

SECTION B

THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SAFETY

Complete Section B as part of your Accreditation:

The school must provide evidence of:

- the completed Form 3: Food Safety from the Forms and Templates section beginning at page 95, AND
- The Local Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) Report

The following documents must also be completed and provided as evidence to the EHO when they assess your canteen for Food Safety requirements. Templates for these documents are found in the Forms and Templates section beginning at page 95:

- Cleaning Schedule
- Temperature Records
- Thermometer Calibration Records
- Rejected Deliveries Log
- Staff Illness Log
- Food Handler Training Records
- Maintenance Request Log.



Food Safety Requirements

All foods must be protected from contamination. There are three categories of contamination:

- **Physical contamination** – foreign objects which have entered the food such as dead insects, glass, plastic, hair or metal. The risks of this type of contamination include choking; cuts to the mouth and the internal body; gastric obstructions; and broken teeth.
- **Chemical contamination** – any number of chemicals, including agricultural and pharmaceutical chemicals, cleaning products, fly spray, rat poison and naturally occurring toxicants and allergens.
- **Biological contamination** – living organisms such as pathogenic bacteria that cause food poisoning and parasites and viruses, such as, Salmonella, Listeria, Campylobacter and Noro virus.

Good practices minimise the risks associated with these types of contamination.

Table 5 outlines ways that you can comply with Tasmanian Food Safety legislation. If you have any questions about Food Safety, please contact your local Environmental Health Officer (EHO) or the DHHS Food Safety Unit – see the contacts list in Section 6: Additional Information and Resources on page 117.

SECTION B: FOOD SAFETY

Table 5: Food Safety Requirements

Area	Requirements
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All food handlers must have skills and knowledge in Food Safety. The training does not have to be a formal course and many training options are available. Check your local council's website for an online course that is free. The TSCA website has an up-to-date list of training options. Do the training every 2 to 3 years. Keep records of food hygiene training that staff have completed.
Personal hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When handling food the Canteen Manager must ensure all food handlers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> wash their hands regularly. wear minimal jewelry (e.g. a plain wedding band only) keep fingernails trimmed, clean and free from nail polish or false nails keep long hair tied back or wear a hat or hairnet; and avoid touching nose, mouth, hair and skin. Wear an apron
Staff Illness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food handlers who have symptoms of food borne illness such as diarrhoea, vomiting, sore throat with fever, fever or jaundice should be excluded from food handling practices, as they can pass on illness to children via the food that they touch. Persons suffering these symptoms should be excluded from food handling duties until they are symptom free for 48 hours. Food handlers, who have wounds such as a skin sore, boil, or an infected cut or abrasion must cover the wound with a coloured, water proof dressing, and avoid touching the wound during food preparation activities. Staff must wash and dry hands if direct contact with a wound occurs. Food handlers who have a condition that causes discharge from the ears, nose or eyes should avoid handling food. If this is not possible they must avoid touching the infected area, and wash and dry their hands if direct contact occurs with the infected area. They must also use medication to dry up discharge. Report these illnesses to the canteen manager and log the illness on the Staff Illness Log.
Deliveries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy foods from reputable suppliers. Check 'use-by' dates and the condition of the packaging. Reject deliveries if items are not within the use-by date or the packaging is damaged e.g. dented cans, gnawed packaging. Check the temperatures of chilled foods and reject them if they are warm. Ensure frozen foods are frozen solid. The use of home grown vegetables is encouraged – brush off any visible dirt and wash before use. Keep records of rejected deliveries using the Rejected Delivery Log.
Storage: general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep floors clear to aid cleaning and to prevent pests. Rotate stock.

