refrigerator in the event of a power interruption. This may depend on various factors including the time of the year, prevailing weather conditions and your particular location.

Power failures can be costly and inconvenient if you are caught unaware. It is therefore recommended that you develop some emergency procedures



that can include details of where to purchase bags of ice or dry ice, where can you transport food to for a short term stay, having a supply of coolers, ice bricks and so on.

The following guidelines will assist in minimising the risks of food borne illness:

### Frozen Foods

- Keep the door closed and don't open it any more than is necessary.
- The holding time within the freezer will vary according to the food items involved.
- Some foods can last for up to 2 days in a full freezer or up to 1 day if the freezer is only half full, provided that the door is kept closed.
- Foods such as ice cream and similar products have a much shorter storage life in this situation.
- The addition of ice or dry ice to the freezer will extend the holding time.
- Transport the frozen food to a short-term location such as another business or a friend's house outside the blackout area if it is likely that the power blackout will last for a long period.
- Some partially thawed foods containing ice crystals can be safely refrozen, however, any thawed foods that have been at room temperature for 2 or more hours should be thrown out.
- It is important that each item be assessed separately with particular attention paid to meat, fish and seafood, poultry products and dairy products such as milk, cream, sour cream and soft cheeses.
- Care should be taken to ensure the quality of the food.
- As a guide, raw meats and poultry in the freezer can be refrozen without loss of quality. Fruit, fruit juices, vegetables and prepared foods can be refrozen with limited loss of quality.
- Discard foods with a strange odour or colour, or which have developed a leak during thawing.

- Remember that appearance and/or odour are only a guide.
- Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they are stored at room temperature for too long, bacteria, which cause food poisoning, will have already started to grow rapidly. Furthermore, some of these bacteria may form toxins that are not destroyed by cooking.

**The overall safe practice is always “when in doubt, throw it out”.**

### Refrigerated Foods

- Depending on the kitchen temperature and the temperature at the time of the power interruption, food in the refrigerator will normally remain cool for between 4 and 6 hours.
- Keep the door closed as much as possible.
- Potentially hazardous foods such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs and egg products that have been above 5°C for 2 hours or more should be thrown out.
- Also of particular concern are gravy, meat products, pizza, opened canned items which are marked “keep refrigerated”, soft cheeses, and other dairy items, baby formula, custards casseroles, stews, cooked pasta and spaghetti, and some dressings.
- The addition of ice, ice bricks or the like will prolong the cooling period.
- Transport the food to another location outside the blackout area, if possible.
- Discard foods with a strange odour or appearance, but remember that while foods may look and smell fine, if they are stored at room temperature for too long, bacteria, which cause food poisoning, will have already started to grow rapidly. Furthermore, some of these bacteria may form toxins that are not destroyed by cooking.

## Thermometers

An accurate thermometer is a legal requirement to have at all times in the kitchen but particularly so in these circumstances to enable you to determine the actual temperature of the freezer or refrigerator. As a guide, a deep freeze temperature of up to  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  is considered normal whereas a refrigerator, depending on the contents, generally operates at about  $5^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

A more comprehensive fact sheet on Food Safety in a Flood, Fire and Power Cuts is available on [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)





## NEW SOUTH WALES FOOD AUTHORITY

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE NSW FOOD AUTHORITY?

In 2004, the NSW Food Authority was established by the State Government for the purpose of providing a single agency with statewide responsibility for all aspects of food safety.

Part of the role of the Food Authority is to:

- Provide advice to consumers on food safety related matters.
- Facilitate education and training to relevant stakeholders.
- Encourage businesses to minimise food safety risks.
- Introduce and regulate a scheme of Food Safety Programs to relevant businesses.
- Carry out pertinent research.
- Develop new and review existing Standards.
- Implement an appropriate regulatory role
- Work with other stakeholders, including local government, on appropriate food safety matters.
- Establish and implement relevant inspection and other associated fees.

More detailed information about the activities of the Authority, including an extensive range of fact sheets on pertinent issues in other languages, can be obtained from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

Since 2004, the NSW Food Authority has worked with the 150 plus local Councils in NSW to implement a coordinated and consistent approach to the broad issue of food safety, including routine inspections of premises.

