



# ACT FOOD BUSINESS FIT-OUT GUIDE

A GUIDE TO THE DESIGN AND  
CONSTRUCTION OF FOOD BUSINESSES  
IN THE ACT

ACT HEALTH PROTECTION SERVICE  
AUGUST 2023

## **Acknowledgments**

This guide was developed with the assistance of the *Food premises Design, construction and fit-out guide* produced by the Southeast Queensland Food Safety and Public Health Working Group.

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# DISCLAIMER

The *ACT Food Business Fit-out Guide* is intended to provide guidance (e.g. to builders and designers) on the construction and design of food business premises.

Food businesses must comply with all relevant requirements of ACT law. This guide does not cover all requirements of the *Food Act 2001*, the Food Regulation 2002 or the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

Users must use their own judgement, as the information provided is not legal advice. Any legal advice should be obtained from a qualified solicitor.

The ACT Government accepts no responsibility for any action taken based on the information in this guide. The ACT Government is not liable for any damages resulting from the use of this guide. The ACT Government does not assure the accuracy of the information on websites referenced in this guide, nor any information on websites that the ACT Government does not manage.

This guide is subject to updates based on emerging issues, such as legislative changes and industry innovation. Users should check they have the most recent version. Visit [www.health.act.gov.au/business/food-safety-regulation](http://www.health.act.gov.au/business/food-safety-regulation) for the most recent version of the guide and other food business resources.

# 1. ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The ACT Food Business Fit-out Guide (the guide) has been developed to provide guidance to food businesses, builders and designers on the construction and design of **food premises**. The guide outlines minimum construction requirements and best practice recommendations to ensure the fit-out of a **food business** complies with the *Food Act 2001* and supports the production of safe food.

This guide is based on:

- the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code - [Standard 3.2.3 \(Food Premises and Equipment\)](#), and
- Australian Standard 4674-2004 (Construction and fit-out of food premises).

The Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code prescribes nationally consistent food safety standards that enable a risk-based, preventative approach to providing safe and suitable food. Standard 3.2.3 sets out the requirements for food premises and equipment used by a food business.

Australian Standard 4674-2004 (Construction and fit-out of food premises) provides design, construction and fit-out criteria for new food premises and for the renovation or alteration of existing food premises. The standard's scope is limited to permanent buildings used by the food service industry, by food retailers and by small-scale food manufacturers.

We strongly recommend you review the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code – Standard 3.2.3 and the Australian Standard 4674-2004 to ensure you appropriately design and construct your food premises.

NB: Words and terms defined in the [Glossary](#) are shown in **green** at their first mention in the text.

## WHY THIS GUIDE IS IMPORTANT?

Thorough planning and design will assist you to build a food premises that will facilitate the production of safe food.

This guide aims to ensure that all food premises:

- are able to be easily cleaned and maintained,
- have sufficient space, **facilities** and **equipment** to produce safe food,
- are provided with services such as **potable water**, effective **sewage** disposal, and sufficient light and ventilation for safe food handling,
- provide facilities for staff to maintain personal hygiene, and
- prevent the entry and **harbourage** of pests.

This guide provides information relating to fixed premises. It does not cover:

- market stalls,
- mobile food vans,
- home food businesses, or
- general food safety information.

Please see the [Food stall guidelines – Food safety requirements for temporary food stalls](#) for information on the setup and operation of market stalls. For information on mobile food vans please refer to the [ACT Mobile Food Business Fit Out Guide](#) . For further information on the requirements for home-based food businesses, please contact the Health Protection Service.

## THE FIT-OUT PROCESS

Applicants are obliged to contact the Health Protection Service at the earliest stages of planning and design to discuss their fit-out requirements. Please call 5124 9700 during business hours.

Fit-outs are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the proposed operation of the food business.

Fit-out assessments are built into the process for registering a food business and the process for making changes to a registered food business. To undertake the fit-out process, applicants must complete the relevant online application form outlined in the table below.

New Food Business	Changes To An Existing Food Business
To undertake a fit-out and register a new food business, complete a <a href="#">Food Business New Registration Application</a> form.	To undertake a fit-out to change an existing registered food business (including food handling or storage areas), complete a <a href="#">Food Business Variation or Transfer Form</a> .

### Documents required for fit-out assessment

The **proprietor** must submit premises plans as part of the online fit-out process. Plans must be of a suitable scale. Your architect, draftsman, builder or shopfitter can assist you to provide the following:

- site plan (including refuse storage area, adjacent land uses and toilet facilities),
- floor plan,
- sectional elevation drawings showing all **fixtures, fittings and equipment**, and designated areas,
- hydraulic plans (plumbing details),
- mechanical exhaust ventilation drawings, including plans and schematic diagrams, and
- reflected ceiling plans.

The proprietor must ensure the following information is included on the above plans:

- finishes of floors, walls, and ceilings,
- layout of all equipment, benches, fittings and fixtures,
- schedule of equipment specifications, including maximum power/gas outputs,
- door and window openings,
- customer and staff toilet information,
- mechanical exhaust ventilation (see [Section 9](#)), and
- process flow (from product received through to end-product delivered).

