



Health and Safety

Food Safety Policy

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Version: 6

Responsible Person: BoG Chair

Approved by BoG on: 21-10-2021

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Best Practice – Quality Area 2

Purpose

This policy will provide guidelines for:

- effective food safety practices at [Service Name] that comply with legislative requirements and meet best practice standards
- minimising the risk to children of scalds and burns from hot drinks.

This policy should be read in conjunction with *Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play Policy*.

Policy statement

Values

Hampton Park Care Group Inc. (Hampton Park Community House) is committed to:

- ensuring the safety of all children and adults attending the service
- taking all reasonable precautions to reduce potential hazards and harm to children attending the service





- ensuring adequate health and hygiene procedures are implemented at the service, including safe practices for handling, preparing, storing and serving food
- promoting safe practices in relation to the handling of hot drinks at the service
- educating all service users in the prevention of scalds and burns that can result from handling hot drinks
- complying with all relevant legislation and standards, including the *Food Act 1984* and the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved in handling, preparing, storing and serving food for consumption at [Service Name], and to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of the service.

Background and legislation

Background

Food safety is very important in early childhood service environments. Young children are often more susceptible to the effects of foodborne illness than other members of the community. Foodborne illness (including gastrointestinal illness) can be caused by bacteria, parasites, viruses, chemicals or foreign objects that are present in food. Food provided by a children's service:

- must be fit for human consumption
- must not be adulterated or contaminated
- must not have deteriorated or perished.

Safe food practices can also assist in reducing the risk of a severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) by preventing cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy* and *Asthma Policy*).

Organisations that provide food to children have a duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) to protect children from all hazards and harm. Employers are also required, under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, to provide a healthy and safe working environment for employees and contractors, and to ensure that other individuals, including children, parents/guardians, visitors and the general public, are not





endangered when attending the workplace. In addition, employees, visitors and contractors are responsible for complying with appropriate workplace standards and procedures that have been implemented to protect their own health and safety, and that of others.

The *Food Act 1984* aims to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness by ensuring that food manufactured, transported, sold, prepared and stored is safe, unadulterated, fit for human consumption and will not cause food poisoning. Under the Act, local councils in Victoria are required to classify every food premises in their municipality according to its food safety risk.

Early childhood services should confirm their food safety risk classification and related requirements with the local council in the area in which they operate.

Class 1 food premises describes those that predominantly handle potentially hazardous food that is served to vulnerable people. Early childhood services that provide long day care are included in the Class 1 category. Class 4 food premises describes those whose food handling activities pose low risk to public health. Sessional kindergartens are included in the Class 4 category.

Standard 3.3.1, in Chapter 3 of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code), is one of the national food safety standards that outlines the responsibilities of food businesses to ensure that the food they produce is safe. This particular standard applies to Australian food businesses that provide meals for vulnerable persons (those who are at greater risk of being affected by foodborne illness), such as the very young, the elderly and individuals who are immunocompromised due to disease or treatment for other illnesses. Standard 3.3.1 requires such businesses to have a documented food safety program (refer to *Definitions*).

Child care services that provide hot/cold meals and snacks are classified as Class 1 (high risk). Class 1 services must:

- ensure food that is sold or prepared for sale is safe to eat (this includes food provided to children as part of the program and included in the fees paid to the service by the family)
- register annually with the council
- be inspected by the council when first registered or when registration is transferred to a new proprietor
- have a food safety program that is tailored specifically to their activities as a food premises
- keep a copy of the food safety program on site
- appoint a food safety supervisor with the necessary skills and accredited training
- undergo two mandatory compliance checks each year:





1. a council assessment of the premises and compliance with the documented food safety program
2. an audit of the food safety program by a Department of Health-approved auditor to determine adequacy and compliance.

From 1 July 2010, Class 1 services can choose to have audits of their tailored food safety program conducted by an auditor approved by the Department of Health. This audit can be conducted by an independent private auditor or by a council auditor (if the relevant council offers audit services). The auditor is responsible for providing the statutory audit certificate to council and services must retain full audit reports for four years after they have been prepared. For more information about Class 1 food premises, services should contact their local council and refer to:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-safety-program/food-safety-program-class-1>

Sessional kindergartens supplying low risk snacks such as cut fruit, milk, bread and cereals are classified as Class 4 (low risk). Class 4 services are **not** required to have:

- a food safety program
- a food safety supervisor
- an annual council inspection.

