



Food Poisoning. A single case of food poisoning can close down your business. At worst, your customers could be permanently injured by food poisoning, or even die.

In 1999, we asked food businesses about the best way we could help them deliver safe food to their customers. Many said that a system that let them write their Food Safety Program using a simple a set of instructions would be easier and cheaper. This set of instructions is called a template.

All businesses will have to provide a Food Safety Program to their local Council the first time they submit their food business registration AFTER 2 January 2002. This means if your registration date is 1 January, the date you will need a Food Safety Program will be 1 January 2003.

The law has now been changed to let most businesses choose to write their Food Safety Program using a template. This pamphlet tells you more about templates and how to use them.

## Why do I need a Food Safety Program?

First, it's the law. You will need to have a Food Safety Program in place when you next register your business after 2 January 2002.

Second, having a Food Safety Program is a proven system of food safety. It is your plan for making sure the food you sell is safe—which makes for a healthy business.

Third, having a Food Safety Program should help you manage your business better, through improved record keeping and cost control.

## What is a Template?

A template is a simple document that describes the steps that you need to take to make sure that the food you sell is safe. Starting November 2001, templates registered by the Department of Human Services will be available for food businesses. A template might be designed to be used by many different types of businesses, or it could be designed specially for one type of business.

## Can I use a template?

You can choose to use a template to write your Food Safety Program unless you sell food mainly to 'at risk' groups like the very young, the elderly, and the sick.

If you use a Department of Human Services registered template to write your Food Safety Program, your local Council Environmental Health Officer will check that you are following your Food Safety Program. Your Food Safety Program will not have to be third party audited.

Businesses that must write their own Food Safety Program, or businesses that choose to will need to have it audited regularly.

## Why should I choose to use a template?

- Templates are a very easy way of writing a Food Safety Program.
- Using a template may be cheaper than employing someone to write your Food Safety Program for you.
- If you use a registered template you won't need to employ a third party auditor.

## How do I use a template?

### Step 1 Choose a template

The Department of Human Services has developed a template that can be used by most small retail and food service businesses. This will be available as a paper template and also on the internet. Industry associations and other business organisations are also developing templates for specific business types.



- Check the Food Safety website [www.foodsafety.vic.gov.au](http://www.foodsafety.vic.gov.au) for a list of registered templates and where you can get them.
- Contact your head franchisor or industry association, looking in the Yellow pages under 'Organisations—Business and Professional'.
- You can buy the Department of Human Services template from Information Victoria at 356 Collins Street Melbourne or by phone on 1300 366 356.
- Visit [www.foodsmart.vic.gov.au](http://www.foodsmart.vic.gov.au) to access the on-line version of the Department of Human Services template.

## Step 2 Tailor the Program to your Business

Read through the template and follow the instructions. Put the information together to create a Food Safety Program that covers all the food handling processes that you do in your business.

## Step 3 Lodge Your Food Safety Program with your local Council

Do this when you next submit your food business registration after 2 January 2002.

## Using Your Food Safety Program

Your Food Safety Program is your plan for delivering safe food to your customers. It says how you are going to make sure that the food you sell is safe.

Everyone who works in your business must do the things you say you will do in your Food Safety Program. If you have used a template to develop your Food Safety Program, your local Council Environmental Health Officer will check that you are doing things the way you say you will in your Food Safety Program.

## To find out more:

- Ring the toll-free Food Safety Hotline on 1300 364 352 during business hours.
- Speak with your local Council Environmental Health Officer.

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# Three Easy Steps to Using a Food Safety Program Template

Food Safety Victoria