If you need more information, please contact the Health Protection Service.

### Other relevant approvals

When building or changing your premises, proprietors must consider other approvals that may be needed. By engaging early with other regulators, you reduce the possibility of expensive mistakes and breaches of legislation. Proprietors should contact Access Canberra on 13 22 81 to discuss other relevant approvals.

## 2. HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The guide is based on two concepts:

### 1. Requirements

This section outlines the requirements from Standard 3.2.3 of the Food Standards Code. A number of acceptable solutions are listed for each outcome. A combination of options may be needed depending on the operation of the food business.

Alternatively, you may be able to achieve compliance using a solution or method not listed in this guide. It is the responsibility of the proprietor to demonstrate that any alternative methods or materials comply with Standard 3.2.3. Before implementing alternatives, please seek advice from the Health Protection Service.

### 2. Best practice

Best practice is where the suggested solution exceeds the required outcomes. It is highly recommended that food businesses aim for best practice solutions. Not all best practice options are listed in this guide. For more information, or to discuss alternative methods of compliance, contact the Health Protection Service.

# 3. GENERAL DESIGN AND LAYOUT REQUIREMENTS

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 2, Clause 3, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### **Adequate space**

Food premises must have designated spaces for food handling activities and equipment storage. Storage areas must be constructed from materials that are durable, impervious and able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

Adequate space must be provided for:

- food delivery areas,
- storage of dry goods (e.g. shelving space, pantry area and food grade containers for anticipated stock levels),
- hot and cold food storage and display (e.g. refrigerators, cool rooms, freezers and bain-maries),
- equipment storage (e.g. sufficient floor, cupboard or shelving space for storage of food preparation equipment),
- storage of food packaging materials and utensils,
- storage of cleaning chemicals,
- waste management,
- storage of personal items, and
- office and business equipment storage.

### **Entry of pests and harbourage**

Pests such as rats, mice, flies and cockroaches can carry bacteria and viruses that may contaminate food and food contact surfaces. All food premises must be constructed to prevent the entry of pests. Prevention measures include:

- ensuring internal structures are designed and finished to prevent pest harbourage,
- fitting windows within food preparation areas with pest-proof mesh screens,
- sealing holes and spaces around pipes and cables in walls or ceilings to prevent entry of pests, and
- ensuring spaces between equipment and walls are either sealed to prevent pest harbourage or are accessible for cleaning.

Pest control chemical sprays (automatic and manual) must not be used in food preparation areas or near exposed food, cleaning equipment, unwrapped packaging, or servery areas.

To further prevent pests, where required businesses should install:

- self-closing doors and mesh screens to ensure that doors into the premises remain closed,
- weather strips to prevent pests from entering the premises under doors, and
- air curtains or plastic curtains to minimise pest entry.



## Appropriate for use

Correct design and layout of a premises can streamline work practices, reduce **cleaning** and maintenance, and prevent cross-contamination. To minimise cross-contamination, the layout must enable an appropriate flow where activities are organised so that food is handled in progression without repeatedly crossing back and forth across the layout. Certain equipment, designated areas and facilities must be separated within the business to also avoid cross-contamination. Examples of such things that must be separated from each other include:

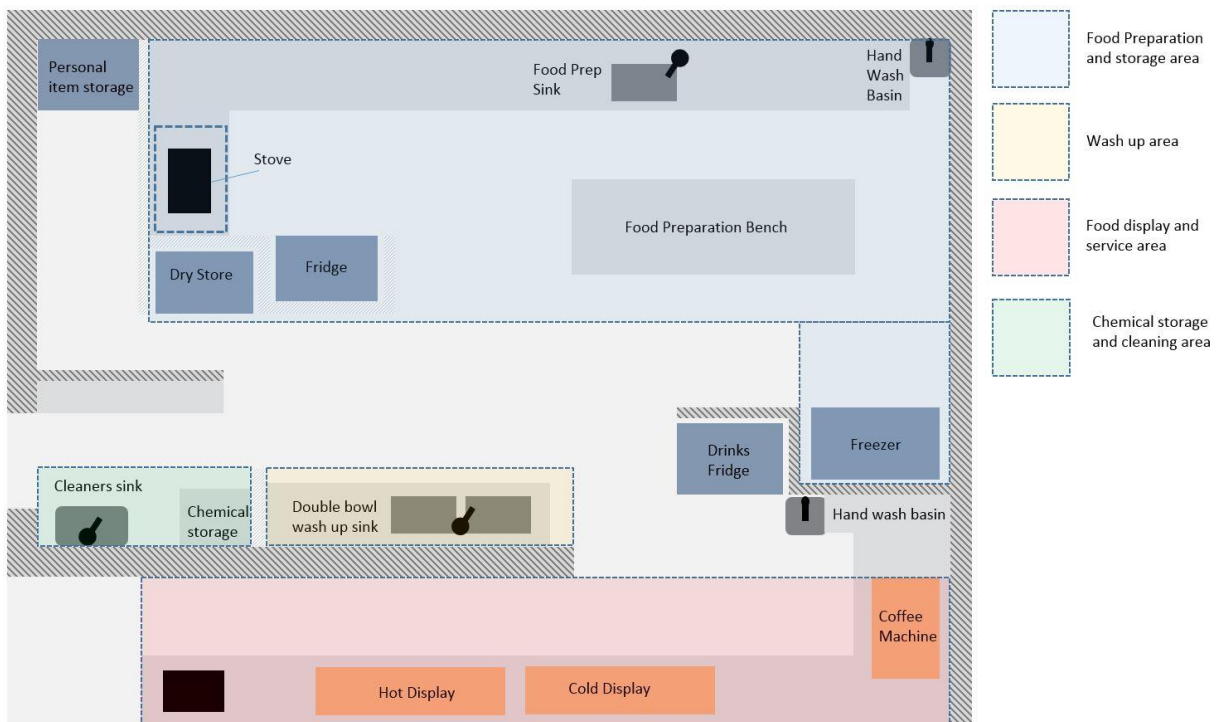
- food preparation surfaces (i.e. for handling raw food),
- cooking equipment,
- **hand washing facilities**,
- wash up facilities,
- food preparation sinks,
- storage facilities,
- **waste disposal areas**, and
- toilet facilities.

