National Delivered Meals
Food Safety Project

Looking After Delivered Meals

A 30-minute video and handbook package developed with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.
Acknowledgments

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Project Management Committee:
Pam Digby, Department of Health, WA
Fran Heidenreich, City of Melville, WA
Kate Hutchison, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Eric Johnson, Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services, Tas
Rebecca Keily, Food Standards Australia New Zealand
Tania Martin, Food Standards Australia New Zealand
Terry Mazzucchelli, Department of Health, WA
Dr Ian McKay, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing
Cam Pearce, South Australian Meals-On-Wheels Service, SA
Beverley Shannon, Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing

Technical Consultants:
Ian Doughty, Laister Consulting Services P/L
Carole Theobald, Cormorant Technical Services P/L

Delivered Meal Organisations Assisting with Research, Filming and Piloting of Materials:
Central West Food Services, Bathurst, NSW
City of Melville, WA
City of Stirling, WA
City of Subiaco, WA
Fremantle Community Care, WA
Harold Hawthorne Home Community Care, Carlisle, WA
Hobson’s Bay City Council, Vic
Holland Park Meals on Wheels, Brisbane, Qld
Meals-on-Wheels, Tas
Queensland Meals-on-Wheels Service, Qld
Rockdale Meals-on-Wheels, Bexley, NSW
Rosewood Care Group, West Perth, WA
South Australian Meals-On-Wheels Service, SA
Yaandina, Roebourne, WA

Video Production:
Centre for Educational Advancement, Curtin University of Technology

Looking After Delivered Meals
How to Use this Package

Everyone working with food has a personal responsibility to handle food safely. This video and handbook information package has been designed to help people involved with delivered meal organisations to understand their legal responsibilities.

The video is set in real kitchens and follows the food from delivery to sale. Practices shown apply to all delivered meal organisations whether large or small, new or old.

The handbook details a range of food safety issues that are of particular interest to delivered meal organisations.

Relevant national Food Safety Standards are quoted in the margin for reference and advice on how to comply with them is contained in the text. The handbook also contains example charts and information sheets suitable for photocopying as required.

Training for skills and knowledge needs to be completed in addition to viewing this video and handbook (see page 3 for more information about training).

The feature boxes contain suggestions that may help a kitchen supervisor monitor food safety practices and could form part of a food safety program.

Ideally, the proprietor and kitchen supervisor should watch the video and read the handbook so they can decide on the most suitable way for the information to be shared. For example, they may choose to:

- Arrange a social event at the start of each quarter for staff and volunteers to meet and use the video to trigger a discussion about food safety
- Loan the package to individuals to watch the video and read the handbook at home, before commencing work in the kitchen.

Choose the method that will work best in your kitchen.
Background

In October 1999, Food Standards Australia New Zealand, formerly known as the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA), recommended four national Food Safety Standards to Health Ministers, meeting as the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Council (ANZFSC). The following three standards were adopted on 24th August 2000 and have been enacted by each State and Territory Government:

- Standard 3.1.1 (Interpretation and Application)
- Standard 3.2.2 (Food Safety Practices and General Requirements)
- Standard 3.2.3 (Food Premises and Equipment).

The fourth Standard, Standard 3.2.1 Food Safety Programs, was gazetted in November 2000 as a model standard that could be adopted voluntarily by State and Territory Governments. In December 2003, Health Ministers, meeting as the Australia New Zealand Food Regulation Ministerial Council, agreed that four identified high risk sectors should implement mandatory food safety programs. One of the identified high risk areas was food service to vulnerable populations, which includes Delivered Meals Organisations. At the time of printing, Food Standards Australia New Zealand is drafting amendments to the Food Standards Code within the policy framework set by Ministerial Council.

This package focuses on the provisions of the first three standards that are already law around Australia.
Introduction

Delivered meal organisations provide food to one of the most vulnerable groups in the community - the old or incapacitated who are unable to prepare their own meals. Without access to a regular balanced diet, clients may experience more sickness, loss of bone strength and decreased quality of life.

Delivered meal organisations can be found in the biggest cities to the smallest country towns. They may be operated in different ways. For example they may:
• Have kitchens operated by full time paid employees
• Have a paid convener with volunteers
• Rely totally on the help of volunteers
• Contract out the food preparation to the local hospital, hotel or other commercial provider.

However, regardless of their size or location, delivered meal organisations all have one thing in common - they have a duty of care to ensure only safe food is delivered to clients.

National food laws, called the Food Safety Standards, have been introduced that apply throughout Australia. They provide the minimum requirements to handle food safely. The Standards identify the responsibilities of the proprietor of the food business and food handlers. For a delivered meal organisation the proprietor may be the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation, the meals co-ordinator or the kitchen supervisor - so you will need to be quite clear who is ultimately responsible for the kitchen. (See ‘Interpretation’ in margin for definition of proprietor).

The Standards apply equally to volunteers and paid kitchen workers. After all, every person who handles food needs to handle it carefully - regardless of whether they are paid.

Looking After Delivered Meals is a video and handbook resource designed to help delivered meal organisations comply with the national Food Safety Standards. By following the practices shown in the video and handbook, everyone involved with preparing or delivering the meals will be able to demonstrate that they handle food safely.
Looking After Delivered Meals

Why do we need the Standards?

You only have to read the newspapers or speak to your friends to know that things can and do go wrong with food. Most people at some stage have suffered from food poisoning symptoms including nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pains, sweats and headaches – all very unpleasant.

Old and sick people are more vulnerable to food poisoning and most other diseases. As their immune systems may not be working properly, their symptoms may be more serious and they may take longer to recover. So, when we make food for them we need to be extra careful to make sure we prepare it safely.

Notification

The national Food Safety Standards apply to all food sold in Australia. This includes food that is raffled or sold to raise funds for a charity or community group. Delivered meal organisations are regarded as food businesses. The government monitors food businesses to make sure they comply with food laws. To help them do this, the national Food Safety Standards require businesses to advise the government that they sell food.

The local government in your area needs to know where all food premises are located. This information is used to:
- Identify food businesses and types of food produced
- Plan inspection frequencies to make sure that businesses are complying with legislation
- Follow up on foodborne disease or food recalls.

The information required provides contact details for the food business, including:
- Name of food business
- Name and business address of proprietor
- Nature of food business
- Location of all food premises of the food business (e.g. if food is transported from a central kitchen and served at satellite centres).

The business must inform the local government of any changes to the information provided, before they occur.
In some States and Territories the business may need to be registered. Registration provides the opportunity for government to put conditions on the operation of the business where they may be necessary to protect public health. In addition, a government may charge a fee to register a food business. If registration applies in your State or Territory, extra information may be required but your local environmental health officer will be able to advise you about this.

Skills and knowledge

Everyone working in the kitchen must have the skills and knowledge to handle food safely. This does not mean that everyone has to have qualifications in food safety - but just that they have the knowledge to understand what can go wrong with food and the skills to prevent it.

For example, food poisoning is caused when something gets into food that shouldn’t be there. When this happens, we say the food has been contaminated.

What is contamination?

There are three main types of contamination:

- **Physical contamination** includes things like insects, dirt, hair, and bits of metal, glass or plastic getting into food.
- **Chemical contamination** happens when chemicals such as insect sprays, paints, detergents, sanitisers or excessive food additives get into food.
- **Microbiological contamination** occurs when bacteria or viruses get into food. Microbes cause most food poisonings.

Some plants and fungi are dangerous as they contain natural chemicals that are poisonous e.g. toadstools.
Microbes are everywhere, on vegetables, raw meat, clothing and our hands. Not all microbes make us sick. Some are used to make yoghurt and wines but others can put us in hospital!

If we eat food that contains a lot of food poisoning microbes, we may get sick. Some people can eat quite a lot of microbes and not get ill. However, very old or very young people can get sick by eating only a small number of food poisoning microbes.

If food is not handled properly it may be contaminated by:
• A large number of viruses or bacteria all at once, (for example, if someone sneezes on a salad) or
• A small number of bacteria that, under the right conditions, multiply quickly to numbers that cause food poisoning.

Bacteria that cause food poisoning may multiply quickly on potentially hazardous foods. These are high-risk foods for

**Examples of Potentially Hazardous Foods**
*If you handle any of these foods, you need to know how to handle them safely.*

- **Processed fruits and vegetables** such as prepared salads and ready-to-use vegetable packs.
- **Dairy products** and foods containing them such as milk, cream, custard dairy based desserts.
- **Seafood** and food containing it such as cooked prawns and crab but not live seafood.
- **Processed foods** containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food.
- **Raw meats, cooked meats** and food containing them such as casseroles, curries, lasagna and meat pies.
- **Cooked rice and pasta.**
- **Other foods** that contain the above foods such as quiche and sandwiches.
food poisoning as they support the growth of bacteria. They generally contain protein and moisture.

Some types of bacteria may double in number every twenty minutes on potentially hazardous food kept between 5°C and 60°C. This range is known as the **temperature danger zone**.

**The Temperature Danger Zone**

- Keep hot food at or above **60°C**
- Keep cold food at or below **5°C**
- Keep frozen food frozen

Food poisoning bacteria are unable to multiply rapidly outside the temperature danger zone.

