

# Food safety *for* fundraising events



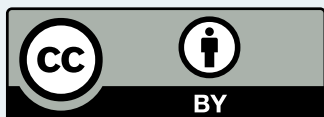
A pocketbook guide to assist non-profit groups



**Queensland**  
Government

## Food safety for fundraising events. A pocketbook guide to assist non-profit groups

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## Introduction

Sausage sizzles, cake stalls and other food-related events are great ways for charities and non-profit community groups to raise funds and highlight their cause at the same time. Volunteers who work at fundraisers need to know how to handle food safely, because food that is mishandled can cause harm.

A charity or a non-profit community group that is selling or handling food is a food business for the purposes of Queensland's *Food Act 2006* (the Act).

The Act requires that certain activities be licensed by their local government. However, exemptions apply for some activities operated by non-profit groups. Regardless of whether a licence is required, all food businesses must ensure they provide safe and suitable food.

This pocketbook guide has been developed to assist non-profit groups to comply with the food safety requirements for a fundraising event under Queensland food safety laws.

## Organising and supervising the event

Start by selecting a responsible person to be in charge of the event. This person should oversee the planning, preparation and clean-up of the event, as well as provide an orientation for all volunteers.

This person should check with the local government where the event will be held; whether there are any specific guidelines for the foods being sold; and whether a food business licence is required to operate.



## Food business licence

Non-profit organisations **must apply for a licence** when meals are prepared, sold or given away from the same place on at least 12 days of a financial year (1 July – 30 June).

However, non-profit organisations **do not need a licence** when:

- selling meals that are pre-prepared by others at other premises and the food handling is limited to the manufacturer's directions. For example, heating a frozen meal purchased at a supermarket in accordance with the directions on the package
- selling meals that consist only of fruit, cereal, toast or similar (simple breakfast) food
- those who help to prepare the meal also consume it or
- selling meals prepared as part of an education or training program the organisation conducts. For example, a cooking class as part of a food preparation, catering or hospitality course.



### When planning a fundraising event

- The responsible person(s) from your organisation has contacted the local government environmental health officer to discuss if there are specific requirements for the event.

# Facilities

Facilities must be suitable to ensure a good standard of food hygiene and to protect the food from contamination.

Regardless of whether the facilities are temporary or fixed, they must meet the requirements of the *Food Safety Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment* so that they are suitable for food handling activities. The design and construction must be adequate for the food activities you propose — if you cannot upgrade the structure you must reduce food handling activities. Talk to your local government environmental health officer if you are unsure.

## Temporary food premises

Temporary food premises can be:

- a permanent structure used to sell food on an occasional basis only (e.g. community hall)  
or
- any structure set up and dismantled after the event such as stall, tent or barbecue.

See Artist Impression – **Guide for the design and operation of a temporary food premises (stall)** (page 12).



## Water supply

- Check the water supplies that are available for your event.
- All water for dishwashing, hand washing, cooking and ingredients (e.g. ice) must be safe to drink.
- Check if hot water will be available for washing-up, see **Cleaning and sanitising** (page 26).
- Access to the water collection point should be restricted and the area protected from animals and foreign matter.
- Only use clean containers, specifically kept for drinking water, with lids fastened and stored carefully at all times, whether full or empty.

## Waste

Rubbish and wastewater attract animals and pests and can contaminate food if not stored and disposed of properly.

Rubbish should be kept well away from food preparation areas, in leak proof, covered containers. It is best practice to take rubbish away when you leave the site, for disposal at an approved council refuse tip. Environmental protection laws prohibit a person dumping waste in non-approved areas.



**Check if there is a designated disposal area at your event site.**

Do not dispose of wastewater into or near water sources such as streams, wells and bores.

All waste oil must be placed in an appropriate container and removed at the end of the event. Large quantities of waste oil must be removed by a licensed waste contractor.

# Food safety skills and knowledge for food handlers

## What event organisers need to know

All licensed food businesses in Queensland are required to have a food safety supervisor and to ensure that all food handlers have a level of skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene appropriate to their food handling activities.

