

Food Safety Supervisor and training

Requirements for food businesses

What the law says

Under the *Food Act 1984*, it is a legal requirement for all Victorian food businesses to be **registered**. For most food businesses, this means getting registered with the Health Department at the local council where your premises is located.

To get registered, your basic requirements are to have:

- a Food Safety Program, and
- a Food Safety Supervisor.

This information sheet provides specific information about the Food Safety Supervisor requirement. To find out more about Food Safety Programs contact your local council or visit the Food Safety Program Template information on our website (<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/bus/templates.htm>).

Who is responsible for food safety in the food business?

Everyone who works in your food business is responsible for the delivery of safe food to the customer.

Business proprietors have the responsibility to ensure the business' food safety processes are put into place and they work. The business proprietor holds the business' food registration

with council and needs to ensure that the food business complies with the food regulations.

All *staff handling food* need to have the skills and knowledge related to the food tasks they do. This means that different people in the business will need to know different things about food safety to do their job and keep food safe. For example, a cook will need skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene that are quite different from those needed by a waiter or a dish-washer. Every staff member must know about how food safety works in the business as it relates to the work they are doing, including their own responsibilities for food safety.

The business' *Food Safety Supervisor* (FSS) is a person nominated by the food business proprietor and works under the direction of the business proprietor. The Food Safety Supervisor is a person who can supervise food handling in the business to make sure it is being done safely. They therefore need to know more about food safety than just the safety of the food they are personally handling. They also need to understand how the business' food safety processes work and what needs to be done.

Food Safety Supervisor

The business' FSS is a person who:

- knows how to recognise, prevent and alleviate the hazards associated with food handling at your premises;
- has a *Statement of Attainment* that shows the required food safety competencies from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO),
- has the ability and authority to supervise other people handling food at your premises and ensure that food handling is done safely.

Step 1. Does your business or event need a Food Safety Supervisor?

In most cases to obtain a food business registration with your local council in Victoria, your business needs to have a Food Safety Program and a nominated FSS. Every food business must provide their local council with the name and qualifications of their FSS. You should get a copy of your FSS's *Statement of Attainment* and check that the training completed matches your business requirements, then provide these details to your council. If the nominated FSS leaves the business, the **business proprietor** must inform the local council of the name and qualifications of the replacement FSS.

Exceptions

One-off or irregular events run solely to raise funds for charitable causes and not for personal or business gain, are not required to have a FSS. However, the organisers of the event must make sure that the people who handle the food at the event can do this safely and that there is a Food Safety Program operating to control food safety hazards for such events. Organisations running events should contact their local council health department to check the FSS and other food safety requirements they need to meet for the event.

Retailers of low-risk pre-packaged food only (for example chemists, newsagents and video stores) do not need a FSS or a food safety program. These businesses DO however need to be registered with local council.

Step 2. Choosing the right Food Safety Supervisor for your business

Your FSS can be the proprietor, an employee or a person external to the business, providing they are able to meet the requirements of a FSS prescribed in the *Food Act 1984*.

It is important to choose someone who can do all of the things listed under the heading 'Food Safety Supervisor' in this information sheet, including being able to supervise other staff's food handling practices.

You should ensure that your FSS has what they need to perform their role as the FSS for your business. This could mean that:

- it is mentioned in their job description;
- the FSS knows what their role and responsibilities are;

- they have relevant and appropriate training;
- they are allocated time in their day to undertake FSS tasks;
- they are able to supervise other staff and staff are aware who the FSS is;
- the FSS knows what to do and where/who to go to if something goes wrong with food safety in your business.

The FSS doesn't have to be on the premises at all times. However, there must be a way for the FSS to know how food is being handled and to ensure that people handling food are doing so safely when the FSS is not on the premises. Similarly, this applies to businesses that operate across a number of shifts, or when a person from outside the business is the FSS.

Businesses operating from more than one site can have one person as the FSS for a number of premises. The local council must be satisfied with such arrangements, and if the premises are in different municipalities, each local council must be satisfied with the arrangements.

Step 3. Which food sector does your business fall into?

The food sector your business falls into will guide which training courses (units) your FSS needs to complete. This is because the training varies and it is important to match the training to your business type to ensure that the training is relevant to your business.

Check Table 1 and then contact your local council Environmental Health Officer to confirm which food sector your business falls into and which training your FSS needs to complete.

Step 4. How does your Food Safety Supervisor obtain a *Statement of Attainment* for their food safety skills and knowledge?

There are two ways a FSS can obtain a *Statement of Attainment*

- i) attending a training course that may be classroom or workplace based, computer based or a combination of these approaches;
- ii) having previously completed training and/or work experience recognised against the required competency standard by an RTO.

Competent is the term used by the training system to describe a person who can demonstrate a set of '*skills and knowledge*'. These skills and knowledge are organised in 'units' of competency so that skills and knowledge can be easily identified and recognised. To be recognised as competent the person must demonstrate the relevant unit/s and receive a *Statement of Attainment* issued by a RTO.

People with appropriate experience, with or without formal qualifications, can have their skills and knowledge recognised against a unit of competency through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. An RTO will assess the evidence provided and may recognise the skills and knowledge that have been acquired through experience or other training, and advise that the person is competent or that further training is required for the person to achieve the unit of competency.