However, Class 4 services must ensure that staff members have the skills and knowledge needed to safely handle food in their work roles. Council may also, at its discretion, inspect a premises under the *Food Act 1984* (e.g. to investigate complaints or conduct a spot check). Individual councils may also require services to complete a food safety audit or plan, especially when the service is operating a special event such as a sausage sizzle. For more information about Class 4 food premises, services should contact their local council and refer to: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-business-classification/food-business-classification-predetermined>

Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*: Section 167
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*: Regulation 77
- *Food Act 1984* (Vic)
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*





- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

Department of Health: The State Government department responsible for the health and wellbeing of Victorians, and with oversight of the administration of the *Food Act 1984*.

Duty of care: A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury.

Food allergies: Some foods and food ingredients, or their components, can cause severe allergic reactions including anaphylaxis (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*). Less common symptoms of food allergy include infantile colic, reflux of stomach contents, eczema, chronic diarrhoea and failure to thrive in infants. Food allergies are often caused by peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, sesame seeds, fish and shellfish, soy and wheat. For more information on food allergies, visit: www.allergyfacts.org.au

Food safety: (In relation to this policy) ensuring food provided by the service is fit for human consumption.

Food safety program: A written plan that details what an individual business does to ensure that the food it sells or handles is safe for human consumption. A food safety program is an important tool for businesses that handle, process or sell potentially hazardous foods, as it helps to maintain safe food handling practices and protect public health. It should identify potential hazards in all aspects of food handling, describe how such hazards can be controlled/monitored, and define appropriate corrective action to be taken when a hazard is found to be under-managed. A food safety program must also include the requirements for appropriate record keeping. Class 4 services are not required to have a food safety program (refer to *Background*).

Food safety supervisor: A person who:

- can recognise, prevent and alleviate food handling hazards at a premises
- has a Statement of Attainment from a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) that confirms competency in the required food safety standards





- has the ability and authority to supervise other individuals who handle food at the premises to ensure safe food handling at all times.

Class 4 food premises do not need a food safety supervisor (refer to *Background*). However, they must ensure that staff members have the skills and knowledge needed to safely handle food in their work roles.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ): A bi-national Government agency with the responsibility to develop and administer the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code), which details standards and requirements in areas such as food additives, food safety, labelling and genetically modified (GM) foods. Enforcement and interpretation of the Code is the responsibility of State/Territory departments and food agencies within Australia and New Zealand.

Hazardous food: Food containing dangerous biological, chemical or physical agents, or food in a condition that has the potential to cause adverse health effects in humans.

High-risk foods: Bacteria that has the potential to cause food-poisoning can grow and multiply on some foods more easily than others. High-risk foods include meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products, small goods, cooked rice/pasta and prepared salads (such as coleslaw, pasta salads, rice salads and fruit salads). Food that is contained in packages, cans or jars can become high-risk once opened, and should be handled and stored appropriately.

Hot drink: Any container holding a liquid that has been heated or boiled, and that remains above room temperature (25°C) for any period of time.

Scalds: Burns by hot fluids, steam and other hot vapours.

Sources and related policies

Sources

- *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code:*
<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/Pages/default.aspx>
- Department of Health – Food Safety. Contact the Department of Health if your inquiry relates to general food compliance issues (and you don't know where to start) or you are looking for publications on food safety or information on legislation.

Telephone: 1300 364 352 (free call within Australia)

Email: foodsafety@health.vic.gov.au

Website: www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety



Your place



- Keeping food safe: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-how-to-keep-it-safe>
- Food safety library: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/publications-guides-resources>
- dofoodsafely – a free online food safety program: <http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/>
- The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – Kids Health Info: <https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/>
Kids Health Info is part of the Family Services Department of The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, which also includes the Safety Centre, the Family Resource Centre and the Volunteer Service. Royal Children's Hospital Safety Centre, 50 Flemington Road, Parkville. Telephone advisory line: (03) 9345 5085 or email: safetycentre@rch.org.au
- Kidsafe: telephone (03) 9251 7725 or email: info@kidsafevic.com.au. For a fact sheet on scalds and burns, visit their website: www.kidsafevic.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/Burns_Scalds.pdf

Related policies

- *Administration of First Aid Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- *Asthma Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *Diabetes Policy*
- *Excursions Policy*
- *Hygiene Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Nutrition and Active Play Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*
- *Staffing Policy*
- *Supervision of Children Policy*

Authorisation

Signature of BoG Chair

Date of approval by BoG 21-10-2021