To prevent food contamination, premises should be designed so food flows in one direction (e.g. from receipt to storage, preparation, packaging, serving and then to disposal). This means food ingredients enter the premises and are stored separately from cooked produce; and personal items and chemicals are stored separately from ingredients.

Figure 1 (below) shows how a food premises can be designed to ensure that processes are physically separated. It can be observed that the food preparation sink is located close to the food preparation bench so that food can be sanitised, processed and then cooked.

The food preparation sink should be a suitable distance from the wash up sink to ensure that food being sanitised cannot be contaminated by equipment being washed. Chemical storage and the cleaner's sink are to be located away from all other areas to ensure that chemicals are kept away from food preparation and storage areas. The servery area should have a handwashing basin if staff prepare beverages or portion food and serve food.

Figure 1: Example of a Food Premises Layout



## 4. FLOORS

### REQUIRED OUTCOME

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 3, Clause 10, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

#### FLOOR FINISHES FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND STORAGE AREAS

Choosing an appropriate floor finish ensures a business is able to keep the floor clean and reduces the frequency of repairs. If floors are not properly installed and maintained, they can become a breeding ground for bacteria and provide harbourage for pests.

Floors in food preparation areas, storage areas, cool rooms, and freezer rooms (including drainage for floor wastes and grading) may be finished with the following materials:

- sealed quarry or ceramic tiles,
- stainless steel,
- laminated thermosetting plastic sheeting,
- epoxy resin,
- sealed concrete or similar impervious material, or
- floor tiles grouted with epoxy grout and finished flush with the surface of the tiles.

Proprietors should consider which finish will be the most suitable for their premises.

Slip resistance is an important aspect of work health and safety practices but is not a requirement of food safety. When choosing non-slip flooring, you must ensure the flooring can be easily and effectively cleaned. Generally, the higher the non-slip rating, the more difficult the floor may be to clean.

There may be alternative floor finishes available and proprietors are encouraged to discuss floor finish options with the Health Protection Service.

## **Coving**

Coving is a smooth and seamless junction between the floor and wall that facilitates effective cleaning and prevents the accumulation of waste. This is usually achieved by continuing the flooring material up the wall. However, depending on the type of flooring material, it can be achieved in a number of other ways.

All new premises and those undergoing significant refurbishment must have coving installed in food preparation and storage areas at the intersections of floors-to-walls, and floors-to-**plinths**. This includes in cool rooms and freezer rooms.

Depending on the floor finish, coving may be installed in accordance with other methods to achieve the same outcome.

# 5. WALLS AND CEILINGS

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 3, Clause 11, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### Wall finishes for food preparation, storage and servery areas

Selecting an appropriate wall finish will depend on the operation of the food business. Walls should be finished with a high gloss, washable and easy-to-clean surface. Timber or rough stone wall surfaces are not permitted in food preparation areas and should only be used in [dining areas](#).

Walls in food preparation and storage areas are to be finished with an approved material such as:

- glazed tiles,
- stainless steel or aluminium sheeting,
- acrylic or laminated plastic sheeting,
- polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams,
- pre-formed panels, or
- other materials coated or sealed to be impervious.

Wall surfaces that are located behind wet areas such as sinks need to be waterproof in construction and be easy to clean.

Walls at the rear of cooking appliances must be covered with a hardwearing material (such as stainless steel) that extends from the [mechanical ventilation](#) or ceiling, to the floor (for details on mechanical ventilation, see [Section 9](#)).

### Ceilings

All food preparation and storage areas must have an enclosed ceiling to prevent food contamination. Exposed ductwork, pipes and joints increase the risk of contamination from dust and debris and provide sites for pest harbourage. Ceilings must be of a continuous construction, free from joints and appropriately sealed. When designing and constructing the ceiling, consider:

- the food handling activities taking place in the area (e.g. whether the surfaces are subject to splashes or [soiling](#)),
- the likelihood of material (such as paint flakes) contaminating food,
- the need to withstand heat from cooking processes,
- the likelihood of pest infestation and the types of pests, and
- ease of cleaning, maintenance and replacement of worn or damaged areas.