This coordinated approach is a key component in the establishment of a Food Regulation Partnership between Councils and the Authority. Broadly speaking, each Council is responsible for the inspection of retail food premises (other than butchers shops and fresh poultry sales) within its local government area whereas the Authority is responsible for the inspection of food manufacturers as well as the seafood, meat and dairy industries.

### NAME AND SHAME

In late 2004 legislation was introduced in NSW to allow a penalty notice (on-the-spot fine) to be issued for a wide variety of offences under the current food laws. The aim was to unclog Local Courts from dealing with perceived less serious matters.

In July 2008 the NSW Food Authority began a “Name and Shame” program that published penalty notices and any food prosecutions on



## NEW SOUTH WALES FOOD AUTHORITY

its website. The website, which is updated weekly, is maintained by the NSW Food Authority based on information provided by the State Debt Recovery Office.

If you receive a penalty notice you have a prescribed time period to challenge it. If you do so, the matter is listed for hearing in the Local Court.

After this appeal period expires, the penalty notice is listed on the website [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) and remains there for one year. Completed prosecutions remain on the website for two years.

### WHAT ABOUT ANY SURVEYS OR FOOD SAMPLING?

From time to time some Councils may be involved in undertaking food or other sampling from businesses as part of a specific survey. These ongoing surveys may be industry or food specific such as bakeries or cooked chickens from take away shops, or sprouts or egg dressings etc.

Each participating business will be informed of outcome of the analysis. This program involves no cost to business operators, and assists in driving change to legislation or the production of targeted and specific guidelines which aim to improve food safety.





## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/ RELEVANT LEGISLATION

### FOOTPATH DINING AND COMPANION ANIMALS

Some food businesses such as restaurants and cafes with a street frontage may wish to seek approval from the local council to use a portion of the footpath directly outside the business for dining purposes.

The Roads Act 1993 allows a Council, in some circumstances, to issue an approval for footpath dining. If you are interested in footpath dining contact your local Council for more information. Councils may set certain conditions for approval, such as paying an annual lease fee per chair or per square metre of usable space, sighting public liability insurance details, maintaining the area in a clean condition etc.

On a related note, recent changes now allow for a companion animal (usually a dog) to accompany its owner and be located within a fully open external dining area subject to certain conditions which are as follows:

- (a) The dog is under the effective control of some competent person and is restrained by means of an adequate chain, cord or leash that is attached to the dog, and
- (b) The person does not feed the dog or permit the dog to be fed, and
- (c) The dog is kept on the ground.

Business operators are encouraged to advise their staff of these conditions to avoid any potentially embarrassing moments with customers.

An informative fact sheet on this issue is available at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au) or by accessing Section 14A of the Companion Animals Act 1998.

### Guide Dogs

Guide dogs are permitted under State and Federal legislation to accompany their users and enter all food businesses. If a guide dog is in a harness it means the dog is assisting a blind or visually impaired person to go about his/her normal activities.

Penalties can apply if a harnessed guide dog and user is refused entry to a food service area such as a dining or drinking area in a restaurant or café or hotel.

### CAN I DONATE FOOD?

Some food businesses are concerned about liability issues if they donate leftover food to a charity/community organisation for distribution to the needy and the recipient becomes ill, however, businesses are protected under the Civil Liability Act 2002.

You are required to make the donation in good faith for a charitable or benevolent purpose and to ensure it is in a safe condition when it leaves your business and is subsequently correctly handled. Under these circumstances you, as the donor, are protected from any liability claim.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/ RELEVANT LEGISLATION

### **SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT ACT**

The Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 requires enclosed public places in NSW to be smoke free. Occupiers need to take reasonable steps to prevent smoke caused by smoking in outdoor areas from drifting into smoke-free areas.

For full details on smoke free and how it affects your business contact your Local Public Health Unit

<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/healthpromotion/tobacco/legislation.asp>

### **WHAT ABOUT DOGGY BAGS?**

The term “doggy bag” is used to describe items of left food from a meal, usually in a restaurant or club that a customer may wish to take with him/her for consumption at home or elsewhere.

