



Food Safety Supervisor Update

This fact sheet provides an update to information relating to Food Safety Supervisors. It should be read in conjunction with Food Industry Fact Sheet 18 - Food Safety Supervisors, which is available on the Queensland Health website at www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/food.

Why is a Food Safety Supervisor important for my food business?

A Food Safety Supervisor will add an onsite level of protection for day-to-day food safety as they have the experience or expertise relevant to the licensable food business and are able to supervise and give directions about food safety to persons in the food business. Additionally, the presence of a Food Safety Supervisor at the food business is important for being contactable by both Local Government and persons who handle food in the food business.

Who is required to have a Food Safety Supervisor?

Under the *Food Act 2006*, all **licensable** food businesses are required to have a Food Safety Supervisor. There are some food businesses that sell food which are not required to be licensed under the *Food Act 2006* including the majority of community non-profit organisations such as sausage sizzles and cake stalls and other food businesses only selling low risk foods such as soft drinks or not potentially hazardous biscuits or cakes. For further information relating to licensing requirements under the *Food Act 2006*, contact your relevant Local Government.

When do the Food Safety Supervisor provisions commence?

The Food Safety Supervisor provisions under the *Food Act 2006* commence on 22 February 2008. However, to allow sufficient time for persons to undertake the required competencies and to ensure food businesses comply with the requirements, the Minister for Health has committed to an enforcement amnesty on these provisions until **1 July 2008**.

Who can be a Food Safety Supervisor for my food business?

The Food Safety Supervisor for a food business may be the proprietor or an employee, provided they meet the requirements of a Food Safety Supervisor prescribed in the *Food Act 2006*. In the circumstance of a small food business, it may be appropriate that the owner is the Food Safety Supervisor.

A Food Safety Supervisor, for a food business is a person who:

- a) knows how to recognise, prevent and alleviate food safety hazards of the food business; and
- b) has skills and knowledge in matters relating to food safety relevant to the food business; and
- c) has the authority to supervise and give directions about matters relating to food safety to persons who handle food in the food business.

How do I determine which food sector my food business falls into?

When determining which food sector your food business falls into, consideration should be given to the predominant activity of the food business, prior to undertaking the required Food Safety Supervisor competencies.

Businesses that generally fall into the food processing sector are those businesses considered to be a manufacturer as defined in the *Food Act 2006*. It should be noted that in relation to food, manufacture does not include preparing food at a particular food business for retail sale at that food business, including for immediate consumption. This includes food prepared at a restaurant kitchen for consumption by a patron in the restaurant or a bakery shop handling and selling food at that bakery shop. These food businesses would fall under the Retail & Hospitality sector for the purposes of acquiring the required competencies.

The Health & Community Services sector includes food businesses preparing or selling food for vulnerable populations including nursing homes, hospitals and child care centres. The Transport & Distribution sector includes those food businesses that are not preparing food, but handling food by way of storing food in warehouses or transporting food. This sector includes distribution centres and water carriers.

How can I obtain the required Food Safety Supervisor competencies?

Persons seeking to become a Food Safety Supervisor are required to contact a registered training organisation (RTO) to either undertake the training required for the specified competencies or to have a 'recognition of prior learning' assessment undertaken to determine if previous qualifications or learning is considered equivalent to the required competencies.

What is a RTO?

A RTO is an organisation registered by a State or Territory authority to deliver training and/or conduct assessments to issue nationally recognised qualifications in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework. RTOs may include TAFE colleges, adult and community education providers, private providers, community organisations, schools, higher education institutions, industry bodies or other organisations meeting the registration requirements.

Where do I find a RTO?

The National Training Information Service website (www.ntis.gov.au) contains a national database of all RTOs in Australia and can be used to locate RTOs in your local area that offer the required competencies. A variety of delivery methods may be offered including on campus, online or part time.

Alternatively, a search of the internet using a search engine and entering any of the descriptions below can provide a detailed list of RTOs who offer the required competencies in Queensland:

- Food Safety Supervisor online training
- Food Safety Supervisor training Queensland
- any of the individual competency codes (eg THHGHS01B)
- any of the individual competency codes with your area/town location (eg THHGHS01B Brisbane)

Food businesses are encouraged to seek the training most suited to their food business and individual requirements, ensuring that the training provider is a RTO and will provide a Statement of Attainment on successful completion of the required competencies.

Is my work experience and previous training taken into consideration?

Yes, you may apply to have a recognition of prior learning assessment undertaken by a RTO that offers the required competencies. The RTO will assess any previous training or education you have done, whether formal or informal, along with any relevant work or general life experience to determine if you meet the required outcomes of the competencies.

The RTO may issue you with a Statement of Attainment for the specified competencies or provide a partial credit advising of any gap training which will be required to obtain the required competencies as a Food Safety Supervisor.

Who is eligible for automatic accreditation as a Food Safety Supervisor?

If a person has completed an appropriate food industry trade qualification or a Bachelor degree or higher qualification from a recognised institution that includes food safety & hygiene subjects, then the person shall be eligible for automatic accreditation as a Food Safety Supervisor.

Qualifications which are suitable for automatic accreditation as a Food Safety Supervisor include:

- Qualified chefs who can demonstrate they have completed the relevant units of competency for the food sector they are working in; or
- Bachelor or higher level degree in:
 - Food Technology or equivalent;
 - Food Microbiology or equivalent;
 - Nutrition & Dietetics or equivalent;
 - Australian Institute of Environmental Health (AIEH) accredited Environmental Health tertiary degree or equivalent.

Automatic accreditation does not require the applicant to obtain a Statement of Attainment via recognition of prior learning assessment from a RTO. The submission of a certified copy of the qualification to the relevant Local Government will suffice. However, in the instance of a qualified chef, a certified copy of the Statement of Attainment for the relevant units of competency must also be provided.

When is a Food Safety Supervisor considered to be reasonably available?

The availability of the Food Safety Supervisor is critical. The Act requires them to be reasonably available while the business is operating. Further guidance has been provided to Local Government to be used as a support mechanism when considering whether a Food Safety Supervisor is reasonably available.

A Food Safety Supervisor is to be located on the premises whenever food handling is being undertaken. However, in the event the Food Safety Supervisor is absent, there must be a documented mechanism for the Food Safety Supervisor to ensure directions about matters relating to food safety are available to persons who handle food. The Food Safety Supervisor must be able to be contacted by the Local Government or food handlers when food handling activities are being undertaken. Determining whether the Food Safety Supervisor is reasonably available in the circumstance, is at the discretion of the relevant Local Government.

A Food Safety Supervisor is not required to be reasonably available when the business is operating but no food handling is being undertaken. For example, a sporting club kitchen closes at 9pm but the club remains open until 11pm for entertainment activities. A Food Safety Supervisor would not be required for the period after 9pm even though the business is open.

Are other food handlers in the food business responsible for food safety?

Yes. A food business must ensure that their food handlers have the skills and knowledge of food safety and hygiene appropriate to the work they do. For example, a chef will need skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene that are quite different from those needed by a waiter or shop assistant in the food business.

Further information

If you have any questions regarding Food Safety Supervisors, contact the Local Government who issues the licence for your food business.

Further information for the food industry can also be obtained from the Queensland Health website at www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/food.