For most premises, a painted plasterboard ceiling is appropriate. Ceilings in food preparation areas must not be constructed from drop-in panels or timber as they are unable to be effectively cleaned and do not withstand heat and moisture.

Light fittings should be installed flush with the ceiling or have a protective cover to prevent the accumulation of dust or harbourage of pests. Lights above food preparation areas must either have a cover that encloses the glass bulb (in case the bulb shatters), or a plastic light fitting. Pendant lights (and other decorative light fittings) above food preparation areas must be able to be effectively cleaned.

# 6. EQUIPMENT FOR CLEANING AND SANITISING

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 4, Clause 12, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### Cleaning and Sanitising

Cleaning is a process that removes visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface, usually using hot water and detergent. During the cleaning process, some microorganisms will be removed from the surface, but the cleaning process is not designed to destroy microorganisms.

**Sanitising** is a process that destroys microorganisms, reducing the numbers present on a surface to a safe level. This is usually achieved using both heat and water, or by specific sanitising chemicals such as a commercial food grade sanitiser or diluted bleach solution.

Cleaning and sanitising should usually be done as two separate processes. A surface needs to be thoroughly cleaned before it is sanitised, as sanitisers generally do not work well in the presence of food residues and detergents.

To effectively clean and sanitise fixtures, fittings and equipment, businesses that handle and prepare food must have either a double bowl sink or a single bowl sink and a dishwasher. Table 1 below shows the different equipment needed when undertaking food preparation, cleaning and sanitising activities.

Table 1- Requirements for preparation, cleaning and sanitising facilities required for food premises

Business Operation	Minimum Facilities
<b>All premises</b>	Designated hand washing facilities that are large enough for food handlers to easily move their hands and arms about under the running water to effectively wash them.
<b>All premises which handle and prepare unpackaged food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Double bowl sink (capable of immersing the largest equipment), <b>or</b></li><li>▪ Dishwasher and single bowl sink (where all food contact equipment will fit in the dishwasher), <b>or</b></li><li>▪ Double bowl sink and a dishwasher (where some equipment must be washed/sanitised in the sink).</li></ul>
<b>Premises where food preparation directly uses a sink (e.g. food prepared by immersion/rinsing in water or draining into a sink)</b>	Designated food preparation sink(s) separate from wash up and hand washing sinks.
<b>Premises where floors are to be wet washed</b>	Cleaner’s sink or floor waste.

### Food preparation sinks

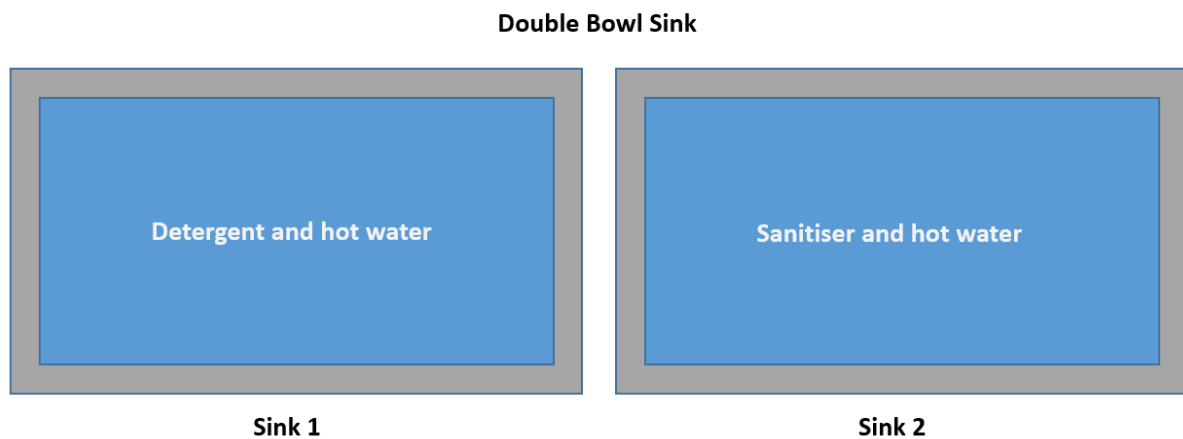
A food preparation sink is required if foods (e.g. salad and vegetables) are immersed in water to be cleaned prior to use or otherwise prepared in a sink. To prevent cross-contamination, food preparation sinks must be separate from all other sinks (e.g. wash up sinks and hand wash basins).

## Double bowl sink

Double bowl sinks must be constructed of stainless steel and have a minimum bowl size that allows the premises largest pieces of equipment to be cleaned and sanitised.

When using a double bowl sink (see Figure 2) to clean and sanitise equipment, one compartment is filled with detergent and hot water, and the other is filled with chemical sanitiser and hot water. The chemical sanitiser must be suitable for use in a food business and not require rinsing.

Figure 2 - Set up of double bowl sink



## Single Bowl Sink and Dishwasher

Where a dishwasher is provided, a food premises only needs a single bowl wash-up sink. The single bowl wash-up sink can be used to remove excess food waste.

