

Guide to Home-based Food Premises

This guide has been developed to assist persons wanting to prepare and sell food from their home-based kitchen. Any food prepared for retail sale must comply with the Food Standards Code and in the majority of cases, the premises will be required to be approved by Council and a Food Business Licence held.

Planning requirements

You must first ensure that your proposed operation is acceptable under Council's Planning Scheme. Generally speaking, planning approval is not required if:

- No more than two (2) customers or clients are present at any one time and no more than eight (8) customers or clients are present in any one day; and
- The home-based business does not involve more than two (2) persons, including residents of the dwelling, and
- No more than two (2) customer vehicles are associated with the home based business at any one time.

Council generally recommends that home-based kitchens deliver to clients where possible to avoid the need for customers to visit their home premises.

What types of food will you be preparing?

Home-based kitchens are not designed to prepare large amounts of food, especially highly greasy/oily foods. If you are planning on preparing meals or producing a large amount of food, or your business has expanded, a home-based kitchen may not be suitable for your operation and you will be required to operate from or establish a commercial kitchen.

Generally speaking, the manufacturer of small-scale confectionary items, including cakes and the basic



preparation of food items such as fruit and vegetable preparation, snack board/picnic hamper preparation (which can include some meat products) and foods requiring limited amounts of cooking are suitable. You will be required to outline the types of food you wish to prepare as part of the licensing and approval process with Council.

Are you planning on selling foods at a Market Stall?

Some home-based kitchens prepare food to be sold at market stalls or events. If you are planning this, you may also be required to hold an additional Food Business Licence for your Market Stall/Temporary Premises set-up.

If you are preparing and packaging food from your home kitchen and selling at a market stall in that packaging, an additional Food Business Licence won't be required. If you are handling, preparing, cooking and/or packaging food at the markets, with exception to some snack foods, then an additional Licence for a market stall will be required.

Food Safety Supervisor

All licensed food premises must have a nominated and qualified food safety supervisor. This requires the completion of a registered training course. Please follow [this link](#) to download the Queensland Health Food Safety Supervisor's Guide.

The course modules required are outlined under Retail and Hospitality (Table 1) in the Guide.

Please note that Food Safety Supervisor qualifications must be renewed every five (5) years from the date of issue on your Certificate of Achievement/Qualification.

How to apply for a Food Business Licence

Please see [Council's website](#) for details on how to apply for a home-based kitchen Food Business Licence. When submitting plans, hand drawn plans are acceptable so long as they are legible and photographs are also provided of the kitchen area. Sectional elevations, mechanical exhaust and/or site plans are not required to be submitted for a home-based kitchen.

What are the minimum requirements for the operation of a home-based kitchen?

Please see the following page for an outline on the minimum requirements for a home-based kitchen. If your kitchen does not meet these minimum requirements, your premises may not be able to be approved by Council.

If you are undertaking any plumbing work, please ensure you engage a licenced plumber and that the necessary applications are submitted to Council's Plumbing Department.

Minimum Requirements

Walls

Walls in the food preparation and storage area must be smooth, impervious and easily cleaned. Walls such as exposed brick or concrete blocks are generally not suitable in a kitchen area. Materials such as painted plaster, tile, stainless steel, laminate, plastic sheeting or other smooth and impervious materials are suitable.

Floors

Floors must be smooth, impervious and easy to clean. Materials, such as polished cork and polished floorboards are acceptable, provided they are well maintained. Other suitable options include vinyl, tiles and sealed concrete (i.e. polished or epoxy coated). Carpet is not a suitable option.

Benches and Cupboards

Domestic style benches are acceptable provided they are in good condition and have impervious surfaces.

Hand Wash Basins

A basin for hand washing should be located in or close to the food preparation area. These basins must have a supply of warm potable water, liquid soap and disposable paper towels. For a home kitchen, a double basin sink with one sink designated for hand washing is acceptable. Kitchens with only one sink in the kitchen area will only be approved in limited circumstance (i.e. preparation of foods that are of negligible risk).

Dish Washing

Dishwashing shall be undertaken via a double bowl sink, or a dishwasher and a single bowl sink.

Ventilation

In domestic premises, the type and size of cooking appliances is usually not within the scope of the relevant Australian Standard. Domestic mechanical systems are usually sufficient to remove fumes produced by cooking. If a standard domestic mechanical system (i.e. rangehood) is not sufficient, then it's generally an indication that the home kitchen is not suitable for the foods you are preparing. Highly greasy and oily foods are discouraged from a home kitchen operation as the kitchens are not designed to cope with the load and it can have impacts on Council's sewer system or your septic system.

Potable Water Supply

The premises must have an adequate supply of potable water for all activities that use water that are conducted as part of the food premises, including hand washing as well as other activities from the home. If you are not connected to Council water supply, you will be required to undertake a standard bacteriological/microbiological water test and provide results to Council. This must be undertaken on an annual basis. Whitsunday Water, owned and operated by Whitsunday Regional Council, can assist with water testing.

Storage Facilities

A dedicated storage area specific for the storage of cooking utensils and food should be provided. This area is to be separate from domestic supplies (i.e. a separate refrigerator for the storage of business related food items).

Pets in the Home

The Food Safety Standards prevent live animals in areas which food is handled. This requirement also extends to home-based food businesses. It is therefore not considered appropriate that a home-based food businesses will have domestic pets inside their home at any time, unless the animals can be excluded from access to the kitchen area and a robust cleaning schedule is in place.