

# How to Run a Healthy Business

## Food Handlers Food Safety Training

Everyone who handles food in your business needs to know how to handle it safely!

Food businesses must make sure that all food handlers, and people who supervise food handlers, have the right skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene for the work they do. It is a legal requirement and part of your Food Safety Program.

**A food handler** is any one in your business who has anything to do with food or a surface that is likely to come in contact with food ie. tables, fridges or chopping boards. It covers staff who manufacture, process, prepare, (such as chopping, cooking, thawing), serve, deliver, transport or package food in your business. Even staff who clean your premises and equipment. Anyone who is likely to have contact with food or a food surface can affect the safety of the food.

*A person who supervises food handling may not always be the Food Safety Supervisor for your business. (Read 'Food Safety Supervisor' fact sheet.)* Staff who supervise may not handle food themselves. However, they must know how to handle food safely for all of the activities that they are supervising.

What does 'Skills' and 'Knowledge' mean in Food Safety?

A **skill** is being able **to do** something. It means that food handlers and their supervisors are able **to do** the things in their work that keep food safe.

**Knowledge** is **knowing** about or understanding something. It means that food handlers and their supervisors **know** what must be done to keep food safe.

**Food Safety** is making sure that food is safe to eat. **Food Hygiene** is about keeping your food premises and equipment clean.

What skills and knowledge do food handlers and their supervisors need?

Food handlers must have the right skills and knowledge to handle food safely for the work they do. They do not need the skills and knowledge for all jobs in the business. For example; a cook's skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene will be quite different from those needed by a waitress or a cleaner.

However, if staff do take on other work from time to time, they must have the right skills and knowledge needed for that work as well. For example a waitress may prepare food dishes when other food handlers are away, or supervise other food handlers. Whatever work in the business your staff do, they must have the right skills and knowledge for that job.

Why is a 'Skills and Knowledge' requirement needed?

The 'skills and knowledge requirement' is an important step forward. It sets the standard requirement for all food handlers to meet. Most importantly it will help to reduce the risk of food poisoning by making sure that all food sold is as safe as possible.

How will the skills and knowledge requirement help my business?

Making sure that food handlers have the right food safety skills and knowledge is not only about meeting your legal requirements, it makes good business sense. Your customers today are more informed and aware. They expect safe food. If they see unsafe food handling they may not complain but often will not come back. Show your customers that you take food safety seriously.

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## Food Safety-make it part of your routine

All good businesses make sure that their staff know how to do the job that they are hired to do. If a staff member is to sell food and handle money they will need to **know how to** work the cash register. It is the same for handling food. Food handlers need to **know how to** handle food safely and must do it.

All staff will need to know what section(s) of the Food Safety Program are important to their job. Make it part of your routine to see that your staff know what to do and how to do it.

## Will formal training be required?

All food handlers in your business need to know how to handle food safely, but this does not always mean attending formal food safety training courses. There are other means of training such as:

- On-the-job training/on-site supervision
- In house training and
- Read the 'Standard Operating Procedures' from your Food Safety Program.

However, your business may decide that formal training might be the best way for your staff to learn the required skills and knowledge. Formal training will deliver up to date information and provide a certificate, which is recognised anywhere in Australia.

In the case of more complex food businesses formal training is usually undertaken.

The decision is up to the business. Look at who among your staff already have the right skills and knowledge for the jobs and who will require further training?

Your Food Safety Supervisor can help you to decide which staff need to be trained for the job they do.

## How do I meet the 'Skills' and 'Knowledge' Legal Requirement?

Council will visit your food premises on a regular basis to make sure that you are doing things the same way you say you will in your Food Safety Program.

To meet with the legal requirement you must make sure that all your food handlers know what to do, how to do it and demonstrate safe food handling. (Read 'Compliance Checks or Auditing' fact sheet.)

## Your Training Plan

It is recommended to keep a training plan to know the training needs for each staff member.

It is a good way to keep track of what training was done and when. Some Food Safety Program Templates will include training records.

## Where is the information on food safety and hygiene courses?

Food safety and hygiene training courses are available from a number of providers. The costs will vary so shop around.

Providers of training include Registered Training Organisation (RTO's), TAFE colleges, industry associations and private tutors. For information on training providers visit the National Training Information Service (NTIS) website [www.ntis.gov.au](http://www.ntis.gov.au).

You can also find training providers in the Yellow Pages under Food Safety Auditors or Training & Development.

For any further information on training requirements or questions in relation to food safety please contact your Environmental Health Officer (EHO) on telephone 9658 8831/8815.