## Dishwashers and glass washers

Businesses may choose to sanitise equipment and utensils using a commercial dishwasher or glasswasher. Dishwashers and glasswashers are to be:

- designed so where hot water is used to sanitise, only operate on the sanitising cycle when the water is at sanitising temperature (greater than 80°C) or use a chemical sanitiser,
- fitted with a thermometer clearly visible to the operator indicating temperature for the washing and rinsing operation. Alternatively, they must be fitted with an automatic indicator light visible to the operator which shows that the water in the heating device has reached the correct temperature,
- designed so that all utensils, after rinsing, are dry by the end of the operating cycle,
- regularly serviced to ensure correct operation, and
- provided with an adequate mechanical ventilation system.

## Hot water supply

The following criteria apply to the supply of hot water:

- all equipment used for cleaning and sanitising must be connected to a continuous supply of hot and cold potable water and to an approved drainage system,
- the ideal temperature for washing utensils in the food service industry is between 54°C and 60°C (higher temperatures may bake on food residue), and
- sinks should be supplied with water at a temperature of at least 54°C for washing.

# 7. EQUIPMENT FOR FOOD PREPARATION AND STORAGE

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 4, Clause 12, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### **Benches, tables and preparation counters**

Benches and tables must be constructed so they can be easily cleaned and sanitised. Suitable materials include:

- melamine laminate,
- plastic, or
- stainless steel with sealed joints.

Benches installed along walls must be sealed to the wall with an appropriate material. Benches subjected to heat should be constructed from stainless steel.

Benches used to prepare food in front of customers (such as sandwich counters), must be fitted with a protective barrier between the customer and the food.

To allow cleaning and prevent the accumulation of food waste, equipment located on bench tops should be:

- easily moveable,
- raised above the bench, or
- sealed to the bench top.

### **Cooking equipment**

Stoves and cooking appliances adjacent to walls must be moveable to enable access for cleaning or built into walls and completely **pest proofed**.

Appliances must be either:

- placed apart to allow access to clean in between appliances,
- placed close together with the gap between the appliances sealed to prevent food waste accumulating, or
- placed on wheels to allow the appliance to be moved for cleaning.

### **Equipment supports**

The following can be used to support equipment:

- metal legs – these are to be smooth and sealed to prevent the access of pests. Legs must be at a height that enables easy and effective cleaning (a leg height of approximately 150mm is considered best practice),
- castors wheels – these must be capable of supporting and moving fully-loaded equipment, or
- brackets i.e. sinks, tubs, wash basins, tables, benches, shelving and similar fittings must be fitted on solid steel brackets that are fixed to the wall (e.g. stainless steel or galvanised tubing with sealed ends).

## **Display cabinets**

Sliding doors to display cabinets must be designed to allow easy and effective cleaning. Self-service food bars must be fitted with sneeze guards designed to prevent contamination.

## **Hot and cold displays**

Equipment designed to display hot or cold food must be capable of keeping food under **temperature control**.

## **Cupboards and cabinets**

Where cupboards and cabinets are free standing, all surfaces (including the back) must be smooth, impervious and able to easily and effectively cleaned. Cupboards and cabinets should be constructed so that there are no inaccessible voids or spaces that may facilitate pest harbourage.

## **Shelving**

Shelving must be smooth, impervious and free from joints. There must be adequate space below the lowest shelf to allow effective cleaning.

Suitable materials include:

- galvanised piping,
- stainless steel, or
- laminated plastic.



# 8. HAND WASHING FACILITIES

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 4, Clause 14, premises must have suitable hand washing facilities to reduce the risk of food contamination and foodborne illness.

### Hand wash basins

A designated hand wash basin must be located in all areas where food is handled or prepared. For example, additional hand wash basins are required in servery areas, bars, drink preparation areas and areas where staff portion food.

Hand washing facilities must:

- be located within an adequate distance. It is recommended that hand washing facilities are located within 5 metres of all food handling areas. Multiple hand washing facilities may be needed to meet this requirement,
- be designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face,
- be located immediately adjacent to toilets,
- have warm potable running water delivered through a single outlet spout,
- have liquid soap in a suitable dispenser,
- have single-use towels,
- be of a suitable size to allow cleaning of hands and arms, and
- be easily accessible at all times.

## BEST PRACTICE

Hand washing facilities should:

- be located at staff entrances to the food premises,
- have a metered tap to provide a flow of water for at least 15 seconds without the need to reactivate the tap, and
- be provided with hands free devices (such as a knee operated lever, single lever taps or sensor taps).

# 9. VENTILATION

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 2, Clause 7, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### **Mechanical ventilation**

Food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the food premises. The adequacy and effectiveness of a ventilation system can be affected by various factors including the nature and volume of food prepared on the premises, design and capacity of the ventilation system, location of the ventilation system and cleanliness.

As retrofitting mechanical ventilation systems can be costly and inconvenient, food businesses should carefully consider whether any ventilation system is adequate for all proposed, and future, food processing the business is likely to undertake.