Now we know what contamination is, and the importance of keeping potentially hazardous food out of the temperature danger zone, we need to make sure that all food handlers use this knowledge to keep food safe.
How do you protect food from contamination?

To protect food from physical contamination you should:
- Wear clean protective clothing e.g. apron, hat, etc.
- Wash your hands
- Keep insects and animals out of the kitchen and
- Keep food covered.

To protect food from chemical contamination you should:
- Store chemicals away from food
- Use insecticides carefully e.g. do not spray over food or work benches and wash hands after placing cockroach baits
- Use cleaning chemicals carefully e.g. follow instructions on the label, use the right chemicals for the job and do not use them near food.

To protect potentially hazardous food from microbiological contamination you should:
- Stop bacteria and viruses getting into food by
  - Keeping food covered
  - Washing hands before touching food
  - Using clean, dry utensils
  - Storing ready-to-eat food above raw meats and vegetables so bacteria in meat juices and soil don’t fall onto other foods
  - Not working if you have diarrhoea or vomiting e.g. food poisoning

Remember, to stop bacteria multiplying on potentially hazardous food keep it cold (at or below 5°C) or keep it hot (at or above 60°C).

What other information do food handlers need to know?

The kitchen supervisor will need to check that food handlers are confident and competent to undertake all tasks required of them.

A ‘train as you go’ approach can work very well. This means that you show food handlers what to do and supervise them until they are comfortable doing the task.
Getting skills and knowledge

If your kitchen prepares potentially hazardous foods you need to understand the dangers associated with handling these foods and have the skills to handle them safely. For example, you prepare potentially hazardous foods if you:

- Cook raw meats e.g. chickens, roasts, rissoles, stews
- Prepare soups from fresh ingredients e.g. chicken
- Make sandwiches with potentially hazardous fillings, e.g. ham, chicken, other cold meats, egg, fish
- Heat foods e.g. pies, chicken strips, fish.

The following table identifies the skills and knowledge that may be required to safely carry out activities in the kitchen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work activity</th>
<th>Skills and knowledge required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Handle potentially hazardous food:  
  - Storing  
  - Preparing  
  - Cooking  
  - Cooling  
  - Reheating  
  - Serving |  
  - Understand what bacteria need to grow  
  - Temperature control  
  - Contamination  
  - Personal hygiene |
| Handle non-potentially hazardous food only e.g. bread (not filled), confectionery (including ice cream), wrapped food that does not need to be refrigerated |  
  - Contamination  
  - Personal hygiene |
| Serve food only |  
  - Contamination  
  - Personal hygiene |
| Clean kitchen only |  
  - Contamination  
  - Handling chemicals |
While the Standards do not require food handlers to have formal training, the kitchen supervisor may benefit from attending an accredited food hygiene training course, for example at a local college. The kitchen supervisor could consolidate her/his knowledge about food safety and learn how to pass on information to other food handlers.

However, if there is no suitable course to attend, the kitchen supervisor may be able to undertake in-house training using books and videos or on-line training.

The kitchen supervisor will need to check that food handlers are confident and competent to undertake the tasks required of them. Show food handlers what to do and supervise them until they are comfortable doing the task. Don’t assume that food handlers will know what to do. Check first!

Many kitchens have regular induction sessions for new staff and volunteers, (see page iv). Include this package in your information sessions so everyone knows what the law requires of them.

Food safety relies on everyone handling food with care.

**Food handling controls**

The national Food Safety Standards have been written in a practical way and follow the food from when it is received to when it is sold. These Standards detail how to handle food during:

- Food receipt
- Food storage
- Food processing
- Food display
- Food labelling and packaging
- Food transportation

They also include information about food disposal and recall.

Let’s look at these food handling controls in more detail.
Garbage in, garbage out, is a well-used expression in the computer industry - but it can also apply to food businesses.

If you accept sub-standard product into the kitchen, no matter what you do, it will be sub-standard when you sell it. Save yourself a lot of hassle and only accept food that is within its date coding and in good condition.

From a practical point of view this means that you should arrange for someone to receive deliveries and, where possible, check them as soon as they arrive. You should reject the following:

### Date Marking

**Generally,** food must be date marked and stored under the conditions shown on the label. **No date marking** is required on food with a shelf life of longer than two years.

#### Use By Date

The date by which the food should be eaten and still be safe.

*Food may not be sold beyond its use by date, as it may not be safe to eat.*

#### Best Before Date

The date the manufacturer recommends that the food be eaten by, to be in best quality condition.

*A food may be sold beyond its best before date provided it has not deteriorated and is still safe to eat.*
Looking After Delivered Meals

Standard 3.2.2
5 Food receipt

(1) A food business must take all practicable measures to ensure it only accepts food that is protected from the likelihood of contamination.

Reject

Damaged food and food in damaged packages

**Holes and tears in packages**
If a package has a hole in it you do not know what caused it or what may have entered the package. The hole may be due to gnawing by rodents or other animals, boring by insects or tearing by machinery or rough handling. Chemicals, bacteria or insects may have contaminated the food through the hole - so don’t take a chance - don’t accept it!

**Dented, rusted or blown cans**
If cans are damaged you cannot see if tiny holes have been formed in the cans. When a hole has been made, the can may suck up dirt and bacteria. Cans which are bulging (‘blown’) may contain gas from decomposing food.

**Dirty or contaminated packaging**
Packages that are dirty will contaminate shelves, and other foods stored near them. Also when you open the package, dirt will contaminate your hands and other foods.

Check the smell of packaging. If it smells of animal urine or chemicals, the product inside may also smell. Some foods e.g. fats and eggs absorb smells easily, so if they are stored near solvents they may smell and taste unpleasant.

Reject

Reject damaged food.

Photos 11 and 12: Reject damaged food.

Standard 3.2.2
5 Food receipt

(2) A food business must provide, to the reasonable satisfaction of an authorised officer upon request, the following information relating to food on the food premises:
(a) the name and business address in Australia of the vendor, manufacturer or packer or in the case of food imported into Australia, the name and business address in Australia of the importer; and
(b) the prescribed name or, if there is no prescribed name, an appropriate designation of the food.

Reject

Reject food without an Australian or NZ address

All prepackaged foods should be labelled with a food name e.g. ‘sausage roll’ or ‘meat pie’ and have an Australian or New Zealand address on the label (or in associated paperwork e.g. invoice).

This information is important in case there is a recall of the food - you will not be able to identify the food without the name and you would not be able to complain about the food or return it if there is no address.

You may need to transfer some information from the outer boxes of catering packs e.g. best before dates or lot numbers, to any containers you store the food in.
Looking After Delivered Meals

You may wish to keep a record of rejected deliveries, so you can identify suppliers that regularly send you sub-standard food.

Photocopy and enlarge the Rejected Deliveries chart on page 12 as required. Use it to identify suppliers that regularly deliver sub-standard food. If deliveries don’t improve, consider changing your supplier.

Reject potentially hazardous food out of temperature control

Potentially hazardous food should only be accepted if it is:
- Frozen solid or
- At or below 5°C or
- At or above 60°C.

Reject potentially hazardous food delivered in the temperature danger zone, unless your supplier can demonstrate the food will be safe. (See page 30 for more information).

For example, if you receive warm pies direct from the bakery you need to make sure they are not going to be in the temperature danger zone for longer than four hours. They may be received warm on the day of baking and put immediately in the fridge or pre-heated pie warmer.

Photo 13: Reject unlabelled food.

Standard 3.2.2

5 Food receipt

(3) A food business must, when receiving potentially hazardous food, take all practicable measures to ensure it only accepts potentially hazardous food that is at a temperature of:
(a) 5°C or below; or
(b) 60°C or above, unless the food business transporting the food demonstrates that the temperature of the food, having regard to the time taken to transport the food, will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.

(4) A food business must, when receiving potentially hazardous food, take all practicable measures to ensure that food which is intended to be received frozen, is frozen when it is accepted.

Photo 14: Reject cold potentially hazardous food above 5°C.
REJECTED DELIVERIES

Only accept food in good condition. Check that:
• Frozen food is hard
• Potentially hazardous foods are at or below 5°C or at or above 60°C
• Food is within use by date or best before date
• Label or documentation has an Australian or NZ contact address
• Packaging is not damaged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Supplier</th>
<th>Problem and action taken</th>
<th>Checked by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have you told your suppliers how you want to receive your food?

It makes sense to let your suppliers know that you expect food delivered to comply with the National Food Safety Standards. All suppliers should be aware of what the Standards require. Use the following example Suppliers’ Letter to help you design your own.

Dear Sir or Madam

Food deliveries to (insert name of business)

(Insert name of business) is committed to providing safe food and complying with food safety legislation. Therefore, our kitchen will only accept food that complies with Standard 3.2.2 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code.

Please be advised that if your product fails to meet the specifications outlined below it may not be accepted when delivered.

- **All foods**: To be within use by or best before date. Australian or NZ address of vendor, manufacturer, importer or packer to be on label or in associated documentation.

- **Dry goods**: Packages to be intact and clean. No dented, rusted or blown cans will be accepted.

- **Cold potentially hazardous foods**: e.g. cooked and raw meats, dairy foods, ham, fish, seafood, prepared salads etc. must be received at or below 5°C.

