

Food Business Proprietor  
City of Parramatta LGA

<b>Your Reference</b>	COVID-19 Food Business Information Pack
<b>Contact</b>	Environmental Health Compliance
<b>Telephone</b>	9806 5684
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au">council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au</a>

## COVID-19 Retail Food Business Information Pack

Dear Sir/Madam,

As we are all aware, the world is facing a global health challenge the like of which we have not experienced in over a century. The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic has forced us all to operate differently in this new and changing environment.

City of Parramatta is committed to supporting its local businesses to get through this situation and remain viable until some sense of normality is able to return to society. With this in mind, we would like to advise that the way we conduct our routine food safety inspections has changed for the immediate future.

In order to be able to comply with the social distancing requirements and to limit any potential for virus transmission we will not be carrying out inspections of enclosed kitchens and/or food preparation & storage areas unless in response to a complaint related to food borne illness.

However, our Environmental Health Officers will continue to conduct 'educational inspections' of retail food premises where they remain open and operating and will be able to respond to any of your questions and provide some instructional advice on the critical areas of food safety as it relates to COVID-19 and any other potentially high risk area.

Please find included in this information pack some fact sheets and guidelines regarding the following areas:

- Cleaning and Sanitising in Food Businesses
- Hand washing in Food Businesses
- Health & Hygiene requirements of Food Handlers
- Protecting Food from Contamination
- Temperature Danger Zone

These materials are also available as translations in fifteen (15) languages, if you would like to receive a translated copy please get in touch on the number below or email [spike@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:spike@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)

Keep safe and wishing everyone all the very best in this difficult time, if there are any questions about this please contact Council on 9806 5684.

Regards,

**Environmental Health Compliance Team**  
**City of Parramatta**

**Contact us:**

[council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au) | 02 9806 5050  
[spike@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](mailto:spike@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au) | PO Box 32, Parramatta, NSW 2124  
ABN 49 907 174 773 | [cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au](http://cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au)



# CLEANING AND SANITISING IN RETAIL FOOD BUSINESSES

## Why do I need to clean and sanitise?

Effective cleaning and sanitising in your food business helps protect you and your customers against the spread of bacteria and other organisms that cause foodborne illness. It also helps to reduce the activity of pests in a food premises by eliminating food sources.

Food Standards Code requires:

- a food premises, including all its equipment, to be maintained to an acceptable standard of cleanliness, [Std. 3.2.2-19] and
- food contact equipment, such as kitchen benches, knives, chopping boards, pots, and meat slicers etc., as well as eating and drinking utensils, to be in a clean and sanitary condition. [Std. 3.2.2-20]

## Difference between cleaning and sanitising

In the food industry, cleaning and sanitising is a two-step process. A surface needs to be thoroughly cleaned before it is sanitised:

1. Cleaning requires the use of warm to hot water, detergent and physical action to remove food debris and dissolve grease and dirt to ensure the surfaces are clean to touch and free of visible matter and odours.
2. Sanitising is the process of applying heat (usually very hot water) or chemicals or a combination of both heat and chemicals, to an already clean surface to reduce the number of bacteria and other organisms to a safe level.

During the cleaning stage detergents ensure food particles are broken down and prevented from depositing back onto the items being washed. Effective cleaning is

90% of the overall sanitation effort as cleaning removes most of the bacteria present. The job of the sanitiser is to kill the remaining bacteria during the sanitising stage.



Cleaning and sanitising can be done mechanically using dishwashers or manually using wash up sinks and spray bottles.

## Cleaning and sanitising using dishwashers

All commercial dishwashers operate differently. High temperature dishwashers sanitise using heat (hot water) while low temperature dishwashers are complemented with chemical sanitisers. This is a very technical process and food businesses should use the program that the manufacturer has specified for sanitising. The manufacturer's instructions should always be followed.

To sanitise with a dishwasher:

1. Make sure you have a suitable dishwasher that can clean and sanitise quickly and effectively. Domestic dishwashers are generally not suitable and are impractical for busy retail or hospitality food businesses due to the very long cycles required to compensate for the lower appliance temperatures.