Natural ventilation will generally only be suitable in premises where there is little or no cooking that generates steam or greasy air.

**Australian Standard 1668.2-2012** (The use of ventilation and air conditioning in buildings –

Mechanical ventilation in buildings) provides the requirements for mechanical air-handling systems that ventilate buildings and for ventilation based on the need to control odours, particles and gases.

The standard specifies that a mechanical exhaust must be installed where:

- a deep fryer is used,
- any single apparatus has:
  - a total maximum electrical power input exceeding 8 kilowatts (kW), or
  - a total gas power input exceeding 29 megajoules per hour (MJ/h),
- the combined output of appliances in a room exceeds 0.5kW/m<sup>2</sup> for electrical, or 1.8MJ/m<sup>2</sup> for gas, of floor area of the enclosed room
- a dishwasher is installed, or
- equipment is used that vents steam that may result in condensation on walls or the ceiling.

Existing food premises may be required to install or upgrade a mechanical exhaust system where new or different equipment has been placed under the exhaust system, or where there are signs the existing system is inadequate, such as, strong odours, grease on walls, smoke stains on ceiling and flaking paint above cooking and washing areas.

Where suitable existing mechanical ventilation kitchen exhaust systems exist, these must be professionally cleaned and serviced including the internal duct works. A copy of compliance certificate of service or invoice must be provided as evidence.

**ADVISORY  
NOTE**

Countertop filtration units do not provide fresh make up air or air extraction and have limited ability to remove odours, heat and grease generated in the operation of a commercial food business. Countertop filtration units are not considered to provide adequate mechanical ventilation as required by AS 1668.2.

## **Certification**

Before the food business registration is approved, the proprietor must supply a Compliance Certificate from a Registered Professional Engineer for any mechanical ventilation in the premises. The certificate must certify that the design, installation and **operation** of the system is in accordance with Australian Standard 1668.2-2012.

## **Wood and solid fuel fired equipment**

Exhaust ventilation for wood fired or solid fuel cooking equipment (pizza ovens, smokers, coal and wood fired grills) must be separate from other ventilation systems. They must not be combined with ventilation systems installed for grease or oil applications.

Retail food businesses should also ensure they comply with their environment duty under the Environment Protection Act 1997. Further information can be found in the [Odour Management in Retail Food Businesses](#) guideline produced by the Environment Protection Authority.

# 10. TOILET FACILITIES

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 5, Clause 16, premises must have adequate toilets available for the use of staff working for the food business.

A food business must ensure that toilet facilities:

- have warm running water, liquid soap and single use towel, and
- are clean and in good repair and must be available to staff at all times.

Toilet facilities located within food premises must be separated from areas where food is handled or stored by an air lock equipped with self-closing doors.

Toilets must not be able to be entered directly off a food preparation, storage or handling area.

Hand wash basins within toilet areas are not permitted as substitutes for hand wash basins in food preparation areas.

## BEST PRACTICE

Separate toilet facilities should be provided for staff and for customers.

# 11. WATER SUPPLY

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 2, Clause 4, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

A food business must ensure:

- a continuous supply of hot and cold water of a sufficient pressure, including during periods of high demand and usage,
- they use **potable water** to carry out all food preparation, utensil washing, hand washing, cleaning and other water using operations,
- warm potable water (e.g. hot and cold water provided through a single outlet) is available at all hand washing facilities, and
- hot water is at a sufficient temperature to effectively clean and sanitise equipment (refer to [Section 6](#)).

For more information on water quality, refer to the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines*. A copy of the guidelines can be found at [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au).

### **Premises not connected to a town water supply**

Food premises not connected to a town water supply must seek approval from the Health Protection Service prior to planning and designing a food business.

# 12. SEWAGE AND WASTE WATER DISPOSAL

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 2, Clause 5, premises must meet requirements to ensure the disposal of **sewage** and waste water does not contaminate food or the water supply.

Food premises must ensure that:

- plumbing and drainage complies with Australian Standard 3500.2:2018 (Plumbing and drainage – Sanitary plumbing and drainage),
- **grease traps** are designed to filter liquid waste from the food business (grease traps need ‘trade waste’ approval; contact Icon Water on 6248 3111 for more information),
- waste water generated from cleaning activities is disposed of in a cleaner’s sink or floor waste trap,
- the drainage system and grease traps are not located where there is a risk of food contamination, and
- equipment generating liquid waste (e.g. cool room evaporative units, coffee machines, hot and cold displays) is connected to a sewerage system.

### Icon Water Liquid Trade Waste Approval

All food businesses discharging liquid waste (known as trade waste) into the sewerage network must obtain an Approval Certificate from Icon Water. Please visit [www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste](http://www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste) for further details on how to apply. Please note that Icon Water may take up to 10 days to assess applications once they are received in full.

The Health Protection Service may request evidence of a business’s approval to deal with liquid trade waste as part of their Food Business Registration.

#### ADVISORY NOTE

Any food business that wishes to discharge non-domestic wastewater should seek further information from Icon Water about any required approvals..