- **Hot potentially hazardous foods**: e.g. hot pies must be received at or above 60°C.

If foods are delivered outside these temperatures, supporting evidence will be required to demonstrate that the products are safe to eat. This is in accordance with clause 5 of Standard 3.2.2, which states:

(3) A food business must, when receiving potentially hazardous food, take all practicable measures to ensure it only accepts potentially hazardous food that is at a temperature of:

(a) 5°C or below; or

(b) 60°C or above,

unless the food business transporting the food demonstrates that the temperature of the food, having regard to the time taken to transport the food, will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.

If you require further information about the national Food Safety Standards please visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand web site at www.foodstandards.gov.au.

This organisation takes food safety very seriously and appreciates your support in this matter.

Yours faithfully
Looking After Delivered Meals

Food storage

Now the food has been delivered, what do you do with it? You need to store food so it can’t be contaminated. Look at the food and ask yourself – can objects, chemicals or bacteria get onto this food? If the answer is yes, then you need to do something to stop food contamination. For example, you could:

- Cover food to prevent foreign objects and chemical sprays contaminating it,
- Store raw meats below other foods to prevent blood dripping onto them and
- Wear a hat or tie hair back so it cannot fall into food.

Check the date marking and always rotate your stock - new stock to the back, old stock to the front. Some foods need special storage conditions. For example, potatoes need to be stored in a dark place to stop them going green and chocolate needs to be stored below 34°C to prevent it from melting.

Most packages contain storage instructions, for example, frozen food temperatures and others such as ‘refrigerate after opening’. Make sure you follow them so the food will be kept at its best.

However, to prevent any bacteria in potentially hazardous food from multiplying, it is very important that this food is stored correctly in the cool-room or fridge.

Storing food in the cool-room or fridge

To protect food from contamination - keep it covered. Where possible, use separate fridges/cool-rooms for raw foods and ‘ready-to-eat’ foods.

Raw foods e.g. raw meats, raw unwashed fruits and vegetables need to be on the bottom shelves and ‘ready-to-eat foods’ on the top (See page 16). This is because raw foods can drop dirt or drip juices onto other foods. The cleaner the food, the higher the shelf!

In many fridges the fruit and vegetable crispers are located on the bottom shelf. Any raw meat stored on the shelf above could contaminate fruits and vegetables in...
the crispers below. Therefore, make sure that any raw meat is placed in a container to collect drips and is wrapped. Make sure that eggs are stored so they cannot contaminate other foods.

Be careful not to overload the cool-room or fridge. They keep food cold by moving cold air around every package. If the food is jam-packed there will be no space for the air to move around the food. The food will not keep cool enough to stop bacteria multiplying.

You may want to label each shelf so everyone knows where food should be stored.

How well does your cool-room or fridge work? Does it keep food at or below 5°C? Do you check the temperature?

An easy way to check the temperature is to keep a container of water in the cool-room or fridge and take the temperature of the water. Move the container to a different place every couple of days to find out where the warmest spot is and then keep the container there. If the water is below 5°C in the warmest spot, you know that all food in the cool-room or fridge should be cold enough.

If you write down the temperature of the water in the container at least once a day when you start work, you can see over time if the temperature is slowly going up. Use the example Temperature Monitoring chart on page 18 to develop your own chart.

If the temperature is rising, just check the cool-room or fridge for the following:

• Is it overloaded?
• Are the door seals damaged letting cold air escape?
• Does the thermostat need adjusting for the season?

Frozen food

The Standards require frozen food to be kept frozen during storage. The easiest way to check if food is frozen is to tap or feel it. If it is hard, then it is frozen.

Some foods will show condensation on the outside of the packages when they are starting to melt. Ice cream does
How to Store Food Safely in the Cool-room or Fridge

Top shelf
Ready-to-eat food

Next shelf down
Dairy foods

Next shelf down
Raw vegetables

Bottom shelf
Raw meats

If you have more than one fridge or cool-room - use one for ready-to-eat foods, another for raw meats, etc.
this very quickly – so use ice cream as an indicator of how well the freezer is working.

You may choose to measure the temperature of your freezer by placing a thermometer between two packages of food. The temperature recordings will give you an idea as to how well the freezer is working.

It makes sense to record the temperatures of all fridges, cool-rooms and freezers to make sure they are working properly. Photocopy and enlarge the Temperature Monitoring chart on page 18 as required.

If, over a few days, the temperature is slowly rising you can arrange for the equipment to be serviced before it breaks down!

**Food processing**

The kitchen must only process food that is safe and suitable. What do these terms mean?

**Safe food**

Safe food is food that will not cause physical harm to a person eating it. However, this does not include people who may be allergic to a particular food.

Some kitchens may prepare food for clients with severe allergies. Before preparing food for these clients find out exactly what it is they are allergic to and how sensitive they are. It may be necessary to prepare the food for allergy sufferers before any other food is handled.

**Suitable food**

Suitable food is food that is in good condition and is not damaged, deteriorated, perished or contaminated. Examples of unsuitable food include food in broken packages, mouldy bread, rotting meat and food containing chemicals, objects or bacteria.

In summary, you cannot make a ‘safe and suitable’ meal from ‘off’ or sub-standard ingredients.
# TEMPERATURE MONITORING

Month ........................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Fridge 1 (Food at or below 5°C)</th>
<th>Fridge 2 (Food at or below 5°C)</th>
<th>Freezer 1 (Frozen food hard)</th>
<th>Freezer 2 (Frozen food hard)</th>
<th>Bain Marie (Food at or above 60°C)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Looking After Delivered Meals*
Looking After Delivered Meals

How to handle food safely

Food handling includes anything you do to food. In a delivered meal organisation this can include:

- Thawing
- Washing
- Chopping and handling
- Cooking
- Cooling
- Re-heating
- Holding/displaying
- Packing
- Transporting.

You need to make sure food doesn’t get contaminated at any processing stage. Let’s look at how we can achieve this.

Thawing food

Foods should be thawed using either of these methods:

- **Cool-room** – plan ahead as some foods take over a day to thaw. Remember, cover all food and store ready-to-eat food above raw vegetables and raw meat.
- **Microwave oven** – great for small amounts of food in a hurry. Be sure to use the defrost setting.

Raw meats that are going to be cooked may be safely thawed by these methods:

- **Clean running water** – the water must keep flowing over the food. Wrap the food so it does not get waterlogged. Refrigerate immediately after thawing. This method is not recommended in times of water shortage.
- **Room temperature** – keep food covered and in a dish so it cannot contaminate the work surface or other food. Put the raw meat in the cool-room as soon as it has thawed or it will spoil and become rotten.

Washing food

Thoroughly wash fruit and vegetables before use to remove any visible dirt. A sink is a food contact surface when used to wash fruit and vegetables. It must be cleaned and sanitised before being used to wash food.
Remember, it is against the law to use the hand washing basin for anything other than hand washing. Only wash food in a clean, sanitised sink.

**Chopping and handling food**

Where possible, prepare food fresh each day. If you prepare food in advance remember to use the oldest food first. Never mix fresh food with old food. For example, don’t mix freshly made rice or stew with the previous batch.

Keep potentially hazardous food out of the temperature danger zone as much as possible. Take food ingredients out of the cool-room, as you need them.

After use, return ingredients and finished products to the cool-room. Don’t leave ingredients on the workbench ‘just in case’ they are needed - bacteria in them could be quickly multiplying to dangerous levels.

During preparation, food may be physically contaminated by a) food handlers or b) equipment.

**a) Food handlers**

- Make sure that you wash your hands before handling food and in between handling different food types such as raw meats and ready-to-eat foods. Try not to touch food with your bare hands – use tongs, utensils or clean paper instead.
- Don’t wear jewellery that could fall into food or bracelets that could touch the food. Take off your watch and use the clock on the wall to check the time.
- Think about your hair … could it fall into the food? Not if your hair is tied back or you are wearing a hat!
- Check that there is always a clean surface between your street clothes and the food e.g. clean apron, clean overalls.

See *Food handling—your legal responsibilities* page 41.

**b) Equipment**

If not used correctly, equipment can transfer bacteria from one food to another. To prevent contamination:

- **Clean, sanitise and dry** all pieces of equipment that contact food as shown on page 49.
• **Change to a clean board** and utensils between handling
  - unclean foods e.g. raw meats, raw fish, raw unwashed vegetables and
  - ready-to-eat foods (e.g. washed vegetables, cooked meats, cheeses, cooked fish and bakery products.
• **Consider using different colour chopping boards and utensils** for particular foods. Generally, red is used for raw meat, green for vegetables and white for ready-to-eat foods. There are many other colours available, just make sure if you are using different colour boards, that everyone knows which colour you use for what!
• **Check the condition of chopping boards and utensils.** Sometimes chopping boards get deep cuts in them or handles break on utensils. This makes them very difficult to clean. Throw out those that are not in good condition – they could contaminate your food!
• **Wooden chopping boards and utensils** are not as easy to keep clean and sanitised as plastic ones. They cannot be put in dishwashers and some can chip easily. They also take longer to dry out as they hold moisture inside the wood, making them an ideal place for bacteria to hide! However, they may be used if you can keep them clean, sanitised, dry and in good condition.

