

## Purchasing or altering your food premises

Potential operators of a new or existing food business must ensure that they have an understanding of the relevant health, planning and environmental issues associated with the business.

### What is a pre-purchase inspection of a food premises?

This inspection assesses the structural compliance of the business with current Australian Standards for food premises. Any alterations or modifications to an existing business require the prior approval of Council.

If you would like to arrange for Council to conduct a pre-purchase inspection of a food premises, please contact Council's Customer Service Centre on (02) 6767 5555 and ask to speak with the Environmental Health Officers. The fee for a pre-purchase inspection can be found within Council's [fees and charges](#).

### What do I do when I want to open a new food business, or make alterations to an existing business?

If you are planning to establish a new food business, alter or relocate an existing business then you will need to make a formal application to Council. A Development Application or Development Application/Construction Certificate may be required for applications that involve the change of use of premises, structural building work or new developments.

### Is there any information that can help me with the design of my food business?

Reference guides include:

- [Food Act 2003](#)
- [Food Regulation 2004](#)
- Australian Standard 4674-2004 Construction and Fit-out of Food Premises
- Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 of the Food Standards Code
- Building Code of Australia
- [Australian Standard 4674-2004](#) for the construction and fit out of food premises

### What information do I need to supply to Council if I am opening a new food business or planning alterations to a food premises?

To avoid unnecessary delays with your application, the plans of the proposed works submitted with the Construction Certificate should be detailed and include the following information to allow assessment of the adequacy of the food handling areas:

- a floor plan
- elevations of all internal walls
- a typical section
- details of the internal walls (including partition walls) construction and finishes
- details of the floor finishing, including a coving plan
- details of the ceiling construction and finishes
- details of the type and location of hand wash basins
- details of the size and location of the sinks
- details of the light fittings
- details of the cool room and freezers (where proposed) including the location of the motors, design, construction and the specifications (you may be asked for the SPL (Sound Pressure Level) in dB(A)
- details of the bar, counter, benches, shelving and other fittings

- details of the location of the hot water system
- details of the cooking appliances
- details of the proposed mechanical ventilation system, which must be demonstrated on the elevation plans (calculations to demonstrate compliance with Australian Standard 1668.2 must also be included)
- details of the storage area for ingredients and bulk goods
- details of the storage area for cooking equipment and utensils
- details and location of the proposed storage area for packaging
- details and location of the proposed storage area for the personal belongings of staff
- details of the location and dimensions of the grease trap (contact Council's Trade Waste Officer on (02) 6767 5555, as you may need to obtain a trade waste permit)

### **What do I do when the alterations of my food premises have been completed?**

You must contact Council's Environmental Health Officers no less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to opening to enable them to inspect the premises.

Prior to its opening, you must also provide notification of your food business to the NSW Food Authority.

### **Food premises inspections and notification**

Council operates an inspection program, which means that inspections are carried out without an appointment being made or prior warning. All premises will be inspected annually.

An annual administration fee is charged at the start of the financial year. This fee includes the cost of one inspection. (Charities and not-for-profit organisations will not be charged the administration fee component but will incur the inspection fee). Reinspections will incur additional fees.

### **Who is the appropriate enforcement agency for food premises?**

In NSW, the appropriate enforcement agency is the [NSW Food Authority](#).

All businesses selling food are required under the Food Standards Code to notify the appropriate enforcement agency of certain information associated with the operation of the business. This requirement also applies to the following types of business:

- home industries
- chemists

### **Changes to Notification**

Retail food businesses are no longer required to notify details to the Food Authority.

All food businesses must notify their local council before they begin to trade. Notification includes advising your council of your business name, contact details, location(s), owner details and information indicating the nature of your food business.

### **Where can I get more information?**

For more information please contact:

- Council's Environmental Health Officers on (02) 6767 5555
- NSW Food Authority on 1300 650 124 or email - [contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](mailto:contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

## Requirements of the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) food standards code skills and knowledge

[ANZFA Food Standards Code](#) requires a food business to ensure that persons undertaking or supervising food handling operations have skill and knowledge in food safety and hygiene matters, commensurate with their work activities. This means:

- your staff and their supervisors must be able to do their work in ways that ensure that your business produces safe food = skill
- your staff and their supervisors must know about issues associated with food safety and safe food handling practices that are relevant to your business and the jobs they do for you = knowledge

### Staff illness

The ANZFA Food Standards Code requires an operator to inform staff of specific health and hygiene obligations.

Part of these requirements includes the exclusion of staff when he/she is suffering from any one of the following:

- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Jaundice
- Hepatitis A
- Norwalk virus
- Typhoid fever
- Shigellosis
- Staphylococcal and Streptococcal diseases except *Staphylococcus aureus*
- *Campylobacter*
- Amoebiasis
- Giardiasis
- Salmonellosis
- Rotaviral enteritis
- Taeniasis
- Cholera
- Yersinosis

It is the responsibility of the operator of the food business to ensure that a staff member is excluded from handling unpackaged or ready to eat food if they are suffering from any of the above listed illnesses.

In addition to the above conditions, staff members suffering from a heavy cold or flu, which involves constant use of tissues or handkerchief, should also be excluded. It may be possible that staff with these symptoms can be temporarily reallocated to non-food handling positions.

It is suggested that the food business develop a written policy for staff illnesses.

### Food regulation partnership

Amendments to the [Food Act 2003 \(NSW\)](#) and [Food Regulation 2004](#) enabled the formation of the Food Regulation Partnership between the NSW Food Authority and all NSW Councils from 1 January 2008.

As a part of the partnership, Tamworth Regional Council is a member of the Northern Region Regional Food Group. This group consists of Environmental Health Officers from all the Councils in the region. A representative of the Regional Group attends the State Liaison Group meetings held every 3 months in Sydney at the Authority's main office to discuss food safety at a local and regional level.

In addition, training is provided by the Authority and a training officer from the authority is present at all Regional Group meetings.

The aim of the partnership is to:

- clarify the responsibilities of local government in relation to food regulation
- improve food safety coordination between Councils and the Authority in several areas, including food inspections
- enable quicker responses to food emergencies and food recalls
- enable all councils to recover the costs of food regulation enforcement
- establish a food regulation forum for consultation

### **Further information**

The following websites are a good source of information about food premises and food handling.

- [Anaphylaxis Australia](#)
- [Food Standards Australia New Zealand Website](#)
- [NSW Food Authority](#)
- [NSW Health](#)
- [The Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCIA\)](#)
- [Standards Australia](#)