



Making Food Safety Your Business Information for Class 4 Food Businesses

What do changes to the Food Act mean for your business?

The *Food Act 1984* regulates the sale of food for human consumption. From 1 July 2010, a new state-wide food business classification system and changed regulatory requirements will apply to food premises operating in Victoria.

As a result of the Food Act changes, councils are responsible for reclassifying every food premises within their municipalities according to their food safety risk. You have received this information flyer because your food premises has been reclassified as a class 4 which is a new level of food premises classification under the Department of Health's new classification system. The *Food business classification tool* is on the department's website if you would like more information about the new system.

What is a class 4 food premises?

Class 4 food premises are those whose food handling activities pose low risk to public health. They include premises that only undertake the following:

- the sale of shelf stable pre-packaged confectionery at newsagents, pharmacies and video stores
- bottle shops
- sale of uncut fruit and vegetables at farmers markets or by greengrocers (whether retail or wholesale)
- wine tastings
- shops and stalls with packaged cakes (excluding cream cakes), bottled jams or honey
- sessional kindergartens serving low risk food including cut fruit, and
- simple sausage sizzles at stalls, where the sausages are cooked and served immediately. This means sausages, sauce, onions and bread. (This does not include hamburgers or other high risk foods).

For a full list of class 4 activities see the Department of Health website. If your activities are not listed, contact your council.

What do I do when my current registration with the council expires?

If you operate your business from a shop, such as a newsagency or pharmacist and it is registered with the council, when that registration expires you will need to complete the new notification form at that time. This is required once only, not annually. The form must be lodged with the council, confirming that you are a class 4.

I am not currently registered with the council, but I think the premises is a class 4. What do I do?

Inform the local council of your intention to run food activities via an easy notification system. This is required once only for permanent premises such as pharmacists, newsagents and bottle shops. (It is an offence to fail to notify your council that you are operating such a food premises.) You will not need to obtain formal annual approval through registration.

Given the low food safety risks associated with class 4 activities, you are not required to have:

- a food safety program
- a food safety supervisor
- an annual council inspection.

However, the council may, at its discretion, inspect your premises under the Food Act (e.g. if any complaints are received or for a spot check).

All food premises, including class 4, must ensure that the food they sell or prepare for sale is safe to eat.

What if we change the type of food we sell?

Please note that if you plan to alter the type of food you will be selling to include higher risk activities (such as any unpackaged foods) then you must notify your local council.

This is an obligation under the Food Act. The council will decide whether reclassification of your food premises is required. If your classification changes you must ensure you meet the food safety regulatory requirements of that class. Your local council would explain this to you.

How can my class 4 food premises find out more about food safety?

To help maintain safe food handling practices, the Department of Health has also made available for your food premises and staff:

- free guidance materials explaining the changes
- the 'Do Food Safely' program, a free online food handling learning program
<http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/> (This course is designed to improve basic knowledge of food safety).

(Special arrangements apply to occasional community group food activities. If you are a community group that has stalls at events or occasional food activities in community halls please refer to the separate information sheet for community groups.)

**This information sheet explains the recent changes to Victoria's Food Act.
The national Food Standards Code continues to apply to food premises
and is not affected by changes to the Act.**

More information about the Food Act reforms, including a full list of class 4 activities and how to notify, can be accessed on the Department of Health website:

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/>

or by contacting the Health Unit of your local council:

<http://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/>

A free online (non-accredited) food safety learning program can be accessed at:

<http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/>