**Cooking**

Raw meat naturally contains bacteria. During processing, meat is cooked thoroughly to kill bacteria on it and make it safe to eat.

• Whole muscle meat has bacteria on its outside surface e.g. joint of beef, lamb, pork, and provided the outside surface is thoroughly cooked the product will be safe to eat.
• In all minced and formed meats, bacteria on the meat surface have been placed in the middle of the product e.g. rolled roasts and chopped meats, chicken nuggets etc. so these must be cooked to at least 75°C in the middle to kill bacteria inside them.
**Looking After Delivered Meals**

- Whole chickens have bacteria on their surface and in cavities. Chickens must always be cooked thoroughly to at least 75°C or until the juices run clear when the chicken is pierced between the breast and the leg.

You will need an accurate probe thermometer to check the temperature of foods. See *How to clean and sanitise a probe thermometer* on page 24 to learn how to take temperatures without contaminating food.

### Cooling

If cooked potentially hazardous food such as soups and casseroles have to be cooled, they need to be rapidly cooled:
- From 60°C to 21°C within two hours and
- From 21°C to 5°C within a further four hours. Why is this?

Just as seeds from our native plants survive bush fires, some bacteria produce ‘spores’ that survive the cooking process. Spores germinate when food is kept in the temperature danger zone. The longer potentially hazardous food is at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C the more chance there is of the spores germinating and the food causing food poisoning. The quicker food is cooled, the safer it will be.

Many delivered meal organisations use blast chillers to quickly cool bulk foods or individual meals. Blast chillers can be small or large to suit the needs of the operation.

If you do not have a blast chiller, but need to cool large amounts of food quickly:

1. Remove food from the oven or stove
2. When the temperature drops to about 60°C, ladle food into a few shallow containers – avoid pouring hot foods from a big pot as this can be dangerous
3. Cover containers with a lid or clean paper and place into the cool-room on a shelf above raw meats and vegetables.

In total, the food must take less than 6 hours to cool from 60°C to 5°C or below. Remember it may take some time for food to cool to 60°C when it first comes out of the oven.

---

**Standard 3.2.2**

**7 Food processing**

(1) A food business must:

(b) (ii) when processing food where a process step is needed to reduce to safe levels any pathogens that may be present in the food – use a process step that is reasonably known to achieve the microbiological safety of the food.

(3) A food business must, when cooling cooked potentially hazardous food, cool the food:

(a) within two hours – from 60°C to 21°C; and

(b) within a further four hours – from 21°C to 5°C unless the food business demonstrates that the cooling process used will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.
Re-heating

Delivered meal organisations providing hot meals, must keep potentially hazardous foods hot prior to packing. Most organisations use a bain marie to keep food hot. A bain marie can only keep potentially hazardous food safe if it keeps the food out of the temperature danger zone at all times. This means that it keeps hot potentially hazardous food above 60°C.

How should a bain marie be used?

Hot food: All potentially hazardous food must be heated (or reheated) before putting it into the bain marie. How hot should the food be?

The Food Safety Standards require potentially hazardous food that has been safely cooked, cooled and stored be reheated to a minimum of 60°C before serving.

However, if there is the slightest chance that potentially hazardous food may have been contaminated during cooking, cooling and storage, it is recommended that it be reheated to 70°C for at least two minutes.

Hot bain marie: The bain marie must be hot before the hot food is put into it. If the bain marie is cold, hot potentially hazardous food could cool down quickly and be at risk of being in the temperature danger zone. Remember bacteria multiply in the temperature danger zone between 5°C and 60°C.

Cover food: To keep the food hot, place a cover over the food in the bain marie until you are ready to serve it.

All the time think.... keep hot food hot.

A bain marie keeps hot food hot only when:

- Bain marie is heated before use
- Hot food is put in the bain marie
- Containers are kept covered

Standard 3.2.2

7 Food processing

(4) A food business must, when reheating previously cooked and cooled potentially hazardous food to hold it hot, use a heat process that rapidly heats the food to a temperature of 60°C or above, unless the food business demonstrates that the heating process used will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food.
How to Clean and Sanitise a Probe Thermometer

Clean and sanitise a thermometer probe before inserting it into food

**Step 1: Wash probe**

Use hot soapy water and shake off excess water

**Step 2: Sanitise probe**

OR

Wipe with an alcohol wipe

OR

Place in boiling water for one minute

**Step 3: Dry probe**

OR

Air dry

OR

Wipe dry with a clean paper towel

Repeat process before inserting probe into next food
Looking After Delivered Meals

Thermometers

There are various types of thermometers. Some measure air temperature and others measure food temperature. When purchasing a thermometer check that it can measure the temperature range that you require. For example, a probe thermometer may need to be able to check that food is cooked to above 75°C in the centre, is displayed at or above 60°C and is stored at 5°C or less.

If you want to check that your freezer stores foods at the temperatures advised on the products then the thermometer may need to measure to below -20°C.

Air temperature thermometers

You can get air temperature thermometers suitable for measuring either cold air in cool-rooms and freezers or hot air in ovens. They are usually made of metal and have a dial similar to a clock. Air temperature thermometers do not tell you the temperature of the food - only the temperature of the air around the food.

Infra-red thermometers

These can look like space age ray guns. They only measure the surface temperature of food - so cannot be used to measure the internal temperature.

Probe thermometers

Kitchens that handle potentially hazardous food must have a probe thermometer on site that is capable of measuring the internal temperature of food.

The probe thermometer must be accurate to within one degree Celsius. When the temperature of the food is 5°C its actual temperature is between 4°C and 6°C.

To find out the accuracy of the thermometer look in the instruction booklet that comes with it or ask the sales assistant before you purchase it.

Check the thermometer regularly (e.g. monthly) to see that it is working properly.

Put ice cubes in a cup and add enough water to cover but not float the ice - let probe stand in the cup for at least two minutes. The reading should be between -1°C and +1°C when placed in the ice.
Displaying food

There are a few occasions when delivered meal organisations may have to display food. For example,

- Some have dining rooms associated with their kitchens. Clients come into the centre for their meals and either serve themselves from a servery or volunteers serve the meal to them from the servery.

- In addition, there may be display fridges/freezers containing packaged meals that clients may purchase to take home from the centre.

Regardless of how food is displayed, there are three actions that must be taken to keep it safe.

1. All foods must be protected from contamination
   Cover or wrap all food on display or being held until service commences.

2. Unpackaged, self-service food must be supervised;
   there must be separate utensils for each food item; and suitable barriers to minimise possible contamination from customers must be provided.
   - Closely supervise any self-service of food and if food is contaminated, throw it away immediately.
   - Use separate utensils to serve each food e.g. separate spoons or tongs to serve potato, meat, vegetables, etc.

3. Potentially hazardous foods must be displayed either at or above 60°C or at or below 5°C. Frozen foods must be hard.
   - Display potentially hazardous food under temperature control. This means:
     - Keeping stews, meats, gravies, hot custards, pastas, rice at or above 60°C
     - Keeping cold custard and cream based desserts, salad trays and milk drinks at or below 5°C.
     - Keeping any frozen meals hard in display cabinets.

(1) A food business must, when displaying food, take all practicable measures to protect it from the likelihood of contamination.

(2) A food business must, when displaying unpackaged ready-to-eat food for self-service:
   a) ensure the display of the food is effectively supervised so that any food that is contaminated by a customer or is likely to have been so contaminated is removed from display without delay;
   b) provide separate serving utensils for each food or other dispensing methods that minimise the likelihood of the food being contaminated; and
   c) provide protective barriers that minimise the likelihood of contamination by customers.

(3) Subclause (2) does not apply to food in tamper resistant equipment or containers.

(4) A food business must not display for sale on any counter or bar, any ready-to-eat food that is not intended for self-service unless it is enclosed, contained or wrapped so that the food is protected from likely contamination.

(5) A food business must, when displaying potentially hazardous food:
   (a) display it under temperature control; and
   (b) if it is food that is intended to be displayed frozen, ensure the food remains frozen when displayed.
Labelling food

Clients that receive delivered meals undergo an assessment before being accepted into the service. The assessment procedure asks questions about:

- Medical conditions that may influence food choices e.g. diabetes, coeliac disease, hypertension
- Food allergies e.g. peanuts, fish, soy, gluten etc.
- Clients ability to eat the food e.g. requires cut food or pureed food
- Cultural diets e.g. kosher, halal
- Vegetarianism
- Foods that the client does not like e.g. Brussels sprouts
- Facilities the client has to store and cook food.

Therefore, a lot is known about the clients before they receive a meal. This information is used to make sure that clients receive food that they are able to eat and will be safe for them to eat.

When clients have been accepted into the service they are supplied with information to explain how their meals will be delivered and appropriate instructions for storage and reheating. The delivered meal organisation must be confident that clients understand how to keep the meals frozen/refrigerated and how to thaw and reheat them. Therefore, many organisations provide this information on pre-printed lids.