<p>Storage: Chilled</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep raw and ready to eat foods in separate containers and separate parts of the fridge. • Keep foods below 5°C – record the temperatures every operational day. The easiest way to do this is to keep a thermometer in the fridge and read the temperature from it. • Follow the manufacturer’s instructions on storage conditions and the shelf life of the product after it has been opened. • Home-made products can be kept refrigerated for around 2-3 days. • Smell and appearance are not a good guide to Food Safety – or the risk of food poisoning. Bacteria do not spoil a food or create an ‘off’ odour. • Code foods with the date when packets are opened. • Stock your refrigerator properly e.g. place raw meats on the bottom shelf so juices cannot drip onto ready to eat foods.
<p>Storage: Frozen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep frozen food frozen solid and do not re-freeze. • Frozen foods can be kept for varying amounts of time; a guide is included in this resource. See page 66. • Code fresh foods with the date they are frozen. • Foods should be dated when removed from the freezer. • Follow manufacturer’s instructions for foods purchased frozen: take note of the shelf life and cooking instructions.
<p>Preparation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash hands before handling food. Ensure it is only handled by gloved hands or by utensils. • Wash fruits and vegetables in running water before cutting and serving them. • Use separate utensils for raw and ready-to-eat foods. • Cover foods prepared in advance with cling wrap or in lidded containers. • Do not use foods past their 'use-by' date. • Defrost foods in the refrigerator, in running cold water or in the microwave. • Use designated sinks for their intended purpose. • Use standard recipes for allergen control.
<p>Cooking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook foods to 75°C. • Document cooking temperatures every operational day. • Use a probe thermometer to check temperatures. Place the probe into the centre of the food and wait until the reading stabilises. • Calibrate the thermometer every month i.e. check that it is working properly by placing it in iced water: it should show 0°C and then in boiling water, it should show 100°C. If it shows a different temperature, it needs to be repaired or replaced. Keep calibration records monthly. Refer to Template 3 in the Forms and Templates Section.
<p>Cooling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool foods to below 5° C within a 6 hour period. • Food can go in the fridge as soon as it stops steaming. • If the food is not for immediate use, date it. • Cooling can be accelerated by dividing the food and putting it into smaller containers, standing the container of hot food in cold water or ice, or moving it to a cool place like a store room.

SECTION B: FOOD SAFETY

Table 5: Food Safety Requirements (continued)

Reheating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reheat food until steaming hot throughout. • If using plastic containers, choose 'microwave safe' products.
Service/ display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display cold foods below 5°C or use the 2 hour 4 hour rule which is explained in this section. • Keep hot food above 60°C, for example in a bain-marie. • When using a bain-marie, cook/reheat the food first then place it in the bain-marie hot. Do not place cold food to warm in the bain-marie as they warm food slowly and the food will spend too long in the temperature danger zone. • Keep foods covered where possible. For example, serve foods from behind a sneeze guard or serve foods in packages. • Keep food service and money handling separate. i.e. use one hand for service and the other for money.
2 hour/ 4 hour rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially hazardous foods can be held out of temperature control for a certain amount of time. • Between 0-2 hours the food can be put back in the fridge (<5°C) and used again later. • If out for between 2 and 4 hours the food must be served. • After 4 hours the food must be discarded. • The time is cumulative and includes preparation time. For example if you are making sandwiches for display at ambient temperatures, and it takes an hour to make them, you have used 1 of the 4 hours already. The sandwiches could either be displayed for one hour then refrigerated for use the next day or they can be displayed for 3 hours and discarded. • Contact the TSCA or your local Environmental Health Officer for advice if you are unsure.
General Cleaning and Sanitising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly clean the entire kitchen, including the harder to reach areas. • Keep the kitchen in a clean condition – clean as you go! • Sanitise food contact surfaces and utensils. Heat is the best way to do this such as in a commercial dishwasher but food grade chemical sanitisers may also be used. • When using chemical sanitisers always follow the manufacturer's instructions and do not mix with other chemicals. • Use a cleaning schedule that details process, products and frequency.
Procedure for sanitising surfaces and equipment with chemical sanitiser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove visible dirt and food debris. • Wash with warm soapy water. • Sanitise following the instructions on the sanitiser label. If used incorrectly or mixed with other chemicals, it will not work. Usually a sanitiser is diluted in a sink of water for smaller equipment and sprayed for larger items and surfaces. • Leave to air dry.

Premises

- Keep premises free of pests and ensure the kitchen is pest proof with fly screening, air curtains or tight-fitting doors and windows kept closed.
- Check for signs of pests i.e. droppings, gnawed packaging, grease marks on walls. If found, take action immediately by reporting it to the school.
- The kitchen must have a designated hand-wash basin.
- The kitchen should have a double bowl sink for cleaning and sanitising equipment, or a single bowl sink with a dishwasher.
- A food preparation sink may also be required if foods are regularly washed.
- Floors, walls, ceilings and work surfaces should be smooth and impervious to water and food particles.
- Equipment must be kept in good condition to prevent contamination. If equipment needs to be replaced, alert the school immediately and keep a record of the request.
- Relevant posters are available in the Additional Information and Resources section of the School Canteen Handbook and from the TSCA.
- Keep a documented Food Safety Policy and procedures document at the canteen.



Use a probe thermometer to check temperatures. Place the probe into the centre of the food and wait until the reading stabilises.