People who have completed a tertiary qualification in the food science and microbiological fields that are recognised in Australia, may be regarded as having

suitable qualifications to be a FSS. The local council health department responsible for registering the food business can determine whether these qualifications are suitable. Your FSS can also ask an RTO to undertake a RPL process of their previous training and experience against the unit/s of competency for your food sector.

How much training?

The **minimum** competency standards for the FSS are listed in Table 1. These competencies depend on the type of food business the FSS is supervising.

These units were selected on advice given to DHS from the Industry Training Advisory Boards (now Industry Skills Councils) for the various food sectors. This is important because the *Victorian Food Act 1984* requires the FSS to have skills and knowledge relevant to the 'premises type' they are working in.

These competencies are National Units of Competency recognised by RTOs anywhere in Australia and can contribute to achieving a whole qualification.

Many courses currently available offer training that is **more than** the competencies needed to be a FSS. There is no *Victorian Food Act* requirement for a FSS to undertake training beyond the minimum competencies listed in Table 1, however there may be industry or organisation based standards in addition to the *Victorian Food Act* requirements.

For example some food manufacturers with more complex processes, such as large retailers or health care providers might require their FSS to have additional food safety skills and knowledge.

Table 1: Food sectors and minimum competency standards

Food Sector	Minimum Competency Standard
Food Processing Businesses such as food product manufacturers including flour mills, canneries, packers, bakers, breweries and wineries.	FDFCORFSY2A 'Implement the food safety program and procedures'
Retail Businesses such as supermarkets, convenience stores, grocers, and delicatessens. Take away and fast food businesses can be considered either retail or hospitality food businesses.	SIRRFSA001A 'Apply retail food safety practices' OR Use both units from the Hospitality Sector below Previous course code: WRRLP6C 'Apply retail food safety practices'
Hospitality Businesses such as restaurants, cafes and hotels. Take away and fast food businesses can be considered either retail or hospitality food businesses.	SITXOHS002A 'Follow workplace hygiene procedures' SITXFSA001A 'Implement food safety procedures' OR Use unit from the Retail Sector above Previous course codes: THHGH01B 'Follow workplace hygiene procedures' THHBCC11B 'Implement food safety procedures'
Health Businesses such as hospitals.	HLTF207B 'Follow basic food safety practices' HLTF310B 'Apply and monitor food safety requirements' HLTF309B 'Oversee the day-to-day implementation of food safety in the workplace' Previous course codes: HLTF7A 'Follow basic food safety practices' HLTF10A 'Apply and monitor food safety requirements' HLTF9A 'Oversee the day-to-day implementation of food safety in the workplace'
Community Services Businesses such as childcare centres, nursing homes, hostels, and Meals on Wheels services.	Use all three units from the Health sector above.
Transport and distribution Businesses such as warehouses.	Use relevant units from other sectors.

Competency codes

The competency unit codes shown on your FSS's *Statement of Attainment* might not be the same as the ones in Table 1. For example sometimes the last letter is A, B, or C. This is because the training packages change from time to time, and the last letter identifies the version of the unit of competency that has been completed. In this case the training is considered equivalent if the code is the same but the last letter different. If there are any other differences in the code on your FSS's *Statement of Attainment* to the one/s on the list for your food sector you should check with your local council about what you need to do.

For the Retail and Hospitality food sectors, the units listed are considered equivalent to each other. This means that a *Statement of Attainment* for the nationally recognised units of competence acquired in the 'Hospitality' sector are transferable to the 'Retail' sector and visa versa. Your FSS can have either of these sectors training if you business falls into these categories.

For the Health food sector a change as a result of the 2007 Training Package endorsement means that the unit codes have changed (See Table 1). In this case even though the unit codes look different the training content is the same.

Step 5. Finding the training course your Food Safety Supervisor requires

To find the food safety course your FSS requires you need to:

- make sure you know which units your FSS needs to complete (Contact your local councils Environmental Health Officer to confirm before attending training)
- contact your local RTO to see if they offer this training.

There are many RTOs in Victoria who offer food safety training at different times to suit your business. Some food safety training is offered in languages other than English.

You can search for training in your area on the following website by entering 'food safety' in 'Find a Course':

Short Courses Website:
<http://www.shortcourses.vic.gov.au>

You could also try:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/tafecourses>

or
<http://training.com.au>

You can also search for an RTO by:

- looking in the Melbourne Yellow Pages under 'Education and Training' or try <http://www.yellowpages.com.au>
- contacting your industry association for information.

There are a number of links on the Food Safety website to help you to find a training course. You can find these on the food safety website at:
<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety>

Other useful links are:

<http://www.otte.vic.gov.au>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

For more information contact:

- Local council health departments
- Food Safety Hotline 1300 364 352

Get help from Business Victoria

Access a range of online tools and information to help you start up and run your food business. Begin with **Step-By-Step: Starting a Food Business**, an interactive guide, and to register for a free Business Victoria account, available on the Business Victoria website.

For more details go to:

www.business.vic.gov.au/foodbusiness

Other information sheets available

- Food handlers skills and knowledge
- Hygienic food preparation and handling in food businesses
- Personal hygiene for people working with food
www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety
- Food Safety: guidance on skills and knowledge for food businesses (ANZFA)
www.foodstandards.gov.au

If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, please phone 1300 364 352 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au

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