As volunteers delivering the meal are not there when the food is eaten, for food safety reasons, the lids must contain some form of date marking. If a client hasn’t eaten a meal, it is difficult for carers to sort out the meals in the fridge if there are no dates on them. Without a date, all the good work in the kitchen may be undone by the client eating old food and getting sick. Some services put a use by date on the lid - others put a packed on date with a statement such as ‘use within 48 hours’. Consider putting the day and date on the lid e.g. ‘Use By Saturday 15th October’ as some clients may not know the date but may know the day of the week.

Generally, organisations have well developed systems in place to make sure that clients receive the correct meal.
Looking After Delivered Meals

Lids are labelled from a day sheet and meals are made up using the information on the lids.

Some organisations have standard meals and only label the non-standard meals with client’s details. This is very similar to the serving of food in an aeroplane (“set menu, sir or special order?”). Others place all the client’s details on all lids. The method of labelling used generally depends on the resources available at the organisation.

Some organisations provide full labelling information including ingredients, allergens and full nutrition information. More information about how to develop full labelling can be obtained from www.foodstandards.gov.au.

Remember that all clients have access to their delivered meals co-ordinator, so they can obtain more information about their meal or change their details at any time.

Packing food

When packing foods make sure that all containers are either:

- New single use items that have been protected from contamination during storage or
- Reusable durable containers that have been cleaned, sanitised and dried before use (See Cleaning and Sanitising on page 49).

Make sure that packaging cannot contaminate food. For example, if you intend to microwave food that is wrapped in plastic film, check the packet label to make sure the film is safe for use in a microwave. Some plastic films contain chemicals that break down during microwaving and may contaminate food.

Use tongs wherever possible to open bags. Don’t be tempted to spit on the food by blowing into bags or licking your fingers to separate pieces of paper.
When packing hot potentially hazardous foods:
• Keep all foods piping hot in a pre-heated bain marie
• Serve food into containers using utensils
• Place lids on containers as they are filled to protect food from contamination and keep heat in
• Place containers immediately into an insulated container for delivery.

If meals are to be chilled or frozen, place containers immediately into the blast chiller or freezer.

Think before you pack!
Lids and containers are food contact surfaces.
Where do you store them?
Do you wash your hands before you touch them?

When packing cold potentially hazardous foods:
• Store them in the cool-room until you are ready to pack them so they keep below 5°C
• Pack cold foods with ice bricks in an insulated box.

If you pack meals into re-useable containers, make sure they are cleaned, sanitised and dried before re-use.

Packing foods for a delivery run is a fine art. Volunteers usually develop a system so that the meals are packed in such an order that the first meal to be delivered is at the top of the insulated box.

Transporting food

Delivered meal organisations generally arrange for volunteers or staff members to deliver individually packed meals directly to their clients by car. The meals may be hot, chilled or frozen. Meals may be delivered daily, a couple of times a week or weekly.

Some large organisations deliver meals to a number of community centres where volunteers transfer them to their own cars for delivery in the local area. A few organisations also deliver bulk foods to community centres to be served to clients in a dining room.

Standard 3.2.2

9 Food packaging

A food business must, when packaging food:
 a) only use packaging material that is fit for its intended use;
 b) only use material that is not likely to cause food contamination; and
 c) ensure that there is no likelihood that the food may become contaminated during the packaging process.
Some organisations use refrigerated vehicles to transport food, others use vans and cars. Regardless of how food is transported, during the journey:

- All food must be protected from contamination
- Frozen food must remain frozen
- Cold food must be kept at or below 5°C
- Hot food must be kept at or above 60°C, unless you can demonstrate food complies with the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide (see below).

The easiest way to achieve this is to make sure all foods are packed into clean washable containers. Potentially hazardous foods should be transported in insulated boxes. Consider using ice bricks or hot packs to keep foods cold or hot in the insulated boxes.

What do you do if no-one is at home?

Ideally, if no-one is home, it is safest not to leave the meal and many agencies regard it as a breach of their duty of care to leave a meal unattended. If no-one is home advise the meals co-ordinator so the family can be contacted where possible to make sure nothing is wrong. Return the meal to the kitchen and assess its safety using the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide below.

Some organisations will leave meals in an insulated box on the client’s doorstep. This is a good arrangement if the client needs to go out for a short time when the delivery is expected and the organisation is confident the food is not going to be left for prolonged periods. (See Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide on page 31).

Never leave meals unprotected e.g. in a bag hanging from the door handle. They will cool down or heat up quickly without insulation and could be contaminated by dogs or other animals.

Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide

You may receive, store, cool, reheat, display and transport potentially hazardous food out of temperature control if you can demonstrate that this will not affect food safety (See the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide on page 31).
Looking After Delivered Meals

The Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide only applies to ready-to-eat potentially hazardous foods.

As it takes time for food poisoning bacteria to grow to unsafe levels, it is safe for them to be in the temperature danger zone for the times shown in the diagram.

The total time includes all time the food has been at room temperature, for example during delivery, preparation and transportation.

### Using the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide with a ham salad meal

Ham is purchased from a reputable supplier, received below 5°C and placed in cool-room below 5°C.

The time the food is in the temperature danger zone is shown in the red boxes below for each stage.

- **Ham comes out of cool-room at 8.00am for slicing. At 8.30am sliced ham is covered and put back in the cool-room.**
- **At 9.30 am the ham is packed into containers with salad and packed salads are put back into coolroom at 10.am.**
- **At 10.30am the salads are taken out of cool-room and packed into insulated boxes. All loaded by 11.am.**

Total time in temperature danger zone: **1 ½ hours**

This means your client has ½ hour to put the salad in the fridge. If total time is more than 2 hours your client should eat the salad immediately.

### Using the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide with a hot roast meal

Roast beef is cooked thoroughly and cooled within 6 hours to below 5°C and stored in the cool-room. The guide only applies to food after it has been cooked.

- **Cold beef comes out of cool-room at 8.00am for slicing. At 8.30am the sliced meat is covered and put back in the cool-room.**
- **At 9.30 am the sliced beef is taken out of the cool-room and reheated to above 60°C. (Meat is under temperature control but any bacteria added during slicing may not be killed unless reheated to cooking temperatures.)**
- **At 10.30am the hot beef is served into containers and packed into hot insulated boxes by 11.00am.**
- **Meal delivered by 12pm. Client puts it in fridge 30 mins after delivery to have in evening.**
- **Client gently warms meal for 30 minutes before eating it.**

Total time in temperature danger zone: **1 ½ hours**
Basically, this Guide means that potentially hazardous food can be kept at room temperature for a maximum of four hours before it must be thrown away.

However, to use the Guide you must record the time the food is between 60°C and 5°C. This may involve recording the time food was packed and noting the time it was delivered. Without records, the Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide cannot be used.

### Food disposal

You may have food on the premises that is not to be used. This includes food awaiting return to the supplier such as:

- A food recalled by the manufacturer
- Unsafe and unsuitable food (e.g., a damaged can or mouldy product) (but this should have been checked on delivery)
- A food complaint (e.g., a food with a strange taste or smell or containing a foreign object). (You may wish to advise your environmental health officer about food complaints before contacting the manufacturer, so that follow-up action may be taken.)

Food awaiting return needs to be clearly identified and separated from other food, so that it cannot be accidentally used or sold. You can separate food by a variety of methods. For example:

- Mark the containers and store them away from other food
- Place the food in a plastic box or bag with a label on it
- Mark all containers with distinctive tape
- Place non-perishable food in a separate room (e.g., an office.)

#### Standard 3.2.2

**11 Food disposal**

(1) A food business must ensure that food for disposal is held and kept separate until it is:

- destroyed or otherwise used or disposed of so that it cannot be used for human consumption;
- returned to its supplier;
- further processed in a way that ensures its safety and suitability; or
- ascertained to be safe and suitable.

(2) In Subclause (1) food for disposal means food that:

- is subject to recall;
- has been returned;
- is not safe or suitable; or
- is reasonably suspected of not being safe or suitable.

(3) A food business must clearly identify any food that is held and kept separate in accordance with Subclause (1) as returned food, recalled food, or food that is or may not be safe or suitable, as the case may be.

(4) A food business must not sell food that has been already served to a person to another person unless the food was completely wrapped when served and has remained completely wrapped.
Food Recall

All wholesalers, manufacturers and importers must have a written food recall procedure. These businesses all have one thing in common - they make food that is not intended to be eaten immediately by the consumer.

For most cook-fresh and cook-chill operations, the food is eaten within a few days of manufacture. Generally, by the time you find out there is a problem the food would have been eaten. However, if the delivered meal organisation prepares frozen foods, these may not be eaten for a few weeks so it is wise to consider what you would do if you found that the frozen meal contained a food that was unsafe.

For example, what would you do if your supplier advises you that:
- Chocolate flakes have been found to be contaminated by dioxins. (There was a worldwide recall of dioxin contaminated Belgian chocolate in the late 90s.)
- Pasta has been found to contain high levels of pesticide.

Would you know which foods contained unsafe ingredients and could you stop them reaching clients?

Luckily, delivered meal organisations usually hold all their food in their own premises and know who has received each meal, so locating the food will be quite easy.

The food recall procedure needs to show how to identify:
- Which recipes have used the contaminated ingredients
- How many meals were made using the recipe
- Where the affected meals are stored (this may be in the kitchen’s own freezer or in client’s freezers)
- How client’s food will be retrieved
- How many meals have been retrieved in total
- How the food has been disposed of.