2. Use the correct type of detergent or sanitiser as outlined in the manufacturer's instructions
3. Use the hottest rinse cycle possible as per the manufacturer's instructions
4. Look over equipment and utensils when removing them from the dishwasher to check they are clean
5. Clean the dishwasher so there is no build-up of food residues
6. Regularly maintain and service the dishwasher according to the manufacturer's specifications.



### Cleaning and sanitising using sinks or spray bottles

Clear and detailed instructions on how to correctly make up and use chemical sanitisers must be either on the label of the sanitiser or provided by the supplier in a product information sheet. Always make up and use chemical sanitisers by strictly following the manufacturer's instructions.

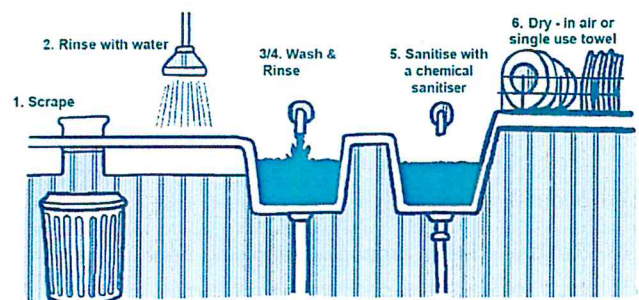
There are many different types of sanitiser and each will vary greatly in how they should be used. If clear instructions are not provided with the product, such as dilution rates and contact time, seek advice from the supplier or manufacturer and source an alternative product if necessary.

Note: contact time means the amount of time a sanitiser must be in contact with an item, for it to work.

The six recommended steps for effective cleaning and sanitising using sinks are:

1. Scrape or wipe away food scraps
2. Rinse with water
3. Wash using warm to hot water and detergent to remove grease and dirt. Soak if needed.
4. Rinse off any loose dirt or detergent residue (sanitisers will not work well in the presence of food or detergent residues).
5. Sanitise with a chemical sanitiser:
  - Make up the sanitising solution as per manufacturer's instructions
  - Dip equipment into the sanitising solution following manufacturer's instructions making sure you allow the appropriate contact time for the sanitiser to work
  - For larger items that won't fit in the sink use spray bottles to apply the sanitising solution to equipment
  - Wash off the sanitiser if necessary as per manufacturer's instructions
6. Dry in air or use single use towels

Figure 1: Cleaning and sanitising using a double bowl sink



### Making up a sanitiser solution in a sink

Diluting a sanitiser to the correct concentration is critical in preventing the spread of harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Businesses using store-bought bleach as a sanitiser should refer to the dilution instructions in

the *Using chemical sanitisers in your food business* factsheet.

To dilute your sanitiser of choice to the correct concentration in a sink follow the steps below. This calculation only needs to be done once for each sanitiser.

1. Calculate the working volume of the sink by either:
  - a. Filling a container of known quantity (e.g. a 10-litre bucket) with water, fill and pour it into a sink the desired number of times and mark the sink at the right level

example: 6 times to make up 60 litres sink volume  
OR

- b. Calculating the capacity of a square or rectangular sink by measuring the length, width and depth of the sink (how high you fill the sink up to) in centimetres
    - i. Multiply these three measurements to get the volume in cubic centimetres
    - ii. Divide your answer by 1000 to determine the number of litres the sink will hold.

For example, a rectangular sink 40 cm wide, 50 cm long and filled to a height of 30 cm:

- $40 \times 50 \times 30 = 60,000 \text{ cm}^3$
- $60,000 \text{ divided by } 1000 = 60 \text{ litres sink volume}$



**Example**

$$40 \times 50 \times 30 \\ = 60,000 \text{ cm}^3$$

$$60,000 / 1000 \\ = 60 \text{ litres}$$

SINK  
VOLUME  
= **60L**

2. Calculate how much sanitiser to add to your sink
  - a. Check the dilution rate on the sanitiser label or in the product information sheet for the required purpose, e.g. for use as a no rinse sanitiser

