



**Macedon
Ranges**
Shire Council

Construction Guidelines for food premises



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INTRODUCTION

Every food business operating in Victoria requires a Food Act registration or notification to sell food to the public. The registration system allows Environmental Health Officers to regulate and monitor local food businesses for compliance under the Food Act and Food Safety Standards Code.

As a food proprietor you have food safety obligations and a responsibility to ensure all food sold is safe and suitable for human consumption, you will need to ensure all staff in the business who handle and prepare food for sale are appropriately trained in food safety.

Our Environmental Health Unit will assist you to understand and comply with your obligations and provide advice on safe food handling for all areas of our community, including businesses, individuals, charities, community, sporting and church groups.

Our Environmental Health Officers work with the Food Safety Unit at the Department of Health and Human Services to monitor the safety of foods consumed throughout the state and enforce the Food Act and related regulations to protect the public health of Victorians.

These Guidelines are based on *Food Standards Australian and New Zealand (FSANZ), Safe Food Australia Standard 3.2.3 (2nd edition Jan. 2001)*, available at the FSANZ website:
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au>

The purpose of this guide is to provide general advice on the minimum standards required for food premises construction. Applicants are advised to consult the Food Standards Code and AS 4674-2004 for further information.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact our Environmental Health Unit on (03) 5422 0333 or email mrsc@mrsc.vic.gov.au

Renovating a food business

To ensure your renovated food premises will comply with the FSANZ Food Safety Standards, we recommend you speak to one of our Environmental Health Officers before commencing any construction work.

To enable us to provide appropriate and useful feedback we recommend you submit a set of plans of the premises showing the proposed fit out PRIOR to any works commencing.

The plans need to include the layout of all fixtures, fittings and equipment and a description of materials to be used for surface finishes including walls, floors, ceilings and bench tops. (A legend on the side of the plan may be used)

If the plans relate to renovating an existing premises the plans need only relate to the areas of the premises that are being renovated or improved.

It is also recommended you speak with Councils Building and Planning Units prior to undertaking any works

Starting a new food business

If you are thinking of starting your own food business there are some important steps you will need to follow to ensure that you are providing safe food and obtaining all the other relevant Council permits.

Step one - Approval from other authorities

There may be other external authority or Council department permits or exemptions that you will need to consider prior to applying for a Food Act registration with us.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- [Statutory Planning](#)
- [Building Services](#)
- Water Authorities such as [Western Water](#) and [Coliban Water](#)
- [Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulations](#) (formally Liquor Licensing Victoria)

Step two - Application process

An application to register a food premises must be submitted to Council with a set of plans of the premises showing the proposed fit-out PRIOR to any works commencing.

The plans need to include the layout of all fixtures, fittings and equipment and a description of materials to be used for surface finishes including walls, floors, ceilings and bench tops. (A legend on the side of the plan may be used)

If your business is not a fixed premises, the below links to our website will take you to other types of registration

- [Temporary and mobile food registrations](#)
- Domestic Food Premises
- Notification of food premises
- Food Vending Machines

Step three - Premises construction

Once you have submitted the Application to Register a Food Premises with a set of plans, a Council Environmental Health Officer will make contact with you to arrange an initial onsite inspection to discuss the layout and design of your premises in accordance to the FSANZ Food Standards Code.

If you have any questions during the construction process it is always best to clarify these matters with Council to prevent the delay of your business opening.

A final inspection of your premises must occur PRIOR to the business opening. Please advise the officer of your intention to open as soon as possible so that an inspection can take place once all works are completed.

Step four - Food safety program

Proprietors of Class 1 and 2 food businesses must follow either an independent food safety program (FSP) (Class 1 or 2) or a Department of Health and Human Services approved template (Class 2 only).

A food safety program template is a simple document that describes the steps required to ensure that food that is offered for sale is safe to eat. FSP Templates can be:

- obtained from our [Health Department](#)
- download a free of charge copy from the Department of Health and Human Services Food Safety Unit website
- Complete and lodge online at [Foodsmart](#).

Class 3 food premises need to keep completed basic records about certain food safety practices onsite. This includes details about suppliers, and about potentially hazardous food. These records are included in the [Food Safety Guide for Class 3 Food Businesses](#)

Step five - Food safety supervisor

Every Class 1 and 2 food business are required to nominate a [food safety supervisor](#) for their business. This person is responsible for the implementation of the food safety program within the food business.

It is the responsibility of the food business to notify Council in writing within 14 days of any changes to the food safety program or supervisor.

Generic food safety training for employees

To ensure food handlers have the skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene for the work they do an on-line food training program has been developed by the Department of Health. To undertake the free course, please visit <http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au>

Step six - Registration and compliance

Once the Environmental Health Officer is satisfied that all requirements have been met then a Certificate of Registration will be issued. This can only happen once you have completed the above steps to the satisfaction of the Officer. It is illegal to operate an unregistered premises.

CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

1. GENERAL

- 1.1. Food contamination can be minimised by physically separating the areas where raw products are handled from the areas where the final product is ready for dispatch or service. Similarly, wash up areas and staff amenity areas should be separated from areas where food is prepared.
- 1.2. The construction and finishing of all surfaces and fittings must be completed to a professional standard. Materials used to construct the premises must be appropriate for food operations. They must be durable under the conditions they are being used and not require frequent or temporary repairs and not be made of materials that may contaminate food.
- 1.3. The premises is to be designed and constructed so as to eliminate inaccessible spaces or any gaps cracks and crevices which hinder cleaning and provide harbourage for pests.
- 1.4. The premises is to be designed to avoid the use of skirting boards cornices, picture-rails or any other unnecessary sills or ledges which attract dust and hinder cleaning.

2. FLOORS

- 2.1. Floors must be designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted in the food premises. Floors must be able to be effectively cleaned and unable to absorb grease, food particles or water. Floors must be laid so that there is no "pooling" of water.
- 2.2. Coving is encouraged at floor/ wall junctions and should be provided in new premises in areas where floors are intended to be or likely to be cleaned by flushing with water.
- 2.3. Glazed tiles, sheet vinyl and epoxy resin would be suitable in food preparation and handling areas. Where concrete flooring is used in food preparation areas, the flooring must be coated with at least 2 layers of epoxy resin.
- 2.4. Requirements for floors in food and equipment storage areas are not as stringent as in food preparation areas. In addition to the floor finishes above, concrete trowelled to a smooth finish is suitable in storage areas.

3. WALLS

- 3.1. Walls in food preparation areas, wet areas and areas where unpackaged food is stored must be smooth, durable, impervious to water or grease and readily washable. It is recommended as a minimum food preparation benches and wash up areas have splashback finishes to height of approximately 1.8 meters from floor level.

- 3.2. Suitable splashback finishes are ceramic tiles, stainless steel sheeting and smooth finished laminates.
- 3.3. Grouting to any tiled areas must be brought up flush to the surface of the tile.
- 3.4. Other food storage areas must have finishes that are smooth, non-absorbent and readily cleanable such as smooth plaster or cement sheeting finished with a light coloured washable paint

4. CEILINGS

- 4.1. Ceilings in food preparation areas must be smooth plaster or cement sheeting (or equivalent) finished with a light coloured washable paint. Acoustic tiles, or drop in panels are not acceptable.

5. WATER SUPPLY

- 5.1. The hot and cold water systems must have sufficient capacity to enable the business to carry out its operations even during peak operating times. A hot water system must deliver water at a minimum of 77°C at the sink
- 5.2. A food business must use potable water for all activities that use water that are conducted on the food premises.

6. SERVICE PIPES

- 6.1. Service pipes, conduits and electrical wiring shall be concealed in floors, walls or ceilings or fixed on brackets so as to provide at least 25mm clearance between the pipe and adjacent vertical surface and 100mm between the pipe and adjacent horizontal surfaces.

7. SINKS

- 7.1. A double bowl sink must be provided, supplied with hot and cold water through a single outlet. These sinks must be large enough to rinse your largest piece of equipment.
- 7.2. A dishwasher or glass washer may be installed in lieu of one sink. (i.e. utensils and equipment are rinsed in the sink and washed in the dishwasher). In this instance the sink must be large enough to rinse your largest piece of equipment
- 7.3. A food preparation sink may also be required depending on the nature and volume of the food prepared.

8. HAND WASH BASINS

- 8.1. A hand wash basin must be clearly designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face. It must be provided in the immediate vicinity (ie within approx. 5 meters) of any food preparation area.
- 8.2. The hand wash basin must be supplied with hot and cold water through a single outlet. Single-lever 'flick' mixer tap are suitable as are hands free devices. Businesses are not specifically required in the standard to install hands-free taps.
- 8.3. Liquid soap and single use/disposable paper towels must be provided in the immediate vicinity of the hand wash basin.

9. DRAINAGE

- 9.1. All wastewater must be drained to the sewer or a septic tanks system where a sewer is not provided.
- 9.2. To discharge trade waste, you are required by law to have a trade waste agreement or consent with Western Water or Coliban Water who may require a licensed plumber to install an appropriately sized and constructed grease trap, or similar oil and fat separation system.

Western Water

Address: 36 Macedon St, Sunbury VIC 3429
Email: mail@westernwater.com.au
Phone: 1300 650 422

Coliban Water

Address: PO Box 2770 Bendigo DC VIC 3554
Email: coliban@coliban.com.au
Phone: 1300 363 200

10. FIXTURES, FITTINGS AND EQUIPMENT

- 10.1. All tables, benches, shelves, trays, fittings or appliances used in the manufacture, preparation, package or storage of food must be constructed of smooth, impervious and durable materials, and finished to a professional standard.