It is up to you whether you provide a doggy bag for left over food; there no specific legal reason why a food business should not provide this service for customers.

Some businesses are concerned about their possible liability if the customer subsequently becomes ill after consuming the contents of the doggy bag, particularly as the business has no control over the time period and conditions under which the food is kept after the customer leaves the premises.

The concern is that adverse environmental and storage conditions will lead to a deterioration in the quality of the food and the customer may think that the business operator is responsible.

If the business elects to provide this service it would be useful to remind the customer about safe storage conditions. The NSW Food Authority, in partnership with Restaurant and Catering NSW, has produced a sticker outlining to customers how to keep doggy bag food safe.

Staff at participating restaurants can attach the small sticker to the doggy bag. Stickers are available at various prices by calling Restaurant and Catering NSW on (02) 9211 3500.



## ENFORCEMENT

An Authorised Officer of Council may decide to take further action in relation to an unsatisfactory aspect of a business identified during an inspection.

It is best practice that the Officer identifies any unsatisfactory matter/s on the Food Premises Assessment Report and discusses these matters with you as the business operator or your representative.

Depending on the risk of the particular matter/s, follow up action may be required by the Officer. In this instance, there should be reference to this on the Food Premises Assessment Report and a timeframe or date that a re-inspection of the business will occur.

In addition to re-inspections, a range of additional enforcement methods may be utilised. These options could include a verbal or written warning, the service of an Improvement Notice (which carries an additional prescribed administration fee), issuing of one or more Penalty Notice(s), issuing of a Seizure Notice, a Prohibition Order or the instigation of legal action.

It is important to note that some of these actions may be utilised concurrently in order to achieve compliance. For example, often Penalty Notice(s) will be issued at the same time as either an Improvement Notice or Prohibition Order which may be issued as a result of the same inspection.

A number of Councils have developed food premise specific enforcement policies or guidelines. Under the Food Regulation Partnership the NSW Food Authority has urged Councils who do not have a specific policy to use the Authority's Compliance and Enforcement Policy as a guide.

When determining what/if any enforcement tools to use, Authorised Officers consider a range of mitigating circumstances including the seriousness of the matter, the food safety risk to the public, the urgency to rectify the situation, the ability or willingness of the business operator to rectify the conditions, the consistency with action taken in similar situations as well as any past history of non-compliance.

The following is a brief description of the varying enforcement tools, what they are often used for and the consequences of these enforcement tools on your business.

### Warning letter

A warning letter is, as the name suggests, a formal written reminder which outlines the issue/s that have been identified during the inspection. A warning letter is normally used to draw to your attention to more high risk (or on-going) non-compliances that the Officer considers necessary to formalise in writing.

The letter should indicate a date for compliance and what actions are likely should the matters not be addressed. It would be unlikely that a second warning letter for a similar matter would be issued by a Council

## ENFORCEMENT

within a reasonable time period and an elevated enforcement approach including the issuing of Penalty Notices and/or an Improvement Notice may occur.

### Improvement Notice

An Improvement Notice is a written formal document issued to the owner/company that stipulates the non-compliances identified during the inspection. The format of the Notice may vary slightly from Council to Council however the notice should clearly state with (reference to specific legislation) the non-compliant issues, how the business can achieve compliance and the specific date for compliance. Additionally, the notice should advise what actions may result from non-compliance by the stipulated date.

The notice should be interpreted as a serious measure taken by Council as non-compliance with the notice may lead to the service of a Prohibition Order.

Improvement Notices carry a prescribed statewide fee of \$330 which is required to be paid within a certain time period specified in the notice. Failure to pay the fee can result in the service of a penalty notice. Part of the above notice fee covers the cost of the re-inspection of the business.

All of the above details will be indicated on the Improvement notice including any information in relation to steps that the business can take to have the notice fee waived or appeal for an extension in time for payment.

### Penalty Notices (PINs/Fines)

An officer may elect to serve one or more Penalty Notice(s) on a business operator. The concept of penalty notices for offences under the *Food Act* was introduced in late 2004 and was designed to free up the Local Court system from dealing with relatively less serious matters.