SECTION B: FOOD SAFETY

Freezing Guidelines

Remember to check labels and follow the manufacturer's instructions for freezing. Below are some examples to guide you. Your freezer should be set at -18°C.

Table 6: Freezer Shelf Life of Foods

Food	Max storage time	Comments
Baked goods	3 months	Package in tight moisture proof wrapping to prevent freezer burn.
Hard yellow cheese	4 months	May be crumbly
Fresh lean fish	9 months	Store with paper between fillets.
Scallops	3 months	Thaw in fridge before cooking
Raw chicken	18 months	Thaw in fridge before cooking
Cooked poultry	3 months	Use within 2 days of removing from freezer
Raw pork	10 months	Thaw in fridge before cooking
Raw lamb or beef	18 months	Thaw in fridge before cooking
Berry fruits	24 months	Suitable for cooking
Peaches, apricots and cherries	18 months	Suitable for cooking
Commercially frozen vegetables	8 months (check packet)	Cook from frozen
Commercially frozen goods	Check packet	Follow cooking guidelines on packet.

Food Safety and Fundraising Events

When hosting events such as a school fair, refer to, and follow, the guidelines set out in the *Temporary Food Stalls Guideline*, available on your Local Council website. Food safety is just as important for school events as it is for the day-to-day running of the canteen. The food stalls may need a temporary food registration status. Contact your Local Council's Environmental Health Officer for advice.

Frequently Asked Questions that relate to Food Safety

Q. What is the difference between a 'use by' date and a 'best-before' date

A. Foods with a shelf life of less than 2 years must be date marked with either a 'best before' date or a 'use by' date.

A 'use by' date indicates the food may not be safe to consume after that date. Potentially hazardous foods like ham, soft cheese, milk and prepared salads will have a 'use by' date as they can support the growth of pathogenic bacteria and will become unsafe. You must not use or sell a food after the 'use by' date.



Follow the manufacturer's instructions on storage conditions and the shelf life of the product after it has been opened.

Home-made products can be kept refrigerated for around 2-3 days.

A 'best-before' is an indicator of quality. 'Best before' dates are usually placed on foods like biscuits, cake, and tinned or powdered food. The product does not become dangerous after the date but the quality may be reduced, for example biscuits will become softer.

Q. I have heard a lot in the media recently about plastics, what do I need to know?

A. There has been concern recently over the safety of using plastic containers for storing and reheating food.

Food can be safely stored in 'food grade' plastic containers, either in the fridge or freezer. Containers that are labelled as 'food grade' are considered to be safe.

However, not all plastic containers are safe to use for heating food. When some plastic food containers are heated i.e. in the microwave, chemicals in the plastic may leach into the food. Always check that plastic containers are of food grade before use.

When you see plastic food containers with a 'microwave safe' label, this is an indication that the required testing has been carried out and that the risk for chemicals leaching into the food is low. The same applies to cling wrap.

Plastic containers must be in good condition, not cracked or damaged and not show signs of melting. Replace your containers when they become damaged. Remember, buy 'microwave safe' plastic containers if you plan to heat food in it and 'food grade' containers for storing food.

SECTION B: FOOD SAFETY

Q. *How can I manage food allergies in my school canteen?*

A. It is important to take food allergies seriously. Any food can trigger an allergic response, but these are the most common foods that can cause allergies in children:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (e.g. cashews, walnuts)
- Cow's milk
- Egg
- Wheat
- Soy
- Fish and shell fish

Contact with even a tiny amount of the allergen can lead to anaphylaxis which can be life threatening.

Here are some practical tips to manage food allergies in your school canteen.

- Know which children are allergic to which allergens in your school.
- Display photos of the children and list the known allergens in the canteen to help ensure that they are not accidentally put in contact with an allergen.
- Be aware of the schools allergy prevention and management plan. Follow advice provided by Anaphylaxis Australia.
- Check ingredient labels – even if you always use the same product, the ingredients can change.
- Tailor your menu to the specific needs of the children with allergies.
- Follow standard recipes and do not substitute ingredients without checking for possible allergens first.



Check ingredient labels – even if you always use the same product, the ingredients can change.

- Consider modifying recipes to remove allergens so all children can eat the same meal.
- Store foods containing allergens in separate, sealed and labelled containers.
- Use separate utensils to prepare allergen free foods.
- Cover foods to prevent cross contamination.
- Prepare allergy-free food first, then seal and store it.

Anaphylaxis Australia produces useful information for schools and food businesses. For more information visit their website www.allergyfacts.org.au