**DIRECTIONS FOR USE:**

**No Rinse Sanitiser: Dilute 1:250 (add 2mL per 500mL bottle) using warm water, spray product then leave to air dry. Best to refill solution after 24 hrs.**

- b. The dilution rate is the amount of sanitiser to water  
  
example: 1:250 means 1 part of sanitiser to 250 parts of water or 1 ml sanitiser to 250 ml water
  - c. Divide the volume of the sink (as calculated in step 1 above) by the sanitiser dilution rate



For example, 60 litres (sink volume) divided by 250 (dilution rate on label)

= 0.24 litres (240ml) of sanitiser

Simply mark the amount of sanitiser required on a measuring cup with a permanent marker for future dilutions.

3. Mix the sanitiser to the water in the sink.

Note: if you change sanitisers or vary the volume of water in the sink the calculation will not be correct, and your sanitising step may be ineffective. In this case you will need to recalculate the correct dilution as above.

### More information

- NSW Food Authority's website at:  
<http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry>
  - Using chemical sanitisers in your food business
  - Campylobacter – advice for food businesses
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406
- email the helpline on [food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).

# HAND WASHING IN FOOD BUSINESSES

## Correct hand washing is important

Correctly washing your hands is an important step you can take to minimise the risk of foodborne illness in your food business.

Thorough hand washing physically removes dirt, food waste, grease and harmful bacteria and viruses from your hands.

It is a legal requirement for food handlers to wash their hands.

## Hand washing facilities

The Food Standards Code requires food premises to have complying hand washing facilities in areas where food handlers work if their hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food.

Additionally, if there are toilets on the food premises, hand washing facilities must be provided immediately adjacent to the toilets. Premises must have complying hand washing facilities.

Hand washing facilities must be:

- permanent fixtures
- connected to or provided with a supply of warm running potable water
- of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing

- accessible
- provided with soap and single use towels (or air drier) and a container for used towels
- clearly designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face.

Some premises are required to provide hand washing facilities fitted with non-hand operated taps, e.g. abattoirs, butcher shops etc. Check with your local council or the NSW Food Authority.

## When hands need to be washed

A food handler must wash his/her hands:

before:

- preparing and cooking food
- handling food, especially ready-to-eat foods
- serving food.

after:

- using the toilet
- handling raw meat, raw poultry or raw eggs
- smoking, sneezing, coughing, blowing his/her nose, eating, drinking or touching his/her hair, scalp or body opening.

Penalties can apply to the food handler for failing to wash his/her hands correctly.

## How to properly wash hands

Using the hand washing facilities provided in the food business, follow these steps:

1. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, warm, running water.
5. Dry with a clean towel (preferably paper) or air-dry them before preparing or eating food.

## Use of nail brushes and antibacterial gels

Clean and undamaged nail brushes can be used during hand washing to assist in removing dough and other hard to remove food residues.

Antibacterial gels that are suitable for use around food preparation can be used in addition to hand washing.



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More resources at [foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)



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[nswfoodauth](https://twitter.com/nswfoodauth)



Antibacterial gels on their own are not a substitute for hand washing.

## Hand wash issues

If an authorised officer from the NSW Food Authority or local council identifies a hand washing or hand wash facility issue that needs to be rectified, a variety of compliance actions can be initiated.

For further information on the circumstances in which compliance action may be initiated, see the *NSW Food Authority Compliance Policy* and the *NSW Food Authority Enforcement Policy* at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)

## More information

Your local council environmental health officer can help you with any questions you have about inspection findings or compliance action. They can help clarify what work needs to be done, and in what timeframe.

- visit the Food Authority's website [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

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**Food  
Authority**

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PO Box 6682, Silverwater NSW 1811  
T 1300 552 406  
[contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](mailto:contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)  
ABN 47 080 404 416

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March 2018  
NSW/FA/FI117/1803



# HEALTH AND HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS OF FOOD HANDLERS

A food handler is anyone who works in a food business and handles food, or surfaces that are likely to come into contact with food (e.g. cutlery, plates). A food handler may be involved in food preparation, production, cooking, display, packing, storage or service.