However, charities and other non-profit community groups are exempt from the skills and knowledge requirement if:

- the food is not potentially hazardous (e.g. shelf stable biscuits, cakes without cream, jams, chutneys)
- or
- the food is consumed immediately after thorough cooking (e.g. meat sold straight from the barbecue).

**Potentially hazardous food** means food that must be kept at a particular temperature to:

- a) minimise the growth of harmful bacteria that may be in the food
- or
- b) stop the formation of toxins in the food.

Examples of potentially hazardous food include:

- raw and cooked meats and food containing them such as casseroles, curries or lasagne
- dairy products and food containing them such as milk, cream, custard or dairy based desserts
- seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood
- cut or otherwise processed fruits and vegetables such as salads, ready-to-use vegetable packs and fresh fruit salads
- cooked rice and pasta.





## What volunteers need to know

Before the event, all volunteers need to know about their roles in transporting, preparing and serving food safely. Use the following quick skills and knowledge quiz to check food handlers' understanding of food safety. Note: there may be more questions to cover other areas of food handling that you need to ask. Seek guidance from the environmental health officer when discussing the event.

### Skills and knowledge quiz

- What are potentially hazardous foods? (page 6)
- At what temperature should hot food be kept? (page 20)
- At what temperature should cold food be kept? (page 20)
- When should you wash your hands? (page 25)
- What are the health and hygiene obligations of a food handler? (page 17, 23-24)
- How do you know when sausages and hamburgers are cooked properly? (page 19)
- Why should raw and cooked foods be separated? (page 18)
- What do you do if asked about food allergens? (page 8-9)



- Nominate someone to be responsible for overseeing food safety:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

- Make a list of volunteers who have been briefed about skills and knowledge in food safety.**

# Food suppliers

When purchasing food, ensure:

- the food is not damaged, deteriorated or perished; and
- that packaging is clean, intact and labelled appropriately.

Potentially hazardous food delivered for your event must be delivered under **temperature control** (page 20) with a responsible person present at the pre-arranged delivery time to receive and check it. Any food that does not meet the above requirements should not be accepted.

Where facilities at your fundraising event have limited space for food preparation or no running water, it is recommended that you purchase food that requires less processing (e.g. ask your butcher to slice all meat ready for cooking).

# Labelling

Food that is sold at events which raise money solely for charitable or community causes does not need to be labelled.

Although you do not need to label your food, if a customer asks, you are required to provide information about the food you sell. For example, you may be asked whether the food contains a certain ingredient that may cause an allergic reaction—somebody at the point of sale must be able to provide accurate information.



Mandatory allergens

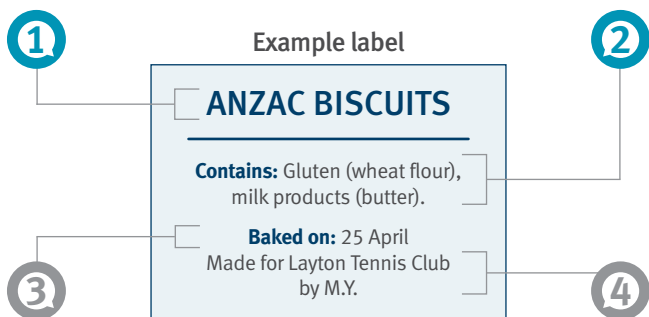


You may wish to label the products you are selling so the customer can identify what it is and its ingredients.

While not compulsory, labelling the food items will give your volunteers confidence to sell the products. It is recommended that you include the following:

Description of the food\*

Ingredients, including whether it contains any of the 10 mandatory allergens\*



The 'baked on' or 'best before' date.

An identification of the producer of the food with the name and address of the organisation (you can use initials).

This label should be printed or legibly handwritten using a waterproof pen.

**\* This information is legally required—it can be displayed with the food or provided to the purchaser on request.**



**Keep a register of food donors, and what they've provided for you to sell.**

Have each donor provide their details and a list of items they've made or donated with the ingredients. Keep these records in a folder at your event in case a customer (or authorised officer) asks for information.

