

Food Premises: Construction & Fit-Out Guide



The Food Safety Standards (FSS), (Chapter 3 of the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code) contains requirements for the establishment of new food businesses and the upgrading of existing ones. Copies of the Standards are available through the website at www.foodstandards.gov.au.

In general, food businesses are required to ensure that premises are designed and constructed to minimise opportunities for food contamination.

It is also important to check with Council's Development Section prior to commencement of any proposed work, as Planning and /or Building approval may also be required. Telephone (08) 8405 6600.

The Fit-Out Process

It is strongly advised that contact be made at the earliest stages of planning and design to discuss your fit-out requirements with Council's Environmental Health Service on 8405 6832.

Fit-out assessments are built into the Development Application process for new food premises.

However, if a food premise requires structural alterations and the installation of fixtures, fittings and equipment, Council's Environmental Health Service can offer a **free** plan assessment service that provides advice prior to construction commencing.

This service is useful in helping proprietors avoid making costly alterations once construction has started or have been completed.

Fit-outs are assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the proposed operation of the food business.

Documents Required for a Plan Assessment

The following details are required on the floor plan to allow for appropriate assessment:

- Plans must be of a suitable scale. Your architect, draftsman, builder or shopfitter can assist you to provide the following:
- The Plan must clearly identify the size of food handling areas and includes equipment, fixtures and fittings.
- Types of finishes to floors, walls and ceilings; these must be designed to be smooth and impervious and be able to be easily and effectively cleaned in accordance with Food Safety Standard 3.2.3. Clauses 10 and 11.
- The types of food that will be processed to assess whether there is sufficient space in the premises for the activities undertaken.
- Premises and layout of all equipment, benches, fittings and fixtures, and mechanical ventilation; dry food storage, fridges, freezers, ovens, hand wash basins, sinks, dishwashers; door and window openings, staff toilets, location of wastewater disposal, location of the waste area. Equipment must be designed with sufficient capacity to cope with the requirements of the types of activities occurring on site.
- The types of food that will be processed on site and how these foods will be processed. This will assist in assessing adequate space.
- Provide process flow diagram(s) detailing stages of food handling from the incoming raw materials to the finished product and where each stage of food handling activities will be undertaken. These should also be detailed on the Plan itself.

Adequate Space (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 3)

The design and construction of food premises must:

- be appropriate for the activities for which the premises are used.
- Provide adequate space for the activities to be conducted on the premises.
- Permit the food premises to be effectively cleaned and sanitised.
- To the extent that is possible, exclude dirt, dust, fumes, pests and other contaminants, nor provide harbourage for pests.

Water Supply (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 4)

- An adequate supply must be made available for all activities requiring the use of water.
- Water used must be acceptable for human consumption.

Sewage and Wastewater Disposal (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 5)

- All sewage and waste water must be disposed of to sewer, or where sewer is not available, an approved on-site wastewater disposal system.
- A cleaner's sink with hose connections, curbed drain connected to the sewer or other waste-collection facility for cleaning the equipment used for cleaning the premises and for disposing of dirty water.
- Contact SA Water (Trade Waste Section) for advice on requirements for grease arrestors and other pre-treatment devices on (08) 7424 1336.

Storage of Garbage and Recyclables (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 6)

- Adequate facilities must be provided for the sanitary storage of all garbage and recyclable matter.
- Food wastes must be stored in suitably sized, easily cleaned containers which are enclosed to keep pests and animals away and minimise the production of odours.

Ventilation (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 7)

- Sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation is required to effectively remove fumes, smoke steam and vapours.
- Generally, mechanical ventilation will be required to be installed above most cooking, frying and steaming appliances. Further guidance on specific requirements may be found in *Australian Standard 1668.2 (Part 2 – Mechanical Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality)*.

Lighting (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 8)

- Sufficient lighting must be provided to enable staff to carry out food handling operations, cleaning and sanitising and other activities.
- Guidance on lighting and “good seeing conditions” can be found in *Australian Standard 1680 Part 1 – 1990, and AS/NZ 1680.2.4 1997*.
- All ceiling lighting in food preparation areas should be fitted with suitable plastic covers (diffusers) or be of shatterproof design.

Floors, Walls and Ceilings

The following requirements relate to areas of food premises other than areas used for dining, drinking, or where customers would ordinarily have access.

Floors (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 10)

- Finishes must be appropriate for the intended food activity.
- Must be able to be effectively cleaned.
- Must be unable to absorb grease, food particles or water.
- Must not allow for the ponding of water.
- Must not provide harbourage for pests.

Depending on the location, examples of suitable finishes may include ceramic tiles, seam welded vinyl, or smooth finished concrete render (suitably sealed or coated). Coving should be considered in wet food handling areas or areas requiring flushing with water to clean.

Walls and Ceilings (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 11)

- Must be appropriate for the intended food activity.
- Must be provided where they are necessary to protect food against contamination.
- Must be sealed to prevent entry of dirt, dust and pests.
- Must be unable to absorb grease, food particles or water.
- Must be able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

In relation to **walls**, consideration needs to be given to the amount of splashing, soiling and cleaning required in specific areas. High maintenance areas (ie. above sinks, benches and behind cooking equipment) may require durable finishes such as tiles, stainless steel or concrete render (suitably sealed or coated)

Avoid the use of open brickwork wherever possible, unless it is flush-jointed and suitably finished to allow for effective cleaning

In relation to ceilings, continuous construction (ie. flushed plasterboard) is recommended for new premises where unpackaged food is handled, stored or displayed. Drop-in panels are acceptable for existing premises provided the panels fit flush and are able to be effectively cleaned.

Walls and ceilings requiring painting should be finished with a washable, durable paint of light colour.

Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 12)

- Generally, must be fit for intended use and adequate for the production of safe and suitable food.
- Must be designed, constructed, located and installed so as to be not likely to cause food contamination, and be able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

Particular consideration should be given to finishes and materials for food contact

surfaces. Suitable food grade materials may include stainless steel, laminate and certain plastics.

Washing of eating and drinking utensils and food contact equipment:

- (1) Double bowl sink (minimum) – one side for cleaning and the other for rinsing/sanitising, **or**
- (2) A dishwashing unit capable of sanitising in the rinse phase (may be commercial or domestic)

Washing/preparation of fruit and vegetables:

A separate, designated sink is required.

Handwashing facilities (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 14)

- Must be permanent fixtures, provided wherever food may be contaminated by the hands (ie. where unpackaged food is handled, stored or displayed, and
- Immediately adjacent to toilets or toilet cubicles.
- Must be easily accessible.
- Must be connected to a supply of warm running water.
- Must be large enough to allow for effective handwashing.
- Must be clearly designated for sole purpose of washing the hands, arms and face.
- Must be provided with a supply of soap (preferably liquid) and single use towels at all times.

As a guide to location, it is recommended that food handlers in typical food service businesses should not need to travel more than five (5) metres to access a hand wash facility.

Storage facilities (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 15)

Chemicals, staff clothing and personal belongings must be stored in separate, designated areas where they are not likely to contaminate food.

Toilet facilities (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 16)

Adequate facilities must be made available for the use of food handlers.

Food Transport Vehicles (FSS 3.2.3 Clause 17)

Food Transport Vehicles must be constructed so as to be easily cleaned and be able to afford adequate protection to the food (including refrigeration where necessary).