



Food Safety Standards – Food business notification requirement

Chapter 3 (Australia only), Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

NOTE: The new Food Safety Standards do not apply in New Zealand. The provisions of the food standards treaty between Australia and New Zealand do not include food hygiene standards.

Who does the notification requirement apply to?

The notification requirement applies to almost every food business in Australia. A food business is any business or activity that involves the sale of food or the handling of any type of food for sale in Australia, with the exception of some primary food production activities.

This means that the notification requirement applies to activities undertaken for charitable or community reasons, as well as to commercial ventures and 'once-only' projects that involve the handling and sale of food. It includes businesses that may not think of themselves as food businesses, like chemists, cinemas, corner stores, petrol stations and swimming pools, if they sell packaged or any other type of food.

The exceptions are listed below.

- Businesses like farms, vineyards, orchards or aquaculture farms, provided they do not sell or supply food directly to the public or process the food they produce.
- Notification is not required for individual food vending machines or vehicles used only for the transport of food, but food businesses that operate food vending machines and food transport vehicles will have to provide the required notification for their business.

Charities and community groups should seek advice before submitting a notification to their local enforcement agency as simplified arrangements may apply in your State or Territory. As a general rule, however, they will have to notify the appropriate enforcement agency when they are planning any events involving the sale of food.

What do I do if I am already registered or licensed as a food business?

Nothing. Notification is needed to make sure enforcement agencies know about the food businesses in their areas and how to contact them, and to provide guidance on the food safety risks associated with your business.

States and Territories will continue to decide on the registration requirements for food businesses in their State or Territory, and their registration requirements will continue to apply under the new State Food Acts. If you are covered by a registration requirement you will not be affected by the new notification requirement.

The notification requirement applies only to food businesses that are not already registered and to all food businesses in States where there is no existing food business registration system.

What do I do if I am not already registered or licensed as a food business?

Under Standard 3.2.2 *Food Safety Practices and General Requirements*, food businesses must give the following information to the enforcement agency responsible for food safety in their area. This will usually be their local council but in some States and Territories it may be the health department or public or environmental health units, depending on the situation in each jurisdiction.

Notification is not an approval process and you do not have to meet any special conditions. However, you must provide the enforcement agency with:

- contact details for your business that include the business trading name and the name and business address of the owner of the business;

over...

- information on the nature of the business to help the enforcement agency assess the level of food safety risk associated with your business – this which includes information on the type of business (such as retailer, manufacturer, transport, caterer, restaurant, or market stall), the foods that it makes or supplies, the size of the business and some specific questions related to the supply of high risk products and the supply of products to groups of people who are most at risk from food-borne illness; and
- the location of all your premises in the area of that enforcement agency.

Mobile food vendors must also supply information on the sites they work from and/or information on where they house or garage their vehicle.

When does the notification requirement come into force?

Under Standard 3.2.2 *Food Safety Practices and General Requirements*, the notification requirement can come into force from February 2002. However, a later starting date may apply in some States and Territories. This depends on the dates on which States and Territories change their food laws and regulations to enact the new standards and also on whether they choose a twelve-month introductory period for this new requirement or decide to keep February 2002 as the start date for this requirement.

For existing businesses, the notification must be made within three months of that date. For new food businesses, the requirement will apply as soon as the requirement comes into force in each State and Territory and the notification must be made before the business opens.

Is notification something I have to do more than once?

No. A single notification is needed, as long as the information that was provided is still correct. However, when there are changes to, for example, the name, address or owner of the business, or to what it does or the food it deals with, then you must tell the enforcement agency about these changes before they take place.

Is there a notification form?

Model notification forms have been developed for the use of local enforcement agencies. Some may choose to use a different format but they should all be asking for the same information. The ANZFA notification policy document provides further guidance on this subject. This is due for publication in June 2001. It will be available on the ANZFA website. Contact your local council or public health unit for information on the notification requirement and notification forms for your area.

Need more information?

Copies of the standards, the guides to these and other fact sheets and supporting material can be found on the ANZFA website (www.anzfa.gov.au). As the standards come into force in each State and Territory, food businesses will also be able to seek advice directly from the Environmental Health Officers at their local council, or from their State or Territory health or health services department and Public Health Units. Contact details for State and Territory health departments and local councils are included in a separate fact sheet *Food Safety Standards – Sources of information & advice*.

Australia New Zealand Food Authority
P O Box 7186
Canberra MC ACT 2610
Tel: 02 6271 2222 Fax: 04 473 9855

Australia New Zealand Food Authority
P O Box 10559
Wellington NZ 6036
Tel: 04 473 994 Fax: 02 6271 2278

Website: www.anzfa.gov.au
Email: advice@anzfa.gov.au
Advice Line: 1300 652 166

Website: www.anzfa.govt.nz
Email: nz.reception@anzfa.gov.au
Advice Line: 0800 441 571