## Responsibilities of food handlers

Under the Food Standards Code, a food handler must take all reasonable measures not to handle food or food surfaces in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

Food handlers also have specific responsibilities relating to health and hygiene.

## Health requirements

Any food handler with symptoms or a diagnosis of an illness (such as vomiting, diarrhoea or fever) must:

- report that they are ill to their employer or supervisor
- not handle food if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the illness

- if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises, take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated
- notify a supervisor if they know or suspect they may have contaminated food.

## Effective hand washing

Hand washing is one of the most important actions you can take to prevent foodborne illness.

Food handlers must:

- wash their hands using hot, soapy water and dry them thoroughly with single-use paper towels
- wash their hands whenever they are likely to be a source of contamination (after using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief,

eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body)

- wash their hands before handling ready-to-eat food and after handling raw food.

## Hygiene requirements

Food handlers must:

- not eat, sneeze, blow, cough, spit or smoke around food or food surfaces
- take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food
- Tie back long hair, and take all practical measures to prevent hair contaminating food
- ensure clothing is clean
- cover bandages and dressings on exposed parts of the body with a waterproof covering
- remove loose jewellery and avoid wearing jewellery on hands and wrists.

## Use of gloves

The Food Standards Code does not require food handlers to use gloves.



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Even when wearing gloves, in many situations it may be preferable to use utensils such as tongs or spoons.

Gloves must be removed, discarded and replaced with a new pair in the below circumstances:

- before handling food
- before handling ready-to-eat food and after handling raw food
- after using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body.

### Employer responsibilities

A food business must:

- ensure food handlers do not handle food if there is a possibility of contamination
- maintain easily accessible handwashing facilities and supplies of hot running water, soap and single-use paper towels
- ensure all food handlers have appropriate skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene.

This can be done either on-the-job or via formal training.

### Food Safety Supervisor

Under the Food Standards Code (Standard 3.2.2) all food handlers must have general skills and knowledge in food safety and hygiene. In April 2010, a law came into effect that required certain businesses in the hospitality and retail food service sector to appoint at least one trained Food Safety Supervisor (FSS).

Training is tied to nationally recognised units of competency that exist within the Vocational Education and Training (VET) System.

To review the Food Authority's Food Safety Supervisor initiative, including training requirements, visit

[www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/fss-food-safety-supervisors](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/fss-food-safety-supervisors)

### More information

- visit the website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- Phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

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Primary Industries  
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August 2015  
NSW/FA/PI041/1508



# PROTECTING FOOD FROM CONTAMINATION

Contamination of food from objects, people, pests or chemicals can cause serious illness. Food businesses, by law, must take precautions to avoid causing harm to people who eat their food.

## Protecting food is important

It is a legal requirement that a food business, when receiving, storing, processing and displaying food, takes all practicable steps to protect food from the likelihood of contamination.

Standard 3.2.2 *Food Safety Practices and General Requirements* of the Food Standards Code sets out the specific requirements for food businesses.

During an inspection of a food business, an authorised officer from the Food Authority or local council may identify issues that need to be rectified.

Business owners should speak to their local council environmental health officer (EHO) if they have any questions about the results of inspections, what work needs to be done and by when.

## Common contaminants of food

- Juices from raw foods, e.g. meat and seafood.
- Unclean surfaces, equipment and utensils.
- Dirt, grease and unclean surfaces.
- Bacteria and viruses from unwashed hands and poor personal hygiene.
- Pests and pest droppings.
- Cleaning and other chemicals.
- Jewellery, hair and personal items.
- Glass, metal or other fragments from damaged equipment and fixtures.

## Tips to protect food from contamination

It is the business owner's responsibility to set up food safety processes and procedures in the workplace to comply with the Food Standards Code.

