



FIT OUT GUIDELINES



GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A FOOD PREMISES

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Introduction

These guidelines have been produced to assist you with the design, construction and fit-out of your commercial food premises. The guidelines are also applicable to established food businesses undergoing modification or renovation works.

The guidelines are based on the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) *Safe Food Australia – A Guide to the Food Safety Standards* 4th Edition, February 2023 and the Australian Standard AS 4674 – 2004 *Design, construction and fit-out of food premises*.

Under each heading, the outcome that your business needs to achieve to comply with the respective section of the FSANZ Food Standards Code outcome is provided in the shaded box.

A copy of the FSANZ *Safe Food Australia – A Guide to the Food Safety Standards* 4th Edition can be downloaded for free from www.foodstandards.gov.au.

The Australian Standard AS 4674 – 2004 *Design, construction and fit-out of food premises* is available for purchase from <https://store.standards.org.au/>

Design and Construction of a Food Premises

General requirements

A food premises must be designed and constructed to:

- Be appropriate for the purposes for which the premises are used;
- Provide adequate space for food production and equipment;
- Facilitate cleaning, sanitising and maintenance
- Prevent access by and harbourage of pests;
- Keep out dust, dirt, fumes, smoke and other contaminants.

When planning the design and construction of your food premises, the following points need to be considered:

Premises size

The size of the kitchen will impact the volume of food that you are able to produce and the size of your menu.

Food Types/Menu

The types of food that you want to make will have an impact on the design of your kitchen. You need to consider:

- The types of equipment that are needed. For example, if you are wanting to deep fry food, you will need one or more deep fryers.
- Method of food preparation. If food is to be made in advance in batches, you will need enough storage space to store the food.
- Do you want to offer allergen free food options? Consideration will need to be given to design elements that minimise the likelihood of contamination e.g. separate storage areas for allergen free foods.

The layout of your premises

The way in which your premises is laid out plays a key role in minimising the likelihood of cross-contamination.

Ideally the flow of food should occur in one direction from receipt through to storage, preparation and then service/dispatch.

Physically separating different areas in your food business where different activities take place is good practice and is another way of minimising the likelihood of cross-contamination. For example, separating food preparation areas from wash – up areas.

Location of equipment and facilities

Equipment and facilities such as hand wash basins need to be located in areas that are easily accessible by staff. For example, you don't want to block access to your hand wash basin by placing another piece of equipment in front of it.

Construction standards and materials

Your premises needs to be constructed from appropriate materials and to a good level of workmanship.

The quality of the fit out and the type of materials used can have a substantial impact on how easy your premises is to maintain in a clean and hygienic condition.

Provision of adequate space

Provision of adequate space for the activities that you are intending to undertake in your business and for the equipment and fittings used for those activities is important. For example, you need to have enough dry shelving space to accommodate all the dry food that you need to store.

Pest Control

It is critical to ensure that food and food contact surfaces are protected from contamination by pests.

Physical measures to prevent pest entry into your food business are a key part of an effective pest management program and include but are not limited to:

- Installation of pest strips or air curtains at entrances.
- Fitting windows with flyscreens.
- Installation of weather strips to the base of doors.
- Installation of self-closing mechanisms to external doors.
- Sealing of any gaps e.g. around pipework.

The location of pest control devices such as zappers is important as you don't want them located where they may pose a contamination risk e.g. above food preparation or packaging storage areas.

Careful consideration must also be given to the orientation of kitchen service openings in alfresco premises designs in order to minimise the likelihood of pest entry.

Water Supply

A food premises must have an adequate supply of potable (drinking) water available for activities conducted at the food premises.

Your food premises must have an adequate supply of safe drinking water. The use of water supplies other than from the mains will require prior written approval from Council's Environmental Health team.

An adequate supply of water is one that can provide good pressure, temperature and volume for all food handling activities carried out. This includes hand washing, food preparation, cleaning, and sanitising.

Hot and cold water must be available to all sinks.

Sewage and wastewater disposal

A food premises must have a sewage and wastewater disposal system that:

- Effectively disposes of all sewage and wastewater; and
- Is constructed and located so that there is no likelihood of the sewage and wastewater polluting the water supply or contaminating food.

Your food premises must have a sewage and wastewater disposal system that:

- Will effectively dispose of all sewage and wastewater through a sewerage point approved by the local water authority (sewered areas). In unsewered areas, an onsite wastewater system (septic system) will be required.
- The sewage and wastewater system must be constructed and located so that there is no likelihood of the sewage and wastewater polluting the mains water supply, storm water system or contaminating food or food preparation surfaces.

NOTE: For information on whether your business requires a food/oil interceptor (grease trap), please contact South East Water's Trade Waste team on 9552 3662.