Sometimes government agencies must be notified when food is recalled. More information is available in the Food Recall Protocol available from Food Standards Australia New Zealand at www.foodstandards.gov.au.

Standard 3.2.2

12 Food recall

(1) A food business engaged in the wholesale supply, manufacture or importation of food must:
   (a) have in place a system to ensure the recall of unsafe food;
   (b) set out this system in a written document and make this document available to an authorised officer upon request; and
   (c) comply with this system when recalling unsafe food.
Health and hygiene requirements

All food handlers must prepare food safely so it does not harm consumers. There are minimum requirements detailed in the Standards for handling food that can be used to help you prepare food safely in the workplace kitchen, home or anywhere you handle food.

However, if you prepare food for sale you must follow these requirements. If you do not follow them, you are taking a chance with someone’s health.

In some ways, food laws are like traffic laws. We all rely on drivers obeying the laws to drive safely so people are not harmed. If you jump a red light you may be lucky and not hit anything – but another time you could crash and injure yourself or someone else.

With food, we all rely on food handlers obeying food safety laws all the time, so people are not harmed. If you worked when you were sick, you may be lucky and not make anyone ill – but another time you could make someone very ill, possibly putting them in hospital, or killing them. Is it worth taking that risk? Remember, food poisoning can kill ‘vulnerable’ people, especially the very young, very old or those whose immune systems are weakened by heart and kidney disease, cancer, AIDS, etc. Most clients of delivered meal organisations are probably ‘vulnerable’.

The legislation is there to protect the community and those that choose not to follow the food safety rules may be fined in the same way as those driving cars will be fined if they do not obey traffic laws.

So the person in charge of the kitchen has to inform you about and, make sure you understand, your hygiene and health responsibilities before you handle food. They may provide you with a copy of the information sheet from this handbook called Food handling – your legal responsibilities on page 41.

The Standards identify specific requirements for individual food handlers and for the business which relate to the following issues:
Looking After Delivered Meals

Spreading disease

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Business responsibility</th>
<th>Food handlers’ personal responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People with these symptoms may be suffering from food-borne disease:</td>
<td>Make sure sick food handlers do not touch food, or anything that will touch food.</td>
<td>You should stay at home if you have symptoms of food poisoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diarrhoea (unless due to diagnosed bowel disorder)</td>
<td>Sick food handlers and carriers of food-borne disease should stay at home until cleared by their doctor to work with food.</td>
<td>If you get sick when you are at work, then tell the kitchen supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vomiting (unless due to pregnancy)</td>
<td>If people with symptoms do come to work, make sure they do jobs that are not near food or food contact surfaces. For example, they could work outside washing flyscreens or do paperwork away from the kitchen.</td>
<td>The supervisor will send you home or make sure you do not work near food or food contact surfaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sore throat with fever</td>
<td>(This also means you cannot serve food directly or touch food containers. You may have bacteria on your hands that could spread disease to the client.)</td>
<td>Light snifflies can be dried up with medication - allowing you to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jaundice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who are carriers of disease, may not have symptoms, but can still spread disease.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standard 3.2.2

16 Health of persons who handle food – duties of food businesses

(1) A food business must ensure the following persons do not engage in the handling of food for the food business where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination:
(a) a person known to be suffering from a food-borne disease, or who is a carrier of a food-borne disease; and
(b) a person known or reasonably suspected to have a symptom that may indicate he or she is suffering from a food-borne disease.

(3) A food business may permit a person excluded from handling food in accordance with paragraph (1)(a) to resume handling food only after receiving advice from a medical practitioner that the person no longer is suffering from, or is a carrier of, a food-borne disease.

14 Health of food handlers

(1) A food handler who has a symptom that indicates the handler may be suffering from a food-borne disease, or knows he or she is suffering from a food-borne disease, or is a carrier of a food-borne disease, must, if at work:
(a) report that he or she is or may be suffering from the disease, or knows that he or she is carrying the disease, to his or her supervisor, as the case may be
(b) not engage in any handling of food where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the disease; and
(c) if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises – take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated as a result of the disease.

If your illness could spread to food or other workers - stay at home
Standard 3.2.2

16 Health of persons who handle food – duties of food businesses

(2) A food business must ensure that a person who is known or reasonably suspected to be suffering from a condition and who continues to engage in the handling of food for the food business takes all practicable measures to prevent food contamination.

14 Health of food handlers

(2) A food handler who suffers from a condition must, if at work:

(a) if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of suffering the condition – report that he or she is suffering from the condition to his or her supervisor; and

(b) if continuing to engage in the handling of food or other work – take all practicable measures to prevent food being contaminated as a result of the condition.

(3) A food handler must notify his or her supervisor if the food handler knows or suspects that he or she may have contaminated food whilst handling food.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Business responsibility</th>
<th>Food handlers personal responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contaminating food with bacteria</td>
<td>Take all practical measures to prevent food becoming contaminated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People may not have a food-borne disease, but have a ‘condition’ that could contaminate food.

Conditions include:
- Infected skin lesions. For example, sores, boils, acne, cuts, abrasions
- Discharges from ears, noses and eyes. For example, colds, flu, sties, hay-fever and other allergies

Food handlers must tell the supervisor if they have a condition that could contaminate food. If the supervisor agrees that the food handler can continue to handle food, then he/she must avoid contaminating it. Practical measures that can be taken include:
- Completely covering infected skin lesions on exposed parts of the body with waterproof bandages and dressings. As most band-aids are only water-resistant, they will need to be covered with a waterproof layer, e.g. clean disposable gloves. Where possible use blue or brightly-coloured band-aids so they can be easily seen if they fall off.
- Avoiding touching the infected area or discharge.
- Washing and drying hands thoroughly after touching infected area or discharge.
- Using medication to dry up discharge.
- Using disposable tissues to wipe the discharge then immediately washing and drying hands thoroughly.

Photo 45: Cover band-aids with a disposable glove.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Business responsibility</th>
<th>Food handlers personal responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food handlers may be fined up to $50,000 if they knowingly contaminate food.</strong></td>
<td>Must tell food handlers about their health and hygiene responsibilities. <em>Food handling - your legal responsibilities</em> provides all this information.</td>
<td>Must comply with their health and hygiene responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confidentiality</strong></td>
<td>If a food handler tells you about their medical condition, you must keep the information confidential. You may tell the proprietor or an authorised officer if information is used to reduce risk of food contamination.</td>
<td>You must tell the supervisor if you are ill. However, only the supervisor, proprietor and authorised officer may be informed, unless you give permission for others to know.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Visitors to the kitchen could contaminate food or food contact surfaces** | Must make sure that visitors:  
  - Do not contaminate food  
  - Restrict visitors e.g. carers and tradespersons in the kitchen to areas away from food and food contact surfaces where possible  
  - Supervise visitors to make sure they do not handle food, sneeze or eat over food or food contact surfaces  
  - Provide protective clothing e.g. hat and apron if they need to be near unwrapped food.  
  - Do not touch ready-to-eat food and  
  - Do not smoke or spit in the kitchen |                                                                                  |

**Standard 3.2.2**

18 General duties of food business

(1) A food business must inform all food handlers working for the food business of their health and hygiene obligations under Subdivision 1 of this Division. *(See Food handling –your legal responsibilities information sheet)*

(2) A food business must ensure that any information provided by a food handler in Subdivision 1 of this Division is not disclosed to any person without the consent of the food handler, except the proprietor or an authorised officer, and that the information is not used for any purpose other than addressing the risk of food contamination. *(This means that any information given by food handlers about their diseases is to be kept confidential)*

(3) A food business must take all practicable measures to ensure all people on the food premises of the food business:  
(a) do not contaminate food;  
(b) do not have unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food; and  
(c) do not spit, smoke, or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas where there is unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food.
Hand Washing Information

Wash your hands
• *Before* handling food
• *In between* touching raw meats and ready-to-eat foods
• *After* using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, eating or drinking
• *After* touching scalp, hair, body, money, dirt or rubbish

*Don’t forget to wash all over the hands, between fingers and under nails*

1. Wet
2. Soap
3. Rub hands thoroughly under warm running water
4. Rinse
5. Thoroughly dry

*You may use the towel to turn off the tap!*
Hand Washing Facilities

• Dry hands thoroughly to remove water and microbes.
• Single use towels can stop the spread of bacteria.
• Hand dryers may be used, but are not as effective as they take too long to dry hands.

• Warm running water required (single outlet, not separate hot and cold water taps).
• You cannot wash hands effectively in cold water.

• Basin located in food preparation area.
• Large enough to wash hands and arms.
• Permanent fixture.
• Connected to potable water supply and drainage.
• Labelled as only for handwashing.

• Bar soaps or liquid soaps may be used.

• Bin required to collect used paper towels.

Standard 3.2.2
17 Hygiene of food handlers – duties of food business

(1) A food business must, for each food premises:

(a) maintain easily accessible hand washing facilities;

(b) maintain, at or near each hand washing facility, a supply of:
(i) warm running water; and
(ii) soap; or
(iii) other items that may be used to thoroughly clean hands;

(c) ensure hand washing facilities are only used for the washing of hands, arms and face; and

(d) provide, at or near each hand washing facility;
(i) single use towels or other means of effectively drying hands that are not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands; and
ii) a container for used towels, if needed.