Business owners and staff can follow some simple steps to protect food from contamination during the receipt, storage, processing and display of food:

- Store food in food-grade containers and covered, if necessary, to protect it from contamination.
- Store food and packaging above the floor.
- Store raw food – especially meat, fish and poultry – below and away from ready-to-eat food in a cool room or fridge.
- Store chemicals and equipment well away from food items, food packaging and food handling areas.
- Maintain the premises, including all fixtures, fittings and equipment, in a clean and undamaged condition.
- Regularly clean and sanitise food contact surfaces and utensils, e.g. chopping boards, knives.
- Use separate equipment and utensils for raw and ready-to-eat foods, or thoroughly wash and sanitise equipment and utensils between handling raw and ready-to-eat foods.



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- Avoid unnecessary contact with food, e.g. use utensils rather than bare hands.
- Thoroughly wash and dry hands before starting work, changing tasks or returning from a break, e.g. between serving customers and preparing food, and after handling raw foods and garbage, or using the toilet.
- Minimise the wearing of exposed jewellery and tie back long hair.
- Cover cuts and wounds with an appropriate dressing.
- Do not handle food if feeling unwell or suffering from a contagious illness.
- Store food in food-grade containers and covered.

### More information

- visit the Food Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
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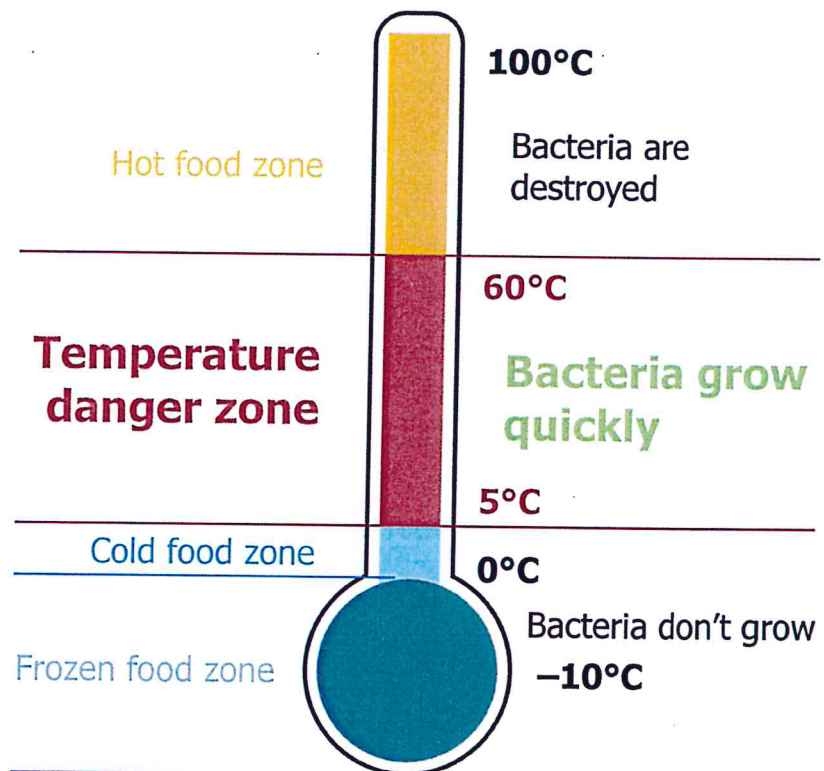
February 2016  
NSW/FA/FI140/1602



# Temperature danger zone



- The temperature danger zone is between 5°C and 60°C, when it is easiest for harmful bacteria to grow in food
- Minimise the time that food spends at these temperatures in order to keep food safe
- Refrigerated food needs to be kept at 5°C or below
- Hot food needs to be kept at 60°C or above



## 4-hour/2-hour rule

If a refrigerated food (eg dairy, cut fruit, sandwiches, salad) or a hot food (eg casserole, pie, lasagne, meatballs) has been in the temperature danger zone for a total time of:

### 0 to 2 hours

Use immediately, or keep at or below 5°C, or at or above 60°C

### 2 to 4 hours

Use immediately

### More than 4 hours

Throw away

If you intend to use the 4-hour/2-hour rule you will need to demonstrate that the food is safe. See the guideline on the 4-hour/2-hour rule on the Authority's website.