Grease traps (food/oil interceptors) should not be installed in areas used for the preparation and storage of food.

Storage of garbage and recyclable matter

A food premises must have facilities for the storage of garbage and recyclable matter that:

- Adequately contain the volume and type of garbage and recyclable matter generated by the business;
- Enclose the garbage or recyclable matter, if this is necessary, to keep pests and animals away from it; and
- Are designed and constructed so that they may be easily and effectively cleaned.

Your food premises must have sufficient bins for the storage and disposal of garbage and recyclable waste.

The bins must be constructed from a material that enables them to be easily and effectively cleaned.

If your business has a garbage room where you store your bins, then this room needs to be designed and constructed so that it can be easily cleaned:

- The floor needs to be made of a smooth, durable, impervious (waterproof) material, coved at wall – floor junctions and graded and drained to your waste disposal system.
- A hose tap connected to a water supply should be provided for cleaning purposes.
- The walls and ceiling need to have a smooth finish, free from cracks and crevices and be constructed from a material that is able to be effectively cleaned.

The room must also have sufficient ventilation and lighting in accordance with the relevant provisions of the FSANZ Food Standards Code.

Ventilation

A food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the food premises.

Your food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from your premises. This helps to prevent the contamination of food through airborne particles and to minimise the build-up of fats and oils on surfaces throughout the premises.

Natural ventilation will generally only be suitable for premises where there is little or no cooking that generates steam or greasy air.

In all other instances, a mechanical ventilation system will need to be installed above cooking equipment, probers, commercial dish washing machines and any other appliance or equipment that releases fumes, smoke, steam or vapours. The system must be designed, constructed and installed in accordance with the *Building Code of Australia* and *Australian Standard AS 1668.2 – 2024*.

NOTE: Installing a mechanical exhaust canopy requires a building permit.

Lighting

A food premises must have a lighting system that provides sufficient natural or artificial light for the activities conducted on the food premises.

Lighting in your food premises must be sufficient to enable food handlers to carry out their job effectively and efficiently and must meet the requirements of the *Building Code of Australia*.

Light fittings in food preparation, storage and wash-up areas should be:

- Flush mounted or recessed into the ceiling; and
- Fitted with shatterproof diffusers (covers).

Floor, walls and ceilings

The requirements for floors, walls and ceilings specified in this section apply to the floors, walls and ceilings of all areas used for food handling, cleaning, sanitising and personal hygiene except the following areas:

- Dining areas;
- Drinking areas; and
- Other areas to which members of the public usually have access.

Floors

Floors must be designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted on the food premises.

Floors must:

- Be able to be effectively cleaned;
- Be unable to absorb grease, food particles or water;
- Be laid so that there is no ponding of water; and
- To the extent that is practicable, be unable to provide harbourage for pests.

NOTE: Exemptions to the above requirements apply under the following circumstances:

- Floors of temporary food premises, including ground surfaces, that are unlikely to pose any risk of contamination to food handled at the food premises;
- Floors of food premises that are unlikely to pose any risk of contamination to food handled at the food premises provided the food business has obtained the approval in writing from Council's Environmental Health Team.

Floor surfaces in food handling, preparation and storage areas must generally be constructed from a material that provides a smooth, durable and impervious (waterproof) surface.

Floor surfaces must be able to withstand the type of cleaning procedures (including heavy-duty chemicals) to be used and the wear and tear caused by food handling operations (i.e. moving of heavy equipment, foot traffic, etc.)

- Suitable floor finishes include:
- Ceramic tiles with flush epoxy grouting.
- Sealed quarry tiles.
- Polyvinyl sheeting with welded seams.
- Laminated thermosetting plastic sheeting.
- Epoxy resins.
- Non-slip stainless steel.

Floor Coving

Floor coving should be installed in all food preparation, storage or wet areas at the intersection of floors with walls/plinths.

Floor Waste Drain

Floor waste drains are recommended in food premises where cleaning is to be conducted via a hose down method.

If floor waste drains are installed, the entire floor must be evenly graded to prevent ponding. The floor waste must be connected to sewer in accordance with the requirements of the local water authority. In unsewered areas, it must be connected to the onsite wastewater management system (septic system).

Walls and ceilings

Walls and ceilings must be designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted on the food premises.

All walls and ceilings must be able to be effectively cleaned and to the extent that is practicable, be unable to provide harbourage for pests.

Where walls and ceilings are necessary to protect food from contamination, they must be:

- Sealed to prevent the entry of dirt, dust and pests;
- Unable to absorb grease, food particles or water; and
- Able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

Walls

The walls in food preparation and food storage areas need to be:

- Easily cleanable; and
- Unable to provide harbourage for pests.