# Transporting

## Protecting food from contamination

When transporting food, it is important to protect it from contamination by keeping it covered at all times. This can be achieved by applying plastic film over containers or using containers with lids.

Materials used to cover food should be suitable for food contact to ensure they do not contain chemicals that could contaminate the food. Aluminium foil, plastic film and clean paper towel may be used provided the food is completely covered. Previously used materials and newspaper may contaminate food so these materials should not be used in direct contact with any food.

Vehicles must be clean. If pets or dirty equipment have been previously carried, the area must be thoroughly cleaned or lined to minimise the likelihood of contamination.

## Temperature control

When potentially hazardous foods are transported they should be maintained at a temperature 5°C or colder or at 60°C or hotter.

If the journey is short, insulated containers e.g. eskies with ice bricks may keep the food cold. If the journey is long or on a hot day, a portable refrigerator may be required. Hot food may be kept hot in insulated containers or with heat packs for short periods, but portable ovens may be required to keep food hot over longer trips.



Food should be pre-heated (for hot foods) or pre-cooled (for cold foods) before being placed in an insulated container. The container must have a close-fitting lid to help maintain the temperature. The container must be in good condition, kept clean at all times and used only for food.

Make sure that there are an adequate number of insulated containers or eskies to transport food at **correct temperatures** (pages 20–21).

