

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
HEALTH SERVICES

**INFORMATION FOR
STARTING A NEW
FOOD BUSINESS**

All Victorian food businesses that handle, prepare, package, store, serve, supply or convey food must be registered with their local Council.

(An exception are food premises which store for sale pre-packaged, unrefrigerated, shelf stable foods. These Class 4 premises must notify Council of their business details on an approved form).

If you are thinking of starting your own business, there are some important steps you will need to follow.

Please note: Council charges a commercial rate on land used for predominantly commercial activities. (i.e. where goods are made or services provided). Where the commercial activities are located with a predominantly residential land use, Council will apply a Mixed Use rate which is lower than the commercial rate but higher than the residential rate. The current rates are available in Councils Rating Strategy on the geelongaustralia.com.au website. For further information please contact Council's Financial Services on ☎ 5272 4650

STEP ONE – Approval from other authorities

Permits or exemptions may be required from other authorities prior to applying for a registration with the Councils Health Services Unit.

These may include, but are not limited to:

Building Services.....	☎ 03 5272 4454
Statutory Planning.....	☎ 03 5272 4456
Local Laws & Permits.....	☎ 03 5272 4500
Barwon Water.....	☎ 03 5226 2500
Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing (formerly Liquor Licensing Victoria).....	☎ 03 8684 1910
Consumer Affairs Victoria.....	☎ 1300 558 181

STEP TWO – Registration Approval Process

An application form (Proposal to Register a Premise) is to be submitted to Council and should be accompanied by two copies of plans of the premises showing the proposed fitout PRIOR to any work commencing.

The plans need to include:

- The layout of all fixtures, fittings and equipment
- A description of materials to be used for surface finishes including walls, floors and bench tops. (A legend on the side of the plan may be used)

There is also a registration process for the following types of premises:

- Mobile Food Operation
- Bed and Breakfast
- Home Occupation

STEP THREE – Premises Construction

Once Council has received all the relevant information and is satisfied that it meets all the requirements, an approval letter will be sent to the applicant along with a Food Act registration form.

An officer may request further information and/or an inspection of the premises prior to the approval being given. An officer is also available at any time during the construction phase to meet you on-site.

STEP FOUR – Food Safety Program

Every Class 1 and Class 2 food business is required to have a Food Safety Program (FSP). (Class 3 food businesses are only required to keep prescribed records, while Class 4 food businesses only need to notify Council of their business details).

Proprietors of premises must lodge either an Independent FSP (mandatory for Class 1) or a Template FSP with Council. If an Independent FSP is implemented, the program and business must be audited by a third party, but is also subject to routine compliance assessments by Council.

For those businesses with a Template FSP, routine assessments will be carried out by Council to ensure that the business is adhering to the FSP.

Council can provide a hard copy of the Department of Health and Human Services FSP template during the registration process or a copy can be downloaded free of charge at the Department [website](#).

STEP FIVE – Food Safety Supervisor

Every food business that has a Food Safety Program is required to have a nominated Food Safety Supervisor (FSS), and if requested, the proprietor may need to supply a copy of their food safety supervisor qualifications.

The nominated FSS must complete an accredited course at a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). However, if the business is a community organisation or a not-for-profit organisation the training is not mandatory. Council will advise you if the business is exempt from the FSS training.

Please contact the Council for a list of RTO's.

STEP SIX – Granting registration

In addition to any site or progress inspections of your premises a further inspection of your premises must occur at least PRIOR to the business opening. Please advise the officer of your intention to open as soon as you know so that an inspection can take place once all works are completed.

The registration form (referred to in Step 3) must be fully completed and returned to the Health Services Unit with the nominated fee.

The Food Safety Program (Class 1 or Class 2 food premises) if of an independent type (i.e. other than a Dept of Health or Franchise approved template) must be lodged with Council, and if requested, a copy of the Food Safety Supervisors certificate.

The officer will then give you approval to open the business and will conduct a full food safety assessment at a later date to ensure compliance, especially with regard to your food safety program and records that are required to be kept.

Once the officer is satisfied that all requirements have been met then a Certificate of Registration will be issued.

Your premises can only open once you have completed the above steps to the satisfaction of the officer. It is illegal to operate an unregistered business.

The registration period is from 1 January to 31 December each year. A renewal of registration will be sent to you approximately one month prior to end of the registration period.

It should be noted that food premises performance is expected to be consistently maintained and additional fees above the annual registration fee may be expected should a food business not reach appropriate food safety levels during the year. For more information regarding these fees please contact Council's Health Service Unit on ☎ 5272 4411.

Inspections will be carried out throughout the year to ensure compliance.

Information available from the Health Services Unit:

- Food Premises Specifications for Structural Design
- Mobile Food Guidelines
- Home Occupation Guidelines
- Bed and Breakfast Guidelines
- Food Labelling information
- Thermometer Supplier list
- Food Safety Supervisor requirements
- Tobacco legislation summary sheet
- Mechanical Exhaust Ventilation Specifications
 - Gas Safety Information

Other useful sites:

- www.health.vic.gov.au
- [Food classification definitions](#)
- <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/bus/foodbus.htm>
- www.foodstandards.gov.au/

Information in other languages

The Department of Health, Victoria (DoH) has produced the Food Safety Program Template (version1.2) and template record sheets in many languages.

Visit www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety for more information

For a copy of the *Food Act 1984*, visit http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/fa198457/

If you require any further information or assistance you may contact the Health Services at the City of Greater Geelong on ☎ 03 5272 4411.