Should you receive a penalty notice you can elect to challenge the matter in the Local Court. This process is started by ticking the relevant box and returning the notice to the State Debt Recovery Office. If a notice/s is challenged in the Local Court,

the matter is set down for the hearing of evidence on a subsequent day, usually some months later.

Unchallenged penalty notices and those that are upheld by the Local Court are listed on the NSW Food Authority's "Name and Shame" website.

### Seizure Notices

Authorized Officers also have the powers to seize (and remove from the premises) a range of items (including food, equipment or evidence). In these circumstances the Officer must provide you (as soon as practical) after the seizure, written notification of the seizure that includes the following:

- (a) a description of the items seized
- (b) the reason for the seizure
- (c) an explanation of the person's right to make an application to the court under for an order disallowing the seizure
- (d) the address of the place where the item is held if the item has been removed from the premises where it was seized
- (e) the name of the enforcement agency to whom the authorised officer reports

In addition, if the Officer has reason to believe that the seized item poses an immediate risk to public health (in relation to food being or in part containing filthy, decomposed or putrid matter) the officer can destroy the food.

### Prohibition Orders

A Prohibition Order is served either because an Improvement Notice has not been complied with or an Officer determines that the seriousness of a particular situation poses an immediate risk to public health. A Prohibition Order will mean that part or all of the business will be closed until all outstanding non-compliances identified on the Prohibition Order AND any outstanding Improvement Notice(s) are completed.

Once the business operator believes these works have been completed, she/he will need to submit a written request for an inspection. If the Officer is satisfied that all requested works have been addressed a Certificate of Clearance is issued and

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

the business can again operate. There is no notice fee associated with a Prohibition Order.

### Legal Proceedings

Legal action, which generally involves an appearance in the Local Court, can be instigated in those situations where the seriousness of the non-compliance(s) are above the issuing of Penalty Notice(s), or where there is a history of non compliance associated with the business. In these circumstances it is helpful to obtain legal advice, although self representation in Court is possible.

### WHAT IS MEANT BY “DUE DILIGENCE”?

The term *due diligence* is usually associated with possible enforcement action being instigated against the business operator for a breach of the food laws.

A defence of due diligence could be considered if it can be established that the employer or director of the company (if the business is operated by a company) exercised all due diligence to ensure the food business was conducted in compliance with the Food Standards Code or the director of the company was not in a position to influence the conduct of the company in relation to the offence.

If an employee commits an offence against the *Food Act*, the employer is deemed to have committed the offence unless the employer can prove that all due diligence was exercised to prevent the commission of the offence.

### USEFUL WEBSITES AND TRANSLATED INFORMATION

Assistance in the form of fact sheets and other material in a range of languages, including the actual Food Premises Assessment Report used by Council Officers carrying out inspections of premises, are available from [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

As the business operator it may be useful to access any one of a number of websites including:

[www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)  
[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)  
<http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au>





## WHAT FACT SHEETS ARE AVAILABLE?

### WHAT IF I WANT A LIQUOR LICENCE?

Enquiries regarding the different types of liquor licences should be directed to the Department of Liquor Gaming and Racing on (02) 9995 0333 or [www.olgr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olgr.nsw.gov.au)

Contact should also be made with your local Council to check whether obtaining a liquor licence is consistent with the development approval for the business and the availability of toilets for customers.

### WHEN DO I NEED A FIRE EXTINGUISHER AND FIRE BLANKET?

Fire extinguishers should be provided in all food premises. While the dry chemical type extinguishers are good all round performers, they are not recommended in food premises because the residue powder is toxic and difficult to remove. A carbon dioxide extinguisher (3.5kg) is preferred in food premises and should be located as close to the cooking equipment as practical.

### WHAT ABOUT A FIRE BLANKET?

Fire blankets are needed if you have cooking appliances. Fire blankets, which should be kept in a convenient location, are effective in smothering fires and are useful over pots and pans when there is a fire.

Fire extinguishers and fire blankets are part of a suite of essential fire fighting services within a building. The building owner (or a suitably qualified person on the owner's behalf) is required to certify to the

local Council on an annual basis that appropriate fire fighting measures are in place.

### WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES?

As a business operator, you need to ensure that business activities do not impact on the environment or the local and broader community from an air, noise, water pollution or waste management perspective.

These activities include, but are not limited to, the incorrect storage of garbage bins with lids uncovered, noisy equipment such as kitchen exhaust systems or refrigeration motors, excessively greasy air emissions from cooking equipment or the washing out of garbage bins in a location where the run-off flows into a storm water drain.

Information on energy efficiency for small businesses is available on [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au)

### GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT 2009

On 1 July 2010, the Freedom of Information Act 1989 (NSW) was replaced by the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act).

The GIPA Act means you can apply to see records held by your local Council (or any other agency). You will need to submit an application to the Council and pay a prescribed fee. However, you should be aware that the submission of an application and payment of the fee does not guarantee a favourable response or access to the information requested.

# APPENDIX ONE

## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE CHECK LIST FOR FOOD HANDLERS.

The following examples of the required skills and knowledge are provided as a guide only and will depend on the actual business.

### Skills and Knowledge in relation to Food Deliveries

- Recognise and understand the significance of swollen or dented cans.
- Check use-by date and packaging.
- Recognise substandard goods like leaking cartons, bottles, broken seals, and cracked eggs.
- Make sure all food items are correctly labelled.
- Check delivery temperatures competently.

### Skills and Knowledge in relation to Food Storage

- Cover all food in the refrigerator, dry food store or freezer.
- Label items, if not already labelled, and date (if required).
- Store food in airtight containers.
- Put unused open canned food into a glass or plastic container.
- Don't keep personal belongings in food storage or preparation areas.
- Know not to store food on the floor.

### Skills and Knowledge in relation to Personal Hygiene

- Practice personal cleanliness and wear clean clothes, and hairnet (if applicable).
- Regular hand washing – before starting work, before handling food, after the using the toilet, handling raw foods or garbage, after a break, handling money, after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing etc.
- Report illnesses to your supervisor.
- Cover cuts and sores with bandage and glove.
- Avoiding unnecessary handling food by using gloves or tongs.
- Don't drink, smoke or eat or cough or sneeze near food.

- Use the hand basin for hand washing only and dry hands using paper towels.
- Bacteria are on everyone and everywhere.
- Change gloves as often as you wash your hands

### Skills and Knowledge in relation to Food Temperature Control

- Know that bacteria grow if food is stored in the danger zone (5°C-60°C).
- Don't prepare food too far in advance.
- Store and display potentially hazardous foods in refrigerator or hot food appliance.
- Know that hot food should be store above 60°C and cold food below 5°.
- Be aware of what the 2 hour/4 hour guide means.
- Know how to check the delivery and storage temperatures of food.
- Know what are potentially hazardous foods.
- Know how to use, clean and calibrate a thermometer.
- Defrost under refrigeration and allow 24 hours at least.
- Reheated food should reach a temperature of 75°C.
- Know that meat juices run clear after thorough cooking.
- Under cooked foods can cause illness.

### Skills and Knowledge in relation to Cross Contamination

- Know to keep raw and cooked foods stored separately.
- Use clean and sanitised chopping boards and utensils.
- Buffet/Smorgasbord require supervision and protecting barriers to avoid contamination.
- Know that raw meat and chicken are contaminated with bacteria.
- Clothes or dirty benches or equipment can contaminate food.



- Store raw meats, fish and poultry near bottom of fridge/cool room (not on floor).
- Store cleaning chemicals well away from food.

### **Skills and Knowledge in relation to Cleaning & Sanitising**

- Understand the difference between cleaning and sanitising.
- Report cleaning and sanitising matters to the supervisor.
- Know that all appropriate equipment should be clean and sanitised before use.
- Dishwashing machine operating at 75-80°C will sanitise appliances crockery, equipment, utensils
- Manual washing of dishes requires washing at 75°C for at least 30 sec.
- Maintaining a clean work area.
- Use separate sinks for hand washing and for cleaning and sanitising appliances and equipment and for washing fruit and vegetables.
- Items like lettuce and other ready to eat vegetables should not be soaked in a sink used for other purposes.
- Are all wiping cloths clean and sanitised
- Know your part of the business cleaning schedule

