

Setting up a New Food Premises or Distribution Centre

This is a summary of the requirements for premises and equipment that a meals on wheels service production kitchen or distribution kitchen must have in place. This is based on the requirements of the following standards:-

Australian Food Standards Code 3.2.2: Food Safety Practices

Australian Food Standard Code 3.2.3: Premises and Equipment

1. Cleaning

- a. Cleaning equipment – enough to prevent cross contamination
- b. A safe and suitable chemical storage area/ cupboard/ bundied chemicals
- c. Wash up facilities – minimum double sink
- d. Have a list of chemicals on-site
- e. Have a copy of all MSDS on-site

2. Personal Hygiene Facilities

- a. Hand wash basin at the entrance to the kitchen which is easily accessible to staff, fitted with warm running water (mixer tap), paper towel and soap

3. Storage

- a. Storage equipment – there must be enough suitable storage equipment to adequately store foods at correct temperatures and to prevent cross contamination
- b. Storage must include (as relevant) – cold storage, frozen storage, dry storage, chemical storage, cleaning equipment storage, rejected product, packaging and equipment storage

4. Probe Thermometers and Fixed Gauges

- a. There must a working thermometer probe on-site at all times
- b. All pieces of equipment must have either a fixed gauge on them or a type of thermometer to allow for regular temperature checking
- c. All probe thermometers must be calibrated once a month and this must be recorded (i.e. the actual temperature noted during calibration to show it is within 1°C of either 0°C or 100°C/ corrective actions taken if the thermometer was not within a 1°C tolerance (An example is included under “Resources” on this web site)
- d. All probe thermometers must be calibrated at boiling point (100°C) and ice point (0°C)

5. Use of data loggers

- a. Data loggers are an excellent way of monitoring storage temperatures, packing and delivery temperatures. Make sure you download them daily, sign off that the temperatures are correct and document any corrective actions taken)
- b. Make sure your data logger is regularly calibrated (monthly internally and at least once every 6 months externally)

6. Temperature monitoring of meals being delivered

- a. The temperature of meals being delivered must be kept daily. Choose the longest run and check a hot and chilled meal, recording the time and temperature at packing/ dispatch and then again on the return of the hot box by the volunteer. Volunteers must sign back in including their name/ time of return when they return to prove that the delivery was within 2 hours (An example of a sample form is included under “Resources” on this web site)

7. Pest Control

- a. Systematic pest control program, using either an external contractor or an internal program

8. Verification Table

- a. A Verification Table must be included in the Food Safety Program which outlines what, how and when your organisation will check that the Food Safety Program is working and is still valid. An example is included under “Resources” on the meals on wheels web site.

9. An up-to-date Food Safety Program

- a. The organisation requires a NSW Food Authority license if it prepares or alters food in any way. All licensed premises must have a documented food safety program. The program must be kept up-to-date.
- b. Make sure all copies of the Food Safety Program are up-to-date if any changes have been made and that staff and volunteers are using the correct records
- c. Conduct an internal audit at least once per year