

Food safety supervisor

Everyone who works in a food business – including the proprietor – is responsible for the delivery of safe food to the customer.

All premises (businesses and community groups) that sell food are legally required to ensure that it is safe for people to eat, regardless of the premises' food safety supervisor requirements.

Failing to comply with the *Food Act 1984* (Food Act) requirements may lead to:

- refusal of the registration, renewal of the registration or transfer of the registration of the food premises
- revocation or suspension of registration of the food premises.

The following sections are a step-by-step guide to whether your business needs a food safety supervisor and, if so, how the food safety supervisor can meet your business's requirements.

Your local council determines the class of your food business, which dictates whether you need a food safety supervisor.

Step 1: Which food premises need a food safety supervisor?

All Class 1 and most Class 2 premises must have a food safety supervisor. This is a requirement under s. 19C of the Food Act.

Council determine which class the food premises fits into, based on the food safety risks of its highest risk food-handling activity. Therefore, different businesses with the same owner or different premises belonging to the same franchise chain may be classed differently. One business, franchise or chain may need a food safety supervisor, and another may not.

Food businesses that operate from more than one site can have one person as the food safety supervisor across a number of premises. The local council must be satisfied with the arrangement you propose. If the premises are in different municipalities, each local council must be satisfied with the arrangements.

Food safety supervisor exemptions

Class 3 and Class 4 food businesses only handle lower-risk foods. Therefore, they are not required to have a food safety supervisor. However, the food business owner must ensure that staff members have the skills and knowledge they need to safely handle food in their work roles. See 'Food handler training' for more information.

A food safety supervisor is also not required where a food premises uses a Quality Assurance food safety program that includes competency-based or accredited training for staff of the premises.

A community group running food events of 1–2 days duration, where those handling the food are mostly volunteers, do not need a food safety supervisor. This is true even if the event is classified as Class 2. If you are a community group and you are planning to run food-related activities for more than 2 days, speak to your local council about your food safety supervisor requirements.

Step 2: Appointing a food safety supervisor

It is important to choose your food safety supervisor carefully. Your food safety supervisor can be the owner, an employee or a person external to the business, providing they are able meet the requirements of a food safety supervisor.

It is important to choose a food safety supervisor 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.

You should ensure that your food safety supervisor has everything they need to perform the role at your business. This could mean that:

- it is mentioned in their job description
- they know what their role is and what their responsibilities are
- they have relevant and appropriate training
- they are allocated time in their day to undertake food safety supervisor tasks
- they are able to supervise other staff and ensure that staff are aware who the food safety supervisor is
- they know what to do if there are any food safety issues in your business.

Food safety supervisor requirements

The food safety supervisor must:

- have the ability and authority to be able to supervise other people handling food in the business and ensure that it is done safely
- know how to identify, prevent and alleviate food-handling hazards
- take reasonable steps to ensure that the food business is free from food-related hazards

- have completed accredited food safety training for the food sector that they are currently working in.

Note that the owner of the food business may be the food safety supervisor.

The food safety supervisor doesn't have to be on the premises at all times. However, they must be able to know how food is being handled when they are 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 food safety supervisor.

Step 3: Which food sector is your business in?

The food sector your business falls into will guide which training courses or course units your food safety supervisor needs to complete. This is because training requirements need to match your business type to ensure that the training is relevant.

Refer to 'Minimum competency standards' in the 'Statement of Attainment' section to determine which food sector your business is in. Contact local council to confirm the food sector so you know which training your food safety supervisor needs to complete.

Step 4: Training to get a Statement of Attainment

Every food safety supervisor must complete the relevant training for their food sector. If they have successfully completed this training, the RTO will provide them with a 'Statement of attainment' stating the units of competency for the training they completed.

The food safety supervisor must be able to produce their Statement of attainment if requested to do so by the local environmental health officer. If a Statement of attainment cannot be produced, then a staff member must complete accredited training for the relevant food sector.

A food safety supervisor can obtain a Statement of attainment in two ways:

Minimum competency standards

There is no Victorian requirement for a food safety supervisor to undertake training beyond the minimum competencies listed in the following sections.

However, there may be industry- or organisation-based standards in addition to the Food Act requirements. Some food manufacturers carrying out complex processes, and large retailers or healthcare providers, may require that their food safety supervisor has additional skills and knowledge beyond the minimum competency standards.

Note that takeaway and fast-food businesses can be considered either retail or hospitality food businesses.