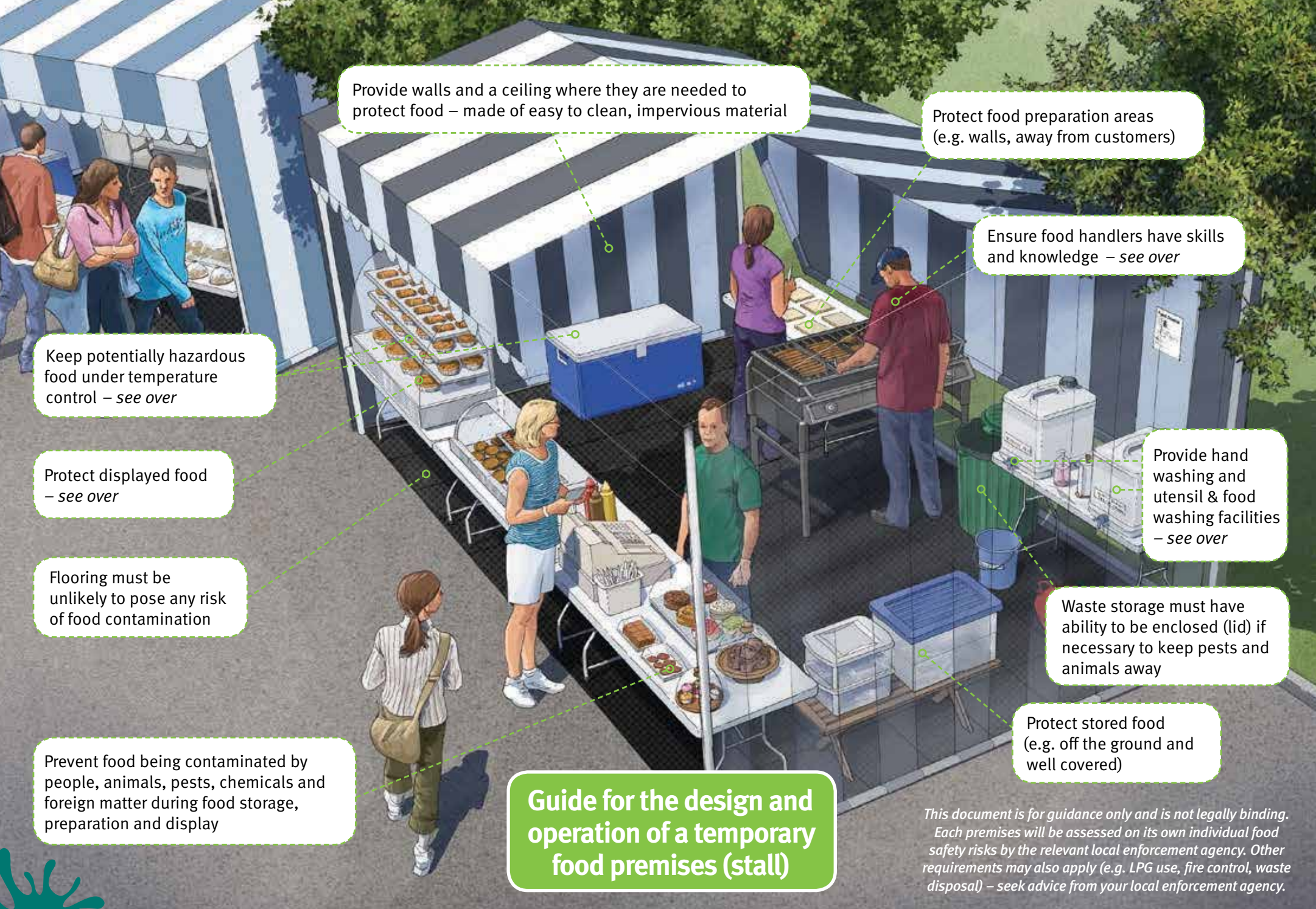


**Remember:** Protect food contact surfaces (such as tongs, trays and plates) from dirt and contamination too!

## Other considerations to keep food under temperature control during transport

- Keep the journey as short as possible.
- Containers for cold food should be placed in the coolest part of the vehicle. If the vehicle is air-conditioned, store cold food inside the vehicle, rather than in the boot.
- Make it your first job to unload any hot or cold food and place it into on-site temperature controlled facilities such as a pre-cooled fridge or pre-heated bain-marie.





Provide walls and a ceiling where they are needed to protect food – made of easy to clean, impervious material

Protect food preparation areas (e.g. walls, away from customers)

Ensure food handlers have skills and knowledge – see over

Keep potentially hazardous food under temperature control – see over

Protect displayed food – see over

Flooring must be unlikely to pose any risk of food contamination

Provide hand washing and utensil & food washing facilities – see over

Waste storage must have ability to be enclosed (lid) if necessary to keep pests and animals away

Prevent food being contaminated by people, animals, pests, chemicals and foreign matter during food storage, preparation and display

Protect stored food (e.g. off the ground and well covered)

### Guide for the design and operation of a temporary food premises (stall)

*This document is for guidance only and is not legally binding. Each premises will be assessed on its own individual food safety risks by the relevant local enforcement agency. Other requirements may also apply (e.g. LPG use, fire control, waste disposal) – seek advice from your local enforcement agency.*



## Hand washing facilities

Container of sufficient size (e.g. 20 litres) with tap and potable water (warm running water is required unless written approval from enforcement agency)

Liquid soap and paper towels

Container for waste water. The waste water is to be disposed of appropriately (e.g. to sewer or without risk of entering stormwater/ waterways)



## Utensil and food washing facilities

Container of sufficient size (e.g. 20 litres) with tap and potable water

Hot water and/or food grade chemical sanitiser for sanitising if needed

Provide separate washing and rinsing containers for food and for utensils, as needed

## Food handlers

Ensure food, utensils and food contact surfaces are not contaminated by hands, hair, jewellery, wounds, coughs, etc.