In order to achieve the above criteria, the walls need to be constructed from a material that provides a smooth, durable and impervious (waterproof) finish.

Splash backs constructed of a durable and impervious (waterproof) material that can be effectively cleaned need to be provided to walls above and behind:

- Cooking equipment.
- Food preparation benches.
- Wet areas.
- Other areas that may come into contact with food or that require frequent cleaning.

A minimum splash back height of 1.8 metres above the floor is recommended. Where benches are secured and sealed to a wall, a splash back may not be required below the bench. In such cases, a splash back should be provided to a minimum height of 450mm above the bench.

It is recommended that aluminium or stainless steel capping is provided to external corners and in doorways of high traffic areas in order to protect the underlying wall surface.

All service pipes should be concealed beneath the surface of walls, floors and ceilings or alternatively pipes can be fixed at least 25mm clear of adjacent services to enable easy cleaning.

Suitable wall finishes include:

- Ceramic tiles.
- Stainless steel.
- Poly vinyl sheeting.

Ceilings

Ceilings above food preparation and food storage areas need to be smooth, durable, impervious, and capable of being effectively cleaned. Flush-jointed plasterboard sealed with a washable paint is a typical example of a suitable finish.

NOTE: Drop-in, removable panel ceilings are generally not suitable in areas where open food is prepared, displayed or served because the panels are difficult to effectively seal.

Fixtures, fittings and equipment

Fixtures, fittings and equipment must be:

- Adequate for the production of safe and suitable food; and
- Fit for their intended use.

General requirements

Fixtures, fittings and equipment must be designed, constructed, located and installed so that:

- There is no likelihood that they will cause food contamination;
- They are able to be easily and effectively cleaned;
- Adjacent floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces are able to be easily and effectively cleaned; and
- To the extent that is practicable, they do not provide harbourage for pests.

Sinks

The number and size of sinks that your food premises needs depends on a number of factors including:

- Nature of food handling activities undertaken at the premises.
- The scale of operations.
- The size of objects to be washed.
- Whether the premises has a commercial dishwasher.

As a general rule, if your business has utensils and equipment that need to be washed and sanitised, you will require a double bowl sink at a minimum. This is the case even if you have a commercial dishwasher as not all utensils and equipment can fit in a dishwasher and/or are dishwasher safe. The sink bowls must be large enough to fully immerse the largest piece of equipment that require washing and sanitising and the sink must be supplied with running hot and cold water.

If your business prepares fresh fruit and/or vegetables then an additional (food preparation) sink must be provided exclusively for the washing of those items.

A cleaner's (mop) sink is required for the filling up and emptying of your mop bucket. The sink must be supplied with running hot and cold water.

In addition, the following may be required depending on the type of business you wish to operate:

- A pot wash for large items that don't fit in a conventional sink;
- Hose connections where floors and/or equipment are to be hosed.

Refer to the *Hand Washing Facilities* section of this document for hand wash basin requirements.

Commercial Dishwashers

If you decide to install a dishwasher, then it needs to be a commercial dishwasher and be capable of delivering a rinse cycle with a temperature above 80°C. It is important to check that the equipment that you intend on placing in the dishwasher will fit prior to purchasing a unit. The volume of items that need to be cleaned and sanitised is another important consideration when selecting a dishwasher.

Domestic dishwashers are not suitable for commercial food businesses.

Shelving

Shelving must be appropriate for its use. For example:

- Suitable shelving options in wet areas include stainless steel and high-density plastic shelving.
- Suitable shelving options in dry storage areas include any suitable smooth, durable, impervious material. Timber shelving must be laminated or sealed on all surfaces.
- Shelving must not have any holes, cracks or crevices where food and other debris can lodge.

NOTE: Unsealed chipboard and other unsealed compressed timber/fibreboard products are not suitable.

Cooking and Refrigeration Equipment

When purchasing equipment for a commercial food business it is important to ensure that it is fit for purpose. Important points to consider are:

- Is the equipment intended for commercial use? If you purchase equipment that is intended for domestic use, using it in a commercial setting may void its warranty.
- If purchasing second hand commercial equipment, is it in good condition and functioning properly?
- What sort of equipment do you need for the types of food that you want to serve? For example, if you need to cool cooked food, you may wish to purchase a blast chiller, which is a piece of equipment designed to rapidly cool food. If you want to sell hot meat pies, you will need both an oven (to cook/reheat the pies) and a pie warmer (in which to store them hot for sale).
- How much refrigeration storage capacity do you require? Overstocking a refrigeration unit will impair the unit's ability to work effectively.
- The design of the unit: for example, a cold display unit with no doors (to keep the cool air in) or fan forced cooling (to circulate the cold air) will generally have difficulties in maintaining food below 5°C.