Food Sector	Minimum Competency
<p>Food Processing</p> <p>Businesses such as food product manufacturers, breweries and wineries</p>	<p>FDFFS2001A Implement the food safety program and procedures</p>
<p>Retail</p> <p>Businesses such as supermarkets, convenience stores, grocers, and delicatessens.</p>	<p>SIRRFSA001A - Apply retail food safety practices (Release 2)</p>
<p>Hospitality</p> <p>Businesses such as restaurants, cafes and hotels.</p>	<p>SITXFSA001 Use hygienic practices for food safety (Release 1) SITXFSA002 Participate in safe food handling practices (Release 1) OR SITXFSA101 Use hygienic practices for food safety SITXFSA201 Participate in safe food handling OR use the unit from the Retail sector</p> <p>Previous course code: SITXOHS002A Follow workplace hygiene procedures SITXFSA001A Implement food safety procedures OR THHGHS01B Follow workplace hygiene procedures THHBCC11B Implement food safety procedures</p>
<p>Health & Community Services</p> <p>Businesses such as hospitals, childcare centres, nursing homes, hostels, and Meals on Wheels.</p>	<p>HLTFSE001 Follow basic food safety practices HLTFSE005 Apply and monitor food safety requirements HLTFSE007 Oversee the day-to-day implementation of food safety in the workplace OR HLTFS207C Follow basic food safety practices HLTFS310C Apply and monitor food safety requirements HLTFS309C Oversee the day-to-day implementation of food safety in the workplace</p>
<p>Transport and Distribution</p> <p>Business such as warehouses.</p>	<p>Use relevant units from other sectors.</p> <p>For example, choose 'Hospitality' if your warehouse supplies to businesses such as restaurants, cafes and hotels.</p>

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-safety-training-skills-knowledge/food-safety-supervisors>

Past training qualifications

Food safety supervisors who completed training under previous codes do not usually need to train again in the current code. Either code is acceptable.

However, if the material covered in an earlier food handling qualification (pre-2001) is no longer considered valid (that is, the training did not cover all areas now required by law) you may have to do some further training.

Your previous training, knowledge and experience may be recognised by an RTO when you apply for recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency. This means that you may not have to repeat all training. You will only need to complete further training in the areas where you do not have the required skills and knowledge.

The RTO will assess the evidence of your prior learning. The RTO will advise you if you are competent or if you require further training.

People who have completed a tertiary qualification (recognised in Australia) in food science and microbiological fields may be considered as competent to be a food safety supervisor.

An RTO or local council will be able to answer any questions you may have about whether your prior learning deems you competent to be a food safety supervisor or if any further training is needed.

Switching food sectors and required training

A food safety supervisor must complete the appropriate units of competency for the sector they will be working in. The required food safety supervisor units of competency can be interchanged between the retail and hospitality sectors only.

If you are switching between sectors, such as retail to health, an RTO may offer a 'bridging' course, so that previous training does not have to be repeated. A Statement of Attainment would then be issued for the health course.

Alternatively, the food safety supervisor can apply for recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency to ensure that their prior training, and current knowledge and experience are recognised. The food safety supervisor will then only be required to complete training in the areas they do not have the skills and knowledge that the law requires.

Chefs – overseas qualification recognition

Your employer may accept your international qualifications as a chef. However, you cannot be the food safety supervisor for the business unless you have a Statement of Attainment from an RTO in Australia for the food sector in which you are working or intend to work.

If you do not have a Statement of Attainment, you can contact an RTO and apply for a recognition of prior learning and recognition of current competency. Once you have a Statement of Attainment, you can become the nominated food safety supervisor for the business you work in.

Step 5: Training courses and registered training organisations

Training courses and recognition of prior learning are organised through RTOs.

To find the right course for your food safety supervisor you need to:

- know the units your food safety supervisor needs to complete (check 'Step 4: training to get a Statement of Attainment') and contact the health unit at your local council to confirm before they start training
- search for training courses online at Victorian Skills Gateway and Training.gov.au
- look in the Melbourne Yellow Pages under 'Education and Training' or go to the Yellow Pages website
- contact your industry association for information
- conduct an internet search using the course code and your location – for example, SITXFSA201 Bendigo
- contact an RTO to see if they offer the required training.

Many RTOs in Victoria offer food safety training at different times to suit business needs. Some food safety training is also offered in languages other than English.

RTOs are required to keep records, so a copy can be requested if a Statement of Attainment has been lost.