Clean person, attire and habits

Must have skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene matters

Exposed wounds covered with waterproof covering

No smoking in stall

Avoid unnecessary contact with food by using utensils or gloves

Money and food handled separately

Hands must be washed whenever they are likely to contaminate food



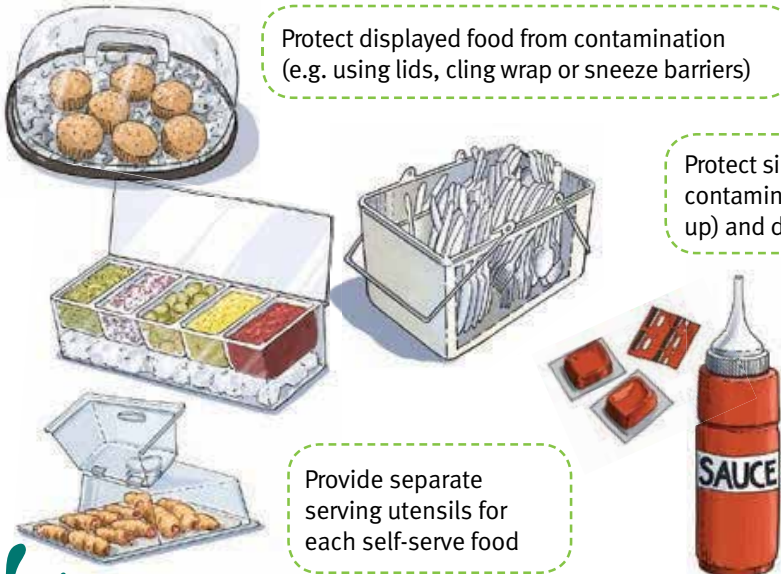
## Food display, single use items and condiments

Protect displayed food from contamination (e.g. using lids, cling wrap or sneeze barriers)

Protect single use utensils from contamination (e.g. store handle up) and do not reuse

Clean the outside and top of dispenser bottles and do not top-up bottles

Provide separate serving utensils for each self-serve food



## Temperature control of potentially hazardous food

Cold food – ensure 5°C or below



Check food temperature with thermometer (accurate to +/- 1°C)



Hot food – ensure 60°C or above



Please seek advice from your local enforcement agency if planning to use an alternative to appropriate temperature control for display of potentially hazardous food.

# Food handling

## Tips for preparing food safely

If food needs to be prepared before the event, it is recommended that a commercial rather than home kitchen be used (e.g. community halls may be better equipped than domestic premises).

Food that is freshly cooked at the event and served immediately, like barbecues, has less chance of becoming unsafe than food that is pre-cooked and taken to the event.

Never use the same plates, trays or utensils for raw meats that are also used for foods that are ready-to-eat such as cooked meats, unless they have been thoroughly cleaned, sanitised and dried between uses. Raw meats contain bacteria, therefore they must be cooked to ensure safety. Cooked food and other food that is ready-to-eat such as salads should always be placed on separate, clean, dry serving dishes.

Use tongs and other utensils when preparing food that will not be cooked before it is eaten, such as salads and sandwiches. Gloves can be used but remember that they should be used for one task only. When you start the next task, make sure you wear a new pair of gloves.



**Remember:** Never wash gloves! Always throw them out before handling a different food product.





## Cooking

Always cook food thoroughly. Do not partially cook food and then warm it up later. Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers to an internal temperature of 75°C and until juices run clear—steaks can be cooked to preference.

Wherever possible, try to cook food as close to the time that you will be serving or selling it. This reduces the chance of the food becoming contaminated after it has been cooked and does not give bacteria enough time to grow to dangerous levels on the cooked food before it is eaten, see **Time limit between 5°C and 60°C** (page 21).

## Making sandwiches

Sandwiches are a popular product at community and fundraising events. Making sandwiches requires a lot of handling which means a lot of contact time with the person making them. Because of this it is very important that people who are ill do not make the sandwiches and that all food handlers maintain good personal hygiene and practise safe food handling.

Sandwiches filled with **potentially hazardous foods** should be handled and stored like any other high-risk food (kept colder than 5°C). Because of this they should be freshly made as close to the start of the event as possible. If this is not practical they will need to be refrigerated to ensure they are kept cold. Make sure that you have enough refrigerator space to store them safely—they will take up plenty of room.

Sandwiches should be kept under **temperature control** when they are transported, after preparation and when displayed for sale. You must limit the time the ingredients are outside of refrigeration, to keep the sandwiches safe. For more information, see **Time limit between 5°C and 60°C** (page 21).