Standard 3.2.3
14 Hand washing facilities

(1) Food premises must have hand washing facilities that are located where they can be easily accessed by food handlers;

(a) within areas where food handlers work if their hands are likely to be a source of contamination; and

(b) if there are toilets on the food premises – immediately adjacent to the toilets or toilet cubicles.

(2) Hand washing facilities must be:

(a) permanent fixtures;

(b) connected to, or otherwise provided with, a supply of warm running potable water;

(c) of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing; and

(d) clearly designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face.
Protective clothing

Food handlers have a personal responsibility to protect food from contamination. Protective clothing provides a barrier between you and food in the following ways:

- **Aprons** protect food from bacteria you may have on your clothes. On your way to work your clothes pick up bacteria from objects such as animals, people, bushes and vehicles. Full-length aprons protect clothes from spills, splashes and squirts. Remove your apron before going to the toilet. Wear a clean apron every day.

- **Hair** must be tied back and kept away from the face. Hats will stop hair falling into food and also prevent fingers touching hair when scratching your head. To protect food from contamination:
  - Tie hair back (plaits keep the hair together)
  - Use clips to keep hair away from face
  - Wear a hat to cover the head and keep hair away from the face. If handling food, keep loose ends around your face inside the hat.
  - Hats are available with built in snoods and these are great for “in between” hair that is too short to tie back.
  - Wear a hair net to enclose all the hair and prevent your head getting hot. Wear a cap or visor with the hair net for a more modern look.
  - Keep beards short and clean or wear a beard guard if handling food directly.

- **Shoes** are not included in the food safety legislation as they are an occupational health and safety concern, but flat enclosed footwear is recommended.
Food Handling
- your legal responsibilities

To keep food safe all food handlers must comply with these requirements from national Food Safety Standard 3.2.2.

If you require further explanation of any items, please ask your kitchen supervisor or contact your local council environmental health officer.

For more information about the Food Safety Standards, visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand web page at www.foodstandards.gov.au

Photocopy the following 4 pages onto two sides of A4 paper to make a useful handout for kitchen workers.
Division 4 — Health and Hygiene Requirements
Subdivision 1 — Requirements for food handlers

13 General requirement

A food handler must take all reasonable measures not to handle food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

14 Health of food handlers

(1) A food handler who has a symptom that indicates the handler may be suffering from a food-borne disease, or knows he or she is suffering from a food-borne disease, or is a carrier of a food-borne disease, must, if at work:

(a) report that he or she is or may be suffering from the disease, or knows that he or she is carrying the disease, to his or her supervisor, as the case may be;

(b) not engage in any handling of food where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the disease; and

(c) if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises – take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated as a result of the disease.

(2) A food handler who suffers from a condition must, if at work:

(a) if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of suffering the condition – report that he or she is suffering from the condition to his or her supervisor; and

(b) if continuing to engage in the handling of food or other work – take all practicable measures to prevent food being contaminated as a result of the condition.

(3) A food handler must notify his or her supervisor if the food handler knows or suspects that he or she may have contaminated food whilst handling food.
15 Hygiene of food handlers

(1) A food handler must, when engaging in any food handling operation:

(a) take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
(b) take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
(c) ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted.
(d) only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering;
(e) not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
(f) not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
(g) not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled; and
(h) not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.

(2) A food handler must wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):

(a) whenever his or her hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food;
(b) immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food; and
(c) immediately after using the toilet.

(3) A food handler must, when engaging in a food handling operation that involves unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):

(a) before commencing or re-commencing handling food;
(b) immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and
(c) after touching his or her hair, scalp or a body opening.
(4) A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands:
   (a) use the hand washing facilities provided;
   (b) thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water; and
   (c) thoroughly dry his or her hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.

(5) A food handler who handles food at temporary food premises does not have to clean his or her hands with warm running water, or comply with paragraph (4)(c), if the appropriate enforcement agency has provided the food business operating from the temporary food premises with approval in writing for this purpose.

Summary of Main Points

Handle food safely by protecting it from contamination.

If you have symptoms of food-borne disease such as vomiting, diarrhoea, sore throat with fever, fever or jaundice, stay at home to avoid contaminating food or infecting people.

If you are sick at work tell the kitchen supervisor.

If you have a skin condition on an exposed part of your body that could contaminate food - tell the kitchen supervisor and put a barrier between you and the food e.g. wear clean gloves and/or use utensils.

Make sure that your hair, clothing and jewellery do not touch food or food contact surfaces e.g. when handling food wear a hat or tie hair back, wear an apron and remove jewellery. If you must wear jewellery cover it with a disposable glove when handling food.

Don’t eat over food or work surfaces.

Wash hands (or change gloves)
   • Before handling any ready-to-eat food
   • In between handling raw meats and ready-to-eat foods
   • After using the toilet
   • After touching your hair or body, sneezing, eating or drinking
   • When they are dirty or sticky.

Wash hands in the hand basin (not the sink):
   • Use soap and warm running water
Cleaning and sanitising

Cleaning

Have you ever tried to clean the kitchen before you have tidied it? It takes longer to sweep around stools, boxes, baskets and other items left on the floor. By removing waste and keeping the kitchen tidy, you will be able to see the dirt and clean more quickly.

Cleaning with a detergent removes all dirt and grease that could attract and provide food for pests. Cleaning also maintains a safe working environment by removing grease from floors reducing the risk of people slipping or falling.

There are many items to clean in the kitchen – so it makes sense to have a list so that no job is missed. Some jobs need to be done all the time, others once a day, week, month or year. A written list will remind you what needs cleaning and when. It may also be useful for contract cleaners.

Don’t forget to let all food handlers know where cleaning equipment is stored and how to use it correctly.

Kitchens that have used a cleaning schedule have found that:

• Jobs are shared among all workers in the kitchen
• Volunteers can see the jobs that need doing and pick up the cleaning jobs in between other duties
• Jobs do not build up.

Little and often is the way to go with cleaning. If the cleaning is left for a long time it will be very hard work to remove the build up of grease and grime. Make life easy, clean as you go!

Make sure that there is no build up of rubbish, food waste, dirt, grease or other visible matter in the kitchen or on equipment, fixtures and fittings. Use a cobweb brush to dust high places and arrange for a contractor to clean when required. Don’t forget to clean the handles on taps and fridge doors.

Now here’s an idea! Use the Cleaning Schedule on page 46 to help you develop one that includes all the jobs in your kitchen.
Looking After Delivered Meals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cleaning job</th>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cleaning continuously/daily</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishes*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep and wash floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste bin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinks* and hand basins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handles on cool-room and taps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insulated boxes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clean at least weekly (indicate day to be done)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool-rooms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cupboards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clean as required (Check weekly and indicate day to be done)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovens/food warmers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freezers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dust the ceiling fans and air conditioner vents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dust the bug zappers/light fittings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Sanitising**

Food contact surfaces include chopping boards, utensils and workbenches used to prepare food. These must be cleaned, sanitised and be dry before they are used for food.

Why do you need to clean and sanitise?

Cleaning removes the grease and dirt, sanitising reduces the number of microbes to a safe level and drying makes sure that any remaining microbes cannot multiply on the surface.

Cleaning may not remove all microbes that hide underneath the dirt and grease. A surface may look clean, but could still be covered with microbes, especially if it is wet. You cannot see microbes without a microscope, but they are there.

Sanitisers do not work on dirty surfaces, as they cannot get through the grease and dirt that surround bacteria, so it is important to clean before sanitising.

**Sanitising methods**

You can sanitise using hot water and/or chemicals:

- **Hot water sanitising** – soaking dishes in water that is over 77°C for 30 seconds will kill most bacteria. However, most hot water systems do not get that hot and there are occupational health and safety issues with using hot water at these temperatures.

  Soaking dishes in hot water out of the tap for a couple of minutes may reduce the number of bacteria. The water should be hot enough that you need to wear rubber gloves when putting your hands in it. The combination of time and temperature will help reduce the number of bacteria on the dishes. The hot water will make the dishes hot, so when they are drained they will air dry very quickly.

- **Chemical sanitising** – chemical sanitisers include QACs (quaternary ammonium compounds), chlorine release agents (hypochlorites including bleach) and iodophors (iodine based compounds). These

**Picture**: **Photo 59: Clean food contact surfaces before using sanitisers on them.**

---

**Standard 3.2.2**

**20 Cleaning and sanitising of specific equipment**

(1) A food business must ensure the following equipment is in a clean and sanitary condition in the circumstances set out below:

a) eating and drinking utensils – immediately before each use; and

b) the food contact surfaces of equipment – whenever food that will come into contact with the surface is likely to be contaminated.

(2) In subclause (1), a ‘clean and sanitary condition’ means, in relation to a surface or utensil, the condition of the surface or utensil where it:

(a) is clean; and

(b) has had applied to it heat or chemicals, heat and chemicals, or other processes, so that the number of micro-organisms on the surface or utensil has been reduced to a level that:

(i) does not compromise the safety of the food with which it may come into contact; and

(ii) does not permit the transmission of infectious disease.
Looking After Delivered Meals

Chemicals are toxic and must be rinsed off a surface with clean water before it is used to prepare food.