Utensils, cutlery, crockery, serviettes, packaging

Sufficient, clean and dry storage must be provided for all utensils, cutlery, crockery, serviettes and packaging.

Food Storage

Dry ingredients must be stored:

- In a dry environment;
- After opening, in food grade containers with tight fitting lids;
- On shelving at least 150mm clear of the floor.

NOTE: Flour, rice and other bulk food items may be stored on the floor in moveable containers fitted with lockable castors or wheels. Pallet storage is not suitable unless a pallet truck or forklift is available to move pallets for cleaning.

There must be adequate provision made for the cold storage of items that require refrigeration or freezing e.g. cool rooms, fridges and freezers.

NOTE: A building permit is required for the installation of a walk-in cool room or freezer.

Self-Serve Displays

If customers are able to serve themselves:

- A separate scoop or other utensil must be provided for customer use for each food container, bin or hopper;
- Scoops or other utensils must be stored so that their handles do not come in contact with the food;
- Constant supervision must be provided to avoid unintentional or deliberate contamination of the food;
- In certain circumstances, scoops or other utensils may require restraints to prevent them from falling to the ground;
- Sneeze guards or other similar methods must be provided to prevent customers from coughing, sneezing, breathing, etc. on uncovered food.

Connections for specific fixtures, fittings and equipment

Fixtures, fittings and equipment that use water for food handling or other activities and are designed to be connected to a water supply must be connected to an adequate supply of water.

Fixtures, fittings and equipment that are designed to be connected to a sewage and wastewater disposal system and discharge sewage or wastewater must be connected to a sewage and wastewater disposal system.

Automatic equipment that uses water to sanitise utensils or other equipment must only operate for the purpose of sanitation when the water is at a temperature that will sanitise the utensils or equipment.

Connections for specific fixtures, fittings and equipment must:

- Be connected to the sewerage system if they generate liquid waste. A tundish/condensate pipe (connected to sewer or an onsite wastewater system in unsewered areas) is recommended for all refrigeration and heating equipment (including coffee machines).
- Be connected to mains water supply if their use requires water.
- If you use equipment such as dishwashers to sanitise, you must ensure that the water temperature is sufficient to sanitise.

Hand washing facilities

Food premises must have hand-washing facilities that are located where they can be easily accessed by food handlers. This includes:

- Within areas where food handlers work if their hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food and;
- If there are toilets on the food premises — immediately adjacent to the toilets or toilet cubicles.

Hand washing facilities must be provided:

- In areas where open food is handled; and
- Immediately adjacent to any toilets on the premises.

Hand washing facilities need to be:

- Free from obstruction and easily accessible;
- Used for the sole purpose of hand washing;
- Be of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing;
- Be installed at a suitable height e.g. bench height;
- Be supplied with clean, warm running water via a single outlet. A hands-free tap or single-lever mixer tap is recommended;
- Be provided with liquid soap and paper towel in dispensers. NOTE: Research has shown that single use paper towels are generally better than electric air dryers from a hygiene perspective.

Storage of Chemicals and Personal Belongings

Food premises must have adequate storage facilities for the storage of items that are likely to be the source of contamination of food, including chemicals, clothing and personal belongings.

Storage facilities must be located where there is no likelihood of stored items contaminating food or food contact surfaces.

Adequate facilities must be provided for the storage of chemicals and cleaning equipment. These items must be stored separate and away from food and food equipment.

Personal belongings and other non-food related items (e.g. paperwork) must also be stored separately to food and food equipment.

Toilet Facilities

A food business must ensure that adequate toilets are available for the use of food handlers working for the food business.

The food premises must have adequate toilet facilities available for staff. Staff toilet facilities must:

- Be easily accessible.
- Clean and function properly.
- Provided with a handwash basin, warm water, liquid soap and paper towel in dispensers.

- Well-ventilated and have good ventilation.
- Designed to minimise air borne contamination via the provision of an air lock and self-closing doors.

Toilets intended for public and/or customer use should not be accessed through areas where open food is handled, displayed or stored.

The number of toilets a food business must have for customers is set out in the Building Code.

Food Transport Vehicles

Vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed to protect food if there is a likelihood of food being contaminated during transport.

Parts of vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed so that they can be effectively cleaned.

Food contact surfaces in the parts of vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed to be effectively cleaned and, if necessary, sanitised.

Food transport vehicles must be designed and constructed to protect the food being transported from contamination. Therefore, the cabin should be effectively sealed off from the section of the vehicle where the food is stored or, alternatively the food can be stored in sealed containers.

All surfaces within the vehicle and/or sealed containers must be smooth and impervious allowing easy cleaning and be unable to taint the food.