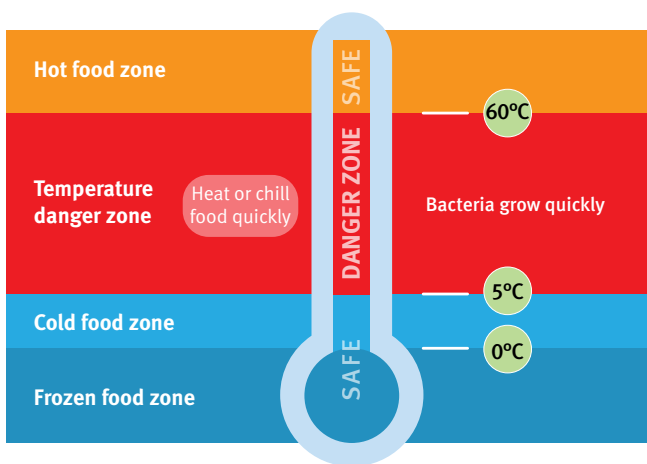
# Temperature control

## Food handling on the day

To prevent food poisoning, food must be kept at safe storage temperatures of 5°C or colder or 60°C or hotter.

Bacteria that cause foodborne illness can grow at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C, which is known as the temperature danger zone.

Food businesses are required to have a thermometer if you prepare, handle or sell **potentially hazardous food**. This will enable you to check that safe temperatures are being maintained.



Do you have an accurate probe thermometer (accurate to +/-1°C) for measuring the temperature of potentially hazardous foods?

Yes  No



## Keeping food cold

When you are preparing food, make sure that you have enough refrigerator space or insulated boxes with ice bricks available to store the food. It is important to remember that refrigerators do not work properly when food is packed tightly into them because the cold air cannot circulate properly.

If you are running out of room in your refrigerator, remove foods that are not potentially hazardous such as soft drinks. The temperature of these foods is not critical to consumer safety and they can be kept cool in insulated containers with ice or ice bricks.







## Cooling foods

After cooking, the temperature of the food must fall from 60°C (or higher) to 21°C (or lower) in less than two hours and be further reduced to below 5°C within the next four hours. Putting food into shallow containers and not overfilling the container will help to cool food more rapidly.

## Time limit between 5°C and 60°C

The 2 hour/4 hour rule applies to ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food. It provides the absolute maximum amount of time this food can be held safely at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C and what should happen to it after certain times. The times refer to the life of the food e.g. it includes preparation and transport, not just display times.

**Total time between 5°C and 60°C**

0–2 hours	2–4 hours	over 4 hours
 	 	 
OK to use or refrigerate at 5°C or less	OK to use	Throw away

## Thermometer tips

Thermometers should not contain glass as this could shatter and contaminate the food.

1. Sanitise the probe of a clean thermometer with sterilising wipes before inserting into food.
2. Insert probe and wait for temperature to settle on thermometer.
3. Note the temperature.
4. Clean probe in hot running water and detergent.
5. Allow probe to air-dry (wipe probe with sterile wipe before re-use).



**Note:** You may need to test a number of areas of the food to ensure that the temperature is distributed evenly.

## Reheating food

Food which is to be served hot will need to be quickly and thoroughly heated until it is steaming hot at the event and then kept hot until it is served.

Never use a bain-marie (food warmer) to reheat food. Only use a bain-marie to keep hot food above 60°C and make sure they are pre-heated before placing any food in them.

It is best to reheat food to a temperature of 75°C for at least two minutes. Use your probe thermometer to check that the internal temperature of the middle of the food reaches this temperature or higher.



# Hygiene of food handlers

Volunteers must not handle food if they are ill or have an infection, as they can transfer harmful bacteria or viruses to food, particularly if:

- they are vomiting or ill with diarrhoea, fever or sore throat with fever  
or
- their doctor has diagnosed them as having or carrying a foodborne illness.

A volunteer handling food must inform the event organiser that they cannot work as a food handler, if they have one of the above conditions or symptoms.

## What to do

### If a volunteer tells you they are ill:

- direct them to immediately stop work  
or
- reallocate duties, so that the person is not handling food.

### A food handler with:

- open sores or wounds on their hands, arm or face and/or
- any discharges from their ears, nose or eyes (such as a cold or conjunctivitis)

**must** take extra precautions to prevent food being contaminated. For example, cover the skin sore with a waterproof covering or take medication to dry up the discharge. They can continue to work with food for sale if the appropriate precautions are taken.

## General hygiene

Food handlers must take care that nothing from their body contaminates any food or food-contact surface. This includes hair, saliva, mucus, sweat, blood, fingernails, clothes, jewellery or bandages.

### A food handler must:

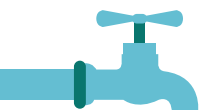
- avoid contact with ready-to-eat food, such as salads and cooked food. Always use clean tongs or other implements to handle the food
- not taste test food with the same utensil that is being used to prepare the food. Hands and fingers must not be used for taste testing
- wear clean clothing (e.g. apron)
- make sure bandages and dressings on exposed parts of their body such as the hands, arms or face are enclosed with a waterproof covering of contrasting colour (e.g. blue)
- not eat over uncovered food or equipment (includes utensils and any other food contact surface)
- not sneeze, blow or cough over uncovered food or equipment and utensils
- not spit, smoke or chew tobacco where food is handled
- wash their hands whenever it is necessary, see **Food handlers fold-out** (page 17).



## Hand washing

Proper hand washing is an important measure to protect food from contamination and stop the spread of harmful micro-organisms. All food handlers must wash their hands:

- before handling food
- in between handling raw food and food that is cooked or ready-to-eat e.g. raw meat then salads
- after using the toilet
- after smoking, coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose, eating or drinking
- after touching their hair, scalp, mouth, nose, ears or other body parts
- after handling money (it is preferable that food handlers not handle cash—have a dedicated cashier if possible)
- after touching another person, including shaking hands
- after handling garbage, other waste or unclean surfaces.



**There are five steps that should be followed when washing hands:**



- 1 WET** hands
- 2 SOAP** hands
- 3 RUB** thoroughly—wrists, forearms, between fingers
- 4 RINSE** in clean water
- 5 DRY** on paper towel



Have all food handlers been made aware of their health and hygiene obligations?

- Yes     No

## Cleaning and sanitising

There are three steps needed to effectively clean and sanitise equipment:

- washing
- sanitising
- drying.

Equipment such as cutting boards, bowls and utensils need to be thoroughly washed in hot soapy water. Effective cleaning will remove most of the bacteria present and sanitising will then kill any that remain.

All equipment must be thoroughly dried before it is reused. Air-drying or paper towels are best but tea towels can be used if they are clean and replaced when they are wet or dirty.

Be aware that cloth towels require frequent replacement (and sanitising during laundering), to ensure that they do not transfer bacteria.

If you are washing-up at an event being held outdoors, make sure you have access to plenty of water that is safe for drinking. If hot water is not available, disposable eating and drinking utensils should be used and enough cooking utensils provided to last the duration of the event so that washing-up is not necessary (e.g. a cooking utensil which has fallen on the ground should not be used again at the event).



**Make sure that utensils and food contact surfaces used for preparing food are clean and protected from contamination.**





## Further information

### Food business licence

Contact your local government (Council) environmental health officer.

### Food safety standards

Contact your local government (Council) environmental health officer.

### Food labelling

Contact your local (Queensland Health) Public Health Unit.

### National food standards

Download free copies of *Food Safety Standards* and other useful resources from the Food Standards Australia New Zealand website: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au).

Call **13QGOV (13 74 68)** and ask for your local Queensland Health Public Health Unit if you are unable to access the internet.

# Organiser's checklist



## Preparation

- Checked with your local government whether you require a food business licence and are allowed to operate?
- Nominated someone to be responsible for overseeing food safety?  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Food safety has been discussed with volunteers and food donors.

## At the event

- All **food handlers** are in good health and have been made aware of their **safe food handling** obligations.
- Food allergens** have been identified (in case information is requested by the purchaser).
- The **food** and the name and address of the person who donated or produced it, can be traced back using a **register** or similar.
- You have a **probe thermometer** accurate to  $\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$  for measuring the temperature of potentially hazardous foods.

## Facilities are adequate for

- Storage (refrigeration, cool boxes, bain-marie)
- Transport
- Serving
- Hand washing
- Waste disposal.
- All **equipment and food contact** surfaces that are used in preparing food are kept **clean** and protected from contamination.