11. STORAGE

- 11.1. Adequate refrigerated storage space for the nature of the business must be provided.
- 11.2. A storage area adequate for the nature of the business must be provided for dry goods, packaging and wrapping materials, crockery and equipment
- 11.3. Shelving must be appropriate for its use.

- Shelving in wet areas – Stainless steel, high density plastic and other suitable materials.
- Shelving in dry storage areas – Any suitable smooth, impervious material. Timber shelving must be laminated or sealed on all surfaces.

11.4. Shelving must not have any holes, cracks or crevices where food and other debris can lodge. Unsealed chipboard and other compressed timbers are not permitted.

11.5. Storage area separate from food must be provided for:

- Cleaning products and equipment
- Staff clothing and personal items
- Office supplies
- Wastes

12. COOKING, HEATING, HOT HOLDING, COOLING AND REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT

12.1. Cooking and heating equipment must be able to rapidly heat a food product to a temperature of at least 75°C for a minimum of 2 minutes (This requirement may vary depending on certain food types, please check your Food Safety Program for further information).

12.2. Hot holding equipment (including Bain Maries) must be able to keep the core temperature of cooked or reheated food above 60°C. Note: Hot holding equipment must not be used to reheat or cook food.

12.3. Cooling and refrigeration equipment must be able to rapidly cool the core temperature of raw or cooked food to 5°C or less (This requirement may vary depending on certain food types, please check your Food Safety Program for further information).

13. FOOD DISPLAY

13.1. Provide covers, sneeze guards or doors to cabinets to protect any unpackaged food on display or for self serve.

13.2. When displaying potentially hazardous food there must be adequate equipment to hold food under temperature control. Fitting sliding doors to bain-maries, cold food displays and other similar food display units is also recommended

14. APPLIANCES AND EQUIPMENT

14.1. All appliances and equipment must be either on legs at least 150mm in height, or sealed to the floor on which it stands, or mounted on castors so as to be freely movable. This is to enable easy and effective cleaning in and around these areas.

14.2. All appliances and equipment must be at least 150 mm from any wall or sealed to the adjacent walls or mounted on castors so as to be freely movable to allow effective cleaning.

15. VENTILATION

- 15.1. Food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the food premises.
- 15.2. A mechanical exhaust system that complies with *Australian Standard 1668, The Use of Mechanical Ventilation and Air Conditioning in Buildings* must be provided for all cooking equipment.
- 15.3. Ensure the drip gutter on kitchen exhaust hood catches the grease and condensation to prevent drips on food or equipment.
- 15.4. A mechanical exhaust system may also be required for commercial dishwashers.
- 15.5. Canopies are required to be “boxed in” to the ceiling, so that no ledges or gaps are present.

16. LIGHTING

- 16.1. Food premises must have a lighting system that provides sufficient natural or artificial light for the activities conducted on the food premises. Light fittings should provide at least 500 lux in food preparation areas and at least 300 lux in wash up, storage and toilet areas.
- 16.2. Shatterproof diffuser covers or sleeves are required for all light fittings, to prevent contamination of food in the event of breakage.

17. PEST PROOFING

- 17.1. Premises must be designed so as to prevent the entry and/or harborage of rodents, birds, animals and insects.
- 17.2. Gaps under doors, around service pipes and fixtures are to be eliminated
- 17.3. Where doors or windows are open for ventilation, appropriate fly screens must be fitted.

18. TOILET FACILITIES

- 18.1. Hand washing facilities with hot and cold water through a single outlet, soap and suitable drying facilities must be provided in the immediate vicinity of the toilet.
- 18.2. Toilets should not be entered directly off a food preparation area but through a ventilated lobby or air lock.
- 18.3. Where toilets are not provided within the food premises (such as in a shopping centre), food handlers **must** have access to toilet facilities that meet the above requirement.

18.4. The following information is sourced from the *Building Code of Australia (BCA)* for guidance on appropriate ratios of toilets to staff and customers.

No of Customers	Female Facilities	Male Facilities
Less than 20	Not required	
20-50	1 toilet 1 wash hand basin	1 toilet 1 urinal 1 wash hand basin
51-100	2 toilets 1 wash hand basin	2 toilet 3 urinals 1 wash hand basin
101-200	3 toilets 2 wash hand basins	1 toilet 2 urinals 2 wash hand basins
201-300	4 toilets 2 wash hand basins	2 toilets 3 urinals 2 wash hand basins

19. FOOD VEHICLES

19.1. Food Vehicles must comply with the Food Standards Australian New Zealand "Safe Food Australia" Standard 3.2.3.