Penalties may apply for businesses that knowingly contaminate water sources or interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the sewerage network. It is strongly recommended that food businesses dealing with the discharge of liquid trade waste contact Icon Water for more information or visit [www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste](http://www.iconwater.com.au/tradewaste)

# 13. STORAGE OF RUBBISH AND RECYCLING

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 2, Clause 6, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### **Rubbish and recycling containers**

Rubbish and recycling storage containers must:

- be constructed from an impervious material such as metal or plastic,
- be of appropriate size for the volume of rubbish produced by business,
- have tight fitting lids, and
- have drainage bungs if bins cannot be lifted for cleaning.

### **External waste disposal areas and recycling storage areas**

External **waste disposal areas** and recycling storage areas must be:

- constructed from an impervious material,
- graded and drained into the sewer,
- able to be easily cleaned, and
- capable of storing the rubbish generated by the business (e.g. wet waste, cardboard, general dry wastes, and bulk waste oil) without creating potential harbourage for vermin.

## BEST PRACTICE

External rubbish and recycling storage areas should have bunding and drainage, be covered and have access to a hose to allow regular cleaning.

# 14. STORAGE FACILITIES

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.3 – Division 5, Clause 15, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### **Adequate storage facilities**

Food premises must have adequate storage facilities for items that could be a source of contamination, including chemicals, clothing and personal belongings. Storage facilities must prevent stored items from contaminating food.

### **Dry goods and food packaging materials**

Storage must be provided for dry goods and food contact packaging materials. All food and food contact items must be stored in a room with impervious flooring. To facilitate effective cleaning and prevent contamination, adequate storage must be provided so items are stored off the floor.

### **Cleaning chemicals and equipment**

To prevent food contamination, cleaning equipment and pest control chemicals must be stored away from food preparation and storage areas.

### **Clothing and other personal belongings**

Facilities must be provided for staff to store clothing and other personal belongings (e.g. in a change room or designated cupboard). These facilities should be located away from the food preparation and storage areas.

### **Office materials**

Paper work and other materials associated with the administration of the business must be stored in a designated room, cupboard or drawers, separate from food preparation and storage areas.



# 15. TEMPERATURE MEASUREMENT

## REQUIREMENTS

To meet Standard 3.2.2 – Division 6, Clause 22, premises must meet the requirements detailed below.

### Thermometer

A food business that handles **potentially hazardous food** must have a digital probe thermometer that is accurate to  $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and is able to measure the internal temperature of the food (see Figure 3). Thermometers with a temperature range of  $-50^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $150^{\circ}\text{C}$  are usually sufficient for measuring the temperature of food.

Thermometers can also be used to verify that potentially hazardous foods are being stored or displayed under temperature control.

Thermometers must be able to be easily cleaned and sanitised. A thermometer can be cleaned by washing the probe in warm water and detergent and then sanitising the probe with alcohol wipes, a food grade sanitiser or hot water (e.g.  $77^{\circ}\text{C}$  or hotter for at least 30 seconds)..

In addition to having a probe thermometer, a food business may also have:

- an infrared thermometer to measure the surface temperature of the food without touching the food, or
- externally mounted, highly visible temperature gauges that are monitored and calibrated on refrigeration and heating equipment.

Figure 3 - Example of an approved temperature measuring device accurate to  $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$



# 16. BEVERAGE AREAS

## What is a beverage area?

A beverage area is a distinct part of the food business where only drink and very minor food handling occurs (e.g. serving of premade cakes and pastries). Beverage areas are separate from the main food production areas.

General operations of beverage areas may include:

- preparation and service of alcoholic drinks, post mix drinks, tea and coffee,
- the cutting and portioning of premade food items, and
- the cutting of fruit for use in drinks.

As this type of operation presents a lower risk than the production of table meals, beverage areas are not required to meet the same design requirements as other food handling areas.

Areas where food is produced or cooked are not considered to be beverage areas. If you are unsure about whether an area is a beverage area under this guide, please contact the Health Protection Service on 5124 9700.

## Alternative materials and finishes

If finishes and materials proposed for beverage areas deviate from other sections of this guide, they must be suitable for their purpose.

To demonstrate that alternative finishes or materials are suitable for purpose, proprietors can submit supporting information, including material Safety Data Sheets or any other such evidence, to the Health Protection Service for consideration.

With respect to decorative features, a cleaning schedule may be required to demonstrate that the feature can be easily and effectively cleaned. Decorative features or fittings that cannot be effectively cleaned will not be permitted.

Any alternative finishes and materials must be approved for use by the Health Protection Service. Any construction commenced using alternative materials prior to receiving approval for use is done at the risk of the applicant.

## BEVERAGE AREA REQUIREMENTS

### Walls

Walls constructed using alternative finishes are permitted in beverage areas as long as they are sealed to prevent the entry of **contaminants**, are hardwearing and easily cleanable.

Where drink preparation equipment that may soil wall surfaces is present (e.g. coffee machines, milkshake makers or blenders), the surfaces must be impervious and waterproof in construction. For example, if there is a stone, brick or timber feature wall, an impervious waterproof splashback must be provided around drink preparation equipment.

