Brisbane City Council is committed to promoting safe food practices in order to support small businesses and protect the health of our city's residents and visitors.

Operating and managing your business effectively is important to food safety practices. An understanding of your licence renewal and Eat Safe Brisbane audit processes, food safety culture and up-to-date record keeping will all help businesses to meet food safety requirements.

Licence renewal

Your food business licence is valid for 12 months from the issue date and requires annual renewal. Council will send you a renewal notice at least 60 days before the licence expiry date. For information on renewal fees, visit brisbane.qld.gov.au/foodbusiness.

Eat Safe Brisbane audits

Council officers regularly audit and assess all food safety risks associated with your food business. Officers will document your audit results on a proforma, similar to the Eat Safe Brisbane food safety industry checklist, and will provide you with a copy.

You can use the Eat Safe Brisbane food safety industry checklist to help you prepare for this audit and understand how your star rating is calculated. You will receive a new star rating following each audit. You can find the checklist on Council's website, by searching 'Eat Safe'.

Food safety management tips

As a food business operator you have a responsibility to manage food safety to ensure you serve safe food to your customers and prevent food poisoning. Having a good food safety culture in your business and introducing good management practices will help you to achieve this.

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Food safety culture

Food safety culture is how you and your staff think about food safety and hygiene, and the actions you take relating to food safety issues. A good food safety culture is created when you and all your staff understand the importance of food safety and prioritise food safety within your business. Business owners and managers are responsible for leading food safety culture.

You can improve food safety culture by prioritising food safety and writing a food safety commitment and making it visible to staff and customers. A food safety commitment will show your staff and customers food safety is a priority for your business. Additionally, your actions will demonstrate to your staff the importance of everyone being responsible for providing safe food.

Tips for creating a good food safety culture
- Understand food safety hazards in your business, such as bacteria and chemicals and explain these to your staff. Consider alternatives for your high-risk activities, e.g. if you are using raw egg to make ready-to-eat food (e.g. mayonnaise) you may instead buy the product from a supplier or use less-risky pasteurised eggs.
- Identify and understand the food safety and handling risks in your business, such as cooling food and explain these to your staff.
- Write procedures for high-risk activities, such as cooling food and stock rotation, and ensure these are visible to staff.
- Write a closing checklist for staff. This should cover all important checks staff need to do at the end of each day, e.g. is there enough paper towel and soap, is the kitchen clean and/or has any food been left out?
- Provide staff training and ensure staff are aware of your food safety and food handling procedures.
- Display images, posters or stickers in your business to explain procedures to staff in appropriate areas, e.g. use posters to explain sanitiser dilution rates or the correct hand washing method.
- Explain the importance of food safety to your staff.
- Walk around your business and talk to staff about their food safety ideas and concerns.
- Provide feedback to staff and correct them if you see them doing the wrong thing and help them improve.
- Reward and recognise your staff when they are following good food safety procedures.
- Lead by example, e.g. wash your hands when you walk into the business.
- Hold regular meetings or presentations to talk about food safety.
- Encourage your staff to report food safety issues they notice, e.g. no hand soap in the dispenser or signs of pests such as cockroaches

- Listen to customer complaints, investigate why problems have occurred and review your food safety procedures.
- Check your procedures are working.
- Read Council's audit proforma and act on the feedback.
- Contact Council if you do not understand any of your audit proforma requirements.
- Visit foodstandards.gov.au and search for food safety culture for more information.

Record keeping

Good business management positively impacts your staff, as well as the quality and safety of the food you produce. Use checklists to keep track of completed and outstanding tasks, including upcoming equipment maintenance.

Key record keeping

- Staff training – this will help you ensure all staff understand personal hygiene procedures and are kept up to date with your food safety procedures.
- Food storage and display temperatures – recording the temperature of food stored and displayed at your business will help identify if your equipment is not working and take corrective action, if required.
- Cleaning schedule – helps you to keep track of what cleaning has been completed and what is due.
- Maintenance – helps to keep track of regular maintenance and identify any areas or equipment that need repair.
- Pest control – will help you keep track of your pest control services
- Waste collection and cleaning – correct waste storage and disposal helps to prevent contamination and pests.

Further information

Visit brisbane.qld.gov.au and search 'Eat Safe' or contact Council's Business Hotline on 133 BNE (133 263).