

Re-opening your food business during COVID-19

Food safety checklist



The Victorian Government has implemented a staged lifting of COVID-19 restrictions on food businesses, based on advice from the Chief Health Officer. Under the proposed plan, restaurants and cafes will now be able to resume dine-in service from Monday 1 June 2020 with up to 20 patrons per enclosed space.

This checklist considers key food handling practices when re-opening or re-starting operations. It is not a comprehensive list, however it does provide general guidance to ensure your food business minimises the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and food safety obligations are achieved.

1. Workplace physical distancing policies

- Ensure physical distancing within your business, which means at least 1.5m between each person and no more than one person per 4 square meters.
- Provide education on physical distancing to staff and any procedural changes that have been implemented by management.
- Provide a register to record contact details of every customer for the purpose of contact tracing.
- Consider physical distancing markings, barriers and displaying clear visible signage.
- Manage waiting areas, entry/exit points and allow a one way flow of customers. Monitor the maximum no. of persons allowed per enclosed space and the need for timing constraints with bookings?
- Please refer to the Safe Work Australia Physical Distancing Guide- <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/COVID-19-Physical-Distancing-Checklist.pdf>
- Recommend implementing a COVID Safety Plan and adopting its safety precautions.

2. Food hygiene measures

- Have you reminded employees that effective hand hygiene includes washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds? They are to be washed regularly, especially after touching a contaminated surface, going to the bathroom, blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Resource material from the Victorian DHHS 'Personal Hygiene for Food Handlers' can be found at www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-how-to-keep-it-safe/personal-hygiene-for-food-handlers
- Provide hand sanitiser (minimum 60 per cent alcohol) at staff workstations and within shared areas to supplement hand washing.
- Do you have adequate provisions of hand soap, paper towels, cleaning agents and sanitiser products?
- Reinforce safe food handling practices.
- Does the business have a notified Food Safety Supervisor who is readily available?
- Ensure any new or replacement staff are trained before they commence work.
- Reinforce safe food handling practices and refer to the Victorian DHHS resource- <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-safety-training-skills-knowledge>

3. Monitoring and identification of unwell staff

- Do you have protocols/a reporting system in place if staff are unwell?
- Have you provided education or information to employees about COVID-19 transmission and symptoms?
- Additional safety precautions may be required, including staff health screening, temperature checks and medical clearance.
- Maintain accurate records of your work rosters to identify those who have been in close contact with others during their shift.
- Encourage your staff to download the COVIDsafe App to assist with contact tracing.
- If you are aware that someone with Coronavirus has been in your workplace, contact the 24 hour hotline 1800 675 398.
- For specific information to operate Covidsafe and how to manage and report staff illness visit www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/covid-19-information-workplaces
- Manage the health of your staff and complete the **Infection Control Training COVID-19** available on the Australian Government Health website- <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covid-19-infection-control-training>

4. Reactivating services

- Reactivate your services if they have been temporarily ceased for power, water and gas.
- Has your rubbish been adequately managed? Contact your waste collection provider if services have ceased.
- Are there signs of pest activity, such as insects, droppings, damaged packaging or nesting material? If yes, do you have effective control measures in place i.e. treatments from a licensed pest technician?

5. Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment

- Ensure the water supply to your sinks is of adequate volume, pressure and temperature to clean and sanitise equipment.
- Ensure the dishwasher operating cycle is able to effectively clean and sanitise equipment (77 degrees C +).
- Ensure all hand wash basins are supplied with warm water, soap and paper towels.
- Are the exhaust ventilation and air conditioning systems clean and working appropriately?
- Check also for leaks or possible water damage inside the premises.
- Organise the grease trap to be emptied if required.
- Ensure toilets and staff facilities are operational, clean and sanitised frequently.
- Check the fire blanket and extinguisher are within their service dates.

6. Food safety management

- Has all food been examined for spoilage, damage, expiration, or evidence of tampering? If needed, was it appropriately discarded?
- Is food properly labelled and organised, such that the receiving date and rotation is evident?
- If there has been a power outage, interruption or if food has been stored incorrectly, it will need to be discarded.
- Are all fridges, freezers and hot holding units capable of reaching the correct temperatures (i.e. $\leq 5^{\circ}\text{C}$, $\leq -15^{\circ}\text{C}$ and $\geq 60^{\circ}\text{C}$, respectively)?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact your regular suppliers to check they are still operating. If you are using a new supplier, have they taken the necessary steps to ensure safe food? - Do new ingredients contain any unexpected allergens? - Limit the self-service of condiments, cutlery and any unnecessary shared surfaces such as menu cards. - See multilingual food safety fact sheets- https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/factsheets/food-safety-rules-translated-posters 	
7. Cleaning procedures	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider increasing the frequency of cleaning/sanitising commonly touched surfaces? (door handles, tables, chairs, display cases, service counters, eftpos keypads etc.). Recommend documenting this process in your cleaning schedule. - Thoroughly deep clean and sanitise the entire premises, including all food contact surfaces i.e. cutting boards, storage containers, crockery and utensils. - Don't forget to flush plumbed-in equipment (e.g. machines used for coffee and ice, slush-ice makers, post mix guns, self-serve soft drinks and water coolers). - Chlorine-based bleach products are commonly used as a disinfectant. A concentration of 1000ppm has shown to be effective against the majority of microbial pathogens. - Please refer to the DHHS 'cleaning procedures' at www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/cleaning-and-disinfecting-reduce-covid-19-transmission 	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Food Safety Program and records	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure your Food Safety Program and records are present at your business. - Ensure that your Food Safety Program is adequate to include all business activities. - Ensure a thermometer is accessible, operational and sanitised. - For Food Safety Program information, visit- www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-safety-program - For more information on home delivery services, go to www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-how-to-keep-it-safe/food-business-home-delivery-guide 	<input type="checkbox"/>