You can sanitise using hot water and/or chemicals. Some chemicals, such as chlorine dioxide are not toxic and do not require rinsing off. Check you know how to use the chemical safely with food.

Commercial dish washing machines either sanitise using high temperatures or use a sanitising solution at a warm temperature. Many have temperatures for washing and sanitising marked on their dials. Check the instructions for your machine and have the machine regularly serviced to make sure it reaches the correct temperatures.

When used correctly all sanitisers are safe, so it is important to read the label to know how to use them.

The label will show you:
- If the chemical is suitable for use in a kitchen
- How to store the chemical – some need to be kept in the dark
- How to dilute the chemical – some need to be made up fresh each day or they do not work
- How long the chemical needs to be in contact with the surface – this “contact time” may be a few seconds or a few minutes
- Safety advice – such as avoiding contact with skin, eyes and food.

Make sure all containers are clearly labelled including chemicals you have diluted.

What about tea towels?

Tea towels spread bacteria around the kitchen, so where possible try to avoid using them. Tea towels are often seen hanging over shoulders or from belts. Food handlers will often not think before they use them to wipe benches, utensils, hands, knives, floors and anything else that needs wiping in a hurry!

If you have no option but to use a tea towel to dry dishes, then make sure that you use:
- Freshly laundered tea towels. (Washing tea towels
Looking After Delivered Meals

Using a Dishwasher or Sink to Clean and Sanitise Equipment
(E.g. crockery, utensils, chopping boards)

Step 1: Prepare
Scrape waste off equipment

Step 2: Wash
Wash in warm, soapy water

Step 3: Sanitise
Soak for at least a minute in very hot water
(If water is only warm, add sanitiser as shown on label).

Step 4: Dry
Leave to drain and put away when dry
How to Clean and Sanitise a Work Surface
(E.g. preparation benches or large equipment too big for the sink)

Step 1: Prepare
Scrape waste off equipment

Step 2: Wash
Wash in warm, soapy water

Step 3: Sanitise
Spray with sanitising solution (at dilution and contact time shown on label)

Step 4: Dry
Leave to air dry or wipe with paper towels
with detergent will remove grease, dirt and grime on them. They are then sanitised by the heat from the washing water, tumble dryer or the ultra-violet light and heat from the sun.)
- Use a clean tea towel for each batch of dishes.
- Get into the routine of using a clean towel each time you go near the draining board.
- When the towel is wet, replace it with a clean dry one.
- Never dry out a wet tea towel and re-use it to dry dishes without laundering it.

Animals and pests

The Standards make it clear that animals are not allowed in the kitchen. They can contaminate surfaces and utensils and transfer bacteria from their bodies onto anything they touch or lick. However, assistance animals such as guide dogs and hearing dogs are permitted in dining areas used by customers.

Pests can be a real problem in the kitchen. Cockroaches, flies, spiders, mice and rats are among the most common pests. Pests bring bacteria into the kitchen and spread them around on their faeces, feet and fur. Pests are most active at night and could contaminate food contact surfaces and equipment without you knowing. You can manage pests by:
- Stopping them coming into the kitchen and
- Controlling those already in the kitchen.

**To stop pests coming into the kitchen** make sure that doors and windows close properly. Also check where pipes enter the kitchen. If you do see holes or cracks in walls, floors or ceilings, arrange to get them filled. If doors and windows are kept open they will need to have some method of stopping pests coming into the kitchen, for example fly screening or air curtains. Air curtains are electric air blowers that blow air across a doorway. Flies cannot fly through the curtain of air.

**To control pests already in the kitchen** you need to stop them eating and breeding. The easiest way to do this is to keep the kitchen clean and tidy. If there is no food for pests to eat and no material for rodents to make nests they will either starve to death or move on to another home.
Looking After Delivered Meals

Standard 3.2.2

21 Maintenance

(1) A food business must maintain food premises, fixtures, fittings, equipment, and those parts of vehicles that are used to transport food, in a good state of repair and working order having regard to their use.

(2) A food business must not use any chipped, broken or cracked eating or drinking utensils for handling food.

When you are cleaning, look out for signs of pest activity, especially cockroach, mice and rat droppings. These are most likely found in warm dark places such as behind the fridges and freezers, around hot water pipes, under cookers and in dark cupboards. Don’t forget to check drawer units by taking out the drawers and check beneath heavy items of equipment such as mixers. If you use cockroach baits, make sure they are within their use by date - the chemicals may not be effective after this time. Follow instructions on the label and keep them away from food and food contact surfaces.

Maintenance

Do you know what condition your kitchen is in? Are the fixtures, fittings and equipment well maintained and working properly? Have you checked recently? It makes sense to regularly check the kitchen and see what needs fixing. For example, there may be
• Loose or cracked tiles on the floor or walls
• Damaged fly screens
• Leaking taps
• Broken lights and diffusers
• Damaged work surfaces
• Chopping boards and utensils that need replacing
• Broken waste bins
• Damaged cleaning equipment such as brooms, buckets and mops
• Damaged food containers or insulated boxes
• Damaged plaster on walls
• Broken shelving
• Cracked windows
• Broken cool-room or freezer door seals
• Damaged blender blades

Take a walk through the kitchen and make a note of any item that needs to be repaired. This may involve forwarding the list to whoever is responsible for the business.

Plan your maintenance, so it doesn’t interfere with food preparation and reduces the risk of food contamination.

Full details of constructional requirements for buildings, fixtures and fittings are in Standard 3.2.3 obtainable from www.foodstandards.gov.au
Throw away any chipped, broken or cracked plates and other dishes as soon as you notice them. They cannot be cleaned effectively as bacteria can hide in the cracks. Also they may be dangerous as people could cut their mouths when drinking from chipped mugs or cut their fingers when handling cracked plates.

Summary

The national Food Safety Standards provide minimum standards for food safety in food businesses. By following the Standards a delivered meal organisation will be able to produce safe food, all day, every day. The Standards require everyone who handles food to know what they are doing and to be aware of their personal responsibility to look after the food.

What next?

While the national Food Safety Standards covered in this handbook do not require anything to be written down, it is recommended that delivered meal organisations consider keeping some records.

Without records, it is difficult to demonstrate due diligence. Due diligence means that you did everything you could reasonably be expected to do to keep the food safe.

For example, if a client becomes ill with food poisoning, the kitchen could use the records to demonstrate it has safe food practices in place and therefore may not be responsible for the illness.

Complying with the national Food Safety Standards as described in this handbook is the first step towards implementing a food safety program. Use the checklist on the next page to see how well you are doing.

As our clients are vulnerable to food poisoning, it makes sense to do everything possible to look after our delivered meals.

Remember

- Protect food from contamination
- Only accept food in good condition
- Wash your hands
- Keep hot food hot and cold food cold
- Use utensils wherever possible
- Don’t handle food if you have food poisoning symptoms such as diarrhoea or vomiting
- If in doubt- throw it out!

What is a food safety program?

A food safety program is a written document that shows how a kitchen is handling the food safety risks associated with preparing food.

It identifies what can go wrong with food and the actions taken to prevent things from going wrong.

It may include information about deliveries, temperature monitoring, cleaning and procedures for particular jobs.
### Does Your Kitchen Comply with the Standards?

Use the checklist to help monitor your progress. You should be able to answer 'yes' to all the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Skills and Knowledge (p7)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Do all food handlers have the skills and knowledge to handle food safely? (This may involve on-the-job or formal training)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Food receipt (p9)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Are all deliveries checked on arrival?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Food storage (p14)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is food protected from contamination?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is cold potentially hazardous food stored at or below 5°C?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Is hot potentially hazardous food stored at or above 60°C?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Is all frozen food hard?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Food processing (p17)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is food thawed safely?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is food cooked thoroughly?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Is food re-heated rapidly (less than 2 hours)?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Is food cooled rapidly (total time less than 6 hours?)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Food display (p26)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is food protected from contamination?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is potentially hazardous food displayed at safe temperatures:</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Hot - at or above 60°C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Cold - at or below 5°C</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Room temperature - complies with Four-Hour/Two-Hour Guide?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 Packaging (p28)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Are packing materials protected from contamination?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7 Transportation (p29)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is food protected from contamination?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Is food transported at safe temperatures?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8 Food disposal (p32)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is returned or recalled food stored away from other foods?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9 Health and hygiene requirements (p34)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Do all food handlers:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Know their legal responsibilities?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Know how and when to wash their hands correctly?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Know not to work when they are ill?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Know how to protect food from contamination?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Know how to wear protective clothing correctly?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Do hand washing facilities have warm running water, soap, single use towel (e.g. paper towel) and bin?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10 Cleaning and sanitising (p45)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is the kitchen cleaned regularly?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Are food contact surfaces cleaned, sanitised and air dried where possible?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Are tea towels used correctly?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11 Animals and pests (p51)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Are pests kept out of the kitchen?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Do you check for signs of pest activity?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 Maintenance (p52)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Is the kitchen building and equipment in a good state of repair?</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>