Stone, brick or timber should not be used where they will be exposed to high levels of moisture, such as next to a dishwasher, glass washer or around wash up or hand wash basins.

For clarity, where stone, brick, timber and similar materials are used, they must be:

- sealed with a durable and impervious finish,
- free from rough surfaces, cracks or crevices,
- smooth and easily cleanable, and

- located appropriately.

## **Floors**

Floors within beverage areas must meet the requirements of the floor section of this guide and be provided with coving (refer to [Section 4](#)).

## **Ceilings**

Ceilings over beverage areas must be able to be effectively cleaned and protect the area from contamination. Alternative ceiling materials (e.g. pressed metal or sealed timber) may be used if the material can be easily and effectively cleaned.

## **Hand washing facilities**

Hand washing facilities (as detailed in [Section 8](#)) are required within 5 metres of beverage areas where food is handled, portioned, or where opened drinks are served. An impervious waterproof splashback must be provided around the hand wash basin.

## **Preparation surfaces**

A timber finish may be used as a preparation surface in beverage areas where drink preparation and portioning of food occurs, provided no heating of food occurs. The timber finish must be a hardwood close-grained timber with a waterproof finish.

Walls adjoining all surfaces where food is portioned or where drinks are mixed must have an impervious splashback. Stone, brick or timber are not suitable finishes for a splashback.

## **Outdoor Bars**

If you wish to install an outdoor bar, please refer to *A Guide for Outdoor Bars* available at [www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au](http://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au).

# 17. APPENDIX ONE – GLOSSARY

## **Cleaning**

A process that removes visible contamination, such as food waste, dirt and grease from a surface, usually using hot water and detergent. Some microorganisms will be removed from the surface; however, the cleaning process is not designed to destroy micro-organisms.

## **Contaminants**

‘Contaminant’ means any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substance that may compromise food safety.

## **Dining areas**

An area designated for consuming food. No food preparation is completed in this area.

## **Easily moveable**

Equipment that can be moved by one person (either on wheels or castors) to enable cleaning as required. This allows food debris to be swept from underneath and the floor mopped. If the equipment cannot be easily moved, a clearance space must be provided so the area surrounding and beneath the equipment can be cleaned without moving the appliance.

## **Equipment**

Means all equipment used in handling food or storing food, as well as equipment used to clean food premises or equipment (e.g. refrigerators, cool rooms, bain-marie units, ovens, food processors, dishwashers, brooms, mops, buckets, etc).

## **Facilities**

Includes a machine, instrument, apparatus, utensil or appliance, other than a single-use item, used (or intended to be used) in or in connection with food handling. Includes any equipment used (or intended to be used) to clean food premises or equipment.

## **Fixtures, fitting and equipment**

Includes all items such as benches, shelves, sinks, handwashing basins, cupboards, light fittings, ventilation ducts, pipes, electrical wiring, as well as cooking and processing equipment (as defined above in ‘equipment’).

## **Food business**

A business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves handling food intended for sale or the sale of food. The entity is considered a food business, regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only.

## **Food premises**

Any location that is used for the preparation or handling of food for sale. Food premises may be land, vehicles, stalls or other temporary structures.

## **Grease trap**

A plumbing device designed to intercept most grease and solids before they enter a wastewater disposal system.

## **Hand washing facilities**

A facility that provides an adequate supply of warm, running, potable water, soap and single-use disposable towels to facilitate handwashing.

## **Harbourage**

A location where pests seek shelter, food and warmth to enable them to live and reproduce.

## **Impervious**

Impervious means a surface that cannot be penetrated or affected by the surrounding environment. This may refer to being waterproof or heatproof.

## **Mechanical ventilation**

A system that uses equipment (such as fans) to dilute pollutants in the air from an area by introducing fresh air.

## **Pest proofed**

A building is considered pest proofed when there are no pest access points into the building, no harbourage, and suitable pest management plans are in place to prevent pests.

## **Plinths**

Plinths are supporting structures used underneath heavy equipment that is unable or difficult to move for cleaning. They help prevent the build-up of waste underneath the equipment.

## **Potable water**

Potable water is safe drinking water that is fit for human consumption.

## **Potentially hazardous food**

This means food that must be kept at certain temperatures (i.e. within temperature control) to minimise the growth of any pathogenic micro-organisms that may be present in the food and/or to prevent the formation of toxins. Examples may include meat, seafood, dairy products, cut fruit and vegetables, and cooked rice.

## **Proprietor**

The owner of a business, or holder of property.

## **Sanitising**

A process that significantly reduces the number of micro-organisms present on a surface. This is usually achieved through the combined use of hot water and chemical sanitisers.

## **Sewage**

Waste from toilets, urinals, basins, showers, sinks and dishwashers.

## **Soiling**

Soiling refers to the process of a surface or equipment becoming unclean or dirty.

## **Temperature control**

The use of temperature to minimise the growth of bacteria and protect the safety of food. Generally, this means keeping potentially hazardous food at 5°C or below, or at 60°C or above.

## **Waste disposal areas**

An area designated to store solid, liquid and gaseous waste prior to collection or removal. This may include food waste, recycling and broken equipment.



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August 2019