

Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands

STARTING A FOOD BUSINESS

The following information will help you to understand food laws that you need to comply with when getting started in the food industry such as running a food business from home.

Home based food businesses

Certain food businesses may operate from a residential house such as:

- B&Bs
- Food prepared for fundraising events
- Online food sales from home
- Preparing food for local markets

If you prepare food for sale or sell food in a residential home, you are deemed to be a food business under the *Food Act 2008*.

Therefore you must:

- Comply with all food laws and
- Register or notify your food business with the Shire.

Food Laws – legislation and standards

The purpose of food legislation and standards is to make sure that food for sale is safe and suitable to eat so that people don't get sick.

It is important that you understand and comply with food legislation before operating your business.

Registration of a food business

Before operating your food business, you need to register or notify your business with the Shire.

This includes temporary food businesses such as a market stall, mobile food vans, home based food businesses and fundraisers.

By law, a food business must not start operating without registering, otherwise enforcement action, including prosecution, can apply.

To register or notify

1. Contact the Shire for details of the registration process required and any other food safety requirements.
2. Complete the Shire notification/registration form and (if required) include design and fit-out specifications of the premises where food is to be handled or any other information required by the Shire.
3. Pay the registration fee as required by the Shire.

After the Shire considers the application for registration they will either:

- grant the application, with or without conditions, and issue a certificate of registration specifying the premises in respect of which registration is granted
- refuse the application in writing, setting out the reasons for refusal

Training – skills and knowledge of staff

It's important that anyone handling food or surfaces that come into contact with food (known as a food handler) and their supervisors have the skills and knowledge to handle food properly so that it's safe and suitable to eat.

The FoodSafe training can be done online at

<https://www.ehawa.org.au/events/event/foodsafesafe-online-2022> to learn more about what you need to do to ensure staff and supervisors have the appropriate skills and knowledge to handle food safely.

Shire fees and charges

1. one-off registration or notification fee -\$75
2. annual or other fee (to cover annual inspections costs) -\$150

Inspections

The Shire employs authorised officer (also known as Environmental Health Officer) who have the regulatory power to:

- inspect a food business to make sure the business and staff are operating in accordance with food laws
- investigate food safety complaints someone may make about a business
- investigate a foodborne disease outbreak or food safety incident that a business may be linked to
- