



A note from the editor

Welcome to the Summer 2020/2021 edition of the MidCoast Council Food Safety Newsletter.

2020 has been a challenging year for many businesses and the local community. We would like to take this opportunity to thank businesses for their assistance in implementing their COVID-19 Safety Plans and on-going efforts in response to the pandemic in keeping their staff, customers and community safe.

As we head into the holiday season, it is important that businesses remain up to date with current rules and requirements, have a current COVID-19 Safety Plan and have now implemented **Mandatory Electronic Customer Check-in** for contact tracing.

An article has been included which provides details and a link to information on what is required in relation to electronic check-in and how to set-up the QR code app. Additional articles include the revamped Food Safety Supervisor Certificates now being issued by the NSW Food Authority and the importance of maintaining high standards for hygiene, cleaning, sanitisation and safe food handling practices to ensure food safety during the Christmas period.

We would like to wish you all a very busy and safe Christmas season and a prosperous and smooth 2021. Please be assured that our Environmental Health Officers are here to continue to assist with any questions or concerns you may have during this challenging time.

Lastly, please enjoy the 2021 Food Safety Calendar enclosed, it contains useful and essential food safety information for all your staff to view through the 2021 year.

Kind regards,
Kate Major - Environmental Health Officer



MANDATORY ELECTRONIC CHECK-IN

A new rule for mandatory customer check-in was introduced on 23 November 2020 requiring staff and patrons of food and drink premises to use electronic check-in via QR codes or other electronic forms.

- Service NSW COVID Safe Check-in QR codes have been emailed to businesses who have registered as COVID Safe
- For customers who don't have a mobile device or the Service NSW app, you can display a device (eg iPad) at your venue to digitally record contact details and time of entry.

Find out more about this new requirement www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/covid-safe/customer-record-keeping/qr-codes#setting-up-your-own-qr-code-check-in

STAY UP TO DATE

It is essential that businesses stay on top of evolving COVID-19 requirements to help keep staff, customers and our community safe.

Find out 'What you can and can't do under the rules' and other helpful information and resources:

www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/what-you-can-and-cant-do-under-rules

NEW LOOK FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR CERTIFICATES

The NSW Food Authority has finalised a fresh new look for the NSW Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) certificate.

Now with anti-fraud features added to the design, the certificates will be issued to Food Safety Supervisors on completion of training modules or renewal training from the 26 October 2020 onward from Approved Registered Training Organisations (RTO's).

A full list of approved RTO's can be accessed at:

www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/fss-food-safety-supervisors/training-organisations



Contact us for advice or guidance in relation to the Food Act 2003 and Food Standards Code. Phone: 7955 7777 or email council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au
For more information visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au

FOOD SAFETY: IT'S IN YOUR HANDS

Australian Food Safety Week 2020 has reinforced the message of good consumer behaviour established during the COVID-19 pandemic so we can continue to reduce the amount of foodborne disease.

We'd like people to continue the good work by following these five simple food safety tips:

1. CLEAN

Wash hands with soap and running water before handling food and between handling raw and ready to eat foods. Wash up regularly, especially items which have been used for raw meat and poultry, and keep kitchen surfaces and fridges clean.

2. CHILL

Keep the fridge at 5°C or below. Refrigerate any leftovers as soon as they've stopped steaming and use within 2-3 days (or within one day for people at higher risk of foodborne illness including pregnant women, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems) or freeze them immediately.

3. COOK

Use a thermometer and cook poultry, sausages, minced or stuffed meat dishes to

75°C in the centre. Be aware of the risk of raw or minimally cooked egg dishes or look for the new pasteurised egg options. Follow any cooking instructions on the food packaging. Remember, microwave ovens can cook unevenly. Make sure you follow the recommended stirring and standing times before serving.

4. SEPARATE

Prevent cross contamination, especially between raw meat, seafood, fish or poultry and ready to eat foods like cooked meats, desserts and salads.

5. COOK WELL

Don't cook for others if you feel unwell - your illness may spread and make others sick too.

If in doubt, stay out of the kitchen.

Remember

TEMPERATURE DANGER

this summer

With the heat of summer now beginning to be felt, it is important that potentially hazardous food is kept under temperature control to minimise the growth of foodborne pathogens and prevent the formation of toxins in food. The temperature range between 5°C and 60°C is often referred to as the 'temperature danger zone' because food poisoning bacteria can grow rapidly in this range.

In practice, all potentially hazardous food must be kept cold at or below 5°C or held hot at or above 60°C, unless businesses can demonstrate that another practice it uses is safe.

The time that food can be safely held between 5°C and 60°C is referred to as the 4-hour/2-hour rule. The rule has been scientifically checked and is based on how quickly micro-organisms grow in food at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C.

0 to 2 hours

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



2 to 4 hours

Use immediately



More than 4 hours

Throw away

Food that has been in the temperature danger zone for less than two hours (including preparation, storage and display) can be returned to the refrigerator to below 5°C, or heated to above 60°C and brought out again at a later time. However, the total time in the temperature danger zone must not be longer than four hours.

If a food business decides to use the 4-hour/2-hour rule, there are certain Food Standards Code requirements that must be met, including:

- Ensure appropriate hygiene and control practices are being followed when receiving, storing and preparing potentially hazardous food and ingredients
- Start timing from when the food is brought out of refrigeration (at 5°C or below)
- Keep a documented system to demonstrate how long the food is out of temperature control so you can be sure when the 2-hour and 4-hour time limits are reached
- Remember to add up all time periods the food has been between 5°C and 60°C to work out the total time - if in doubt, throw it out
- Ensure food is not displayed in direct sunlight or at temperatures above 25°C

The documented system can take the form of:

- A set of work instructions on how the 4-hour/2-hour rule is applied by the business; or
- Keeping records that demonstrate adherence to the time temperature requirements.

It is the responsibility of food businesses to make sure all food handlers understand the use of the 4-hour/2-hour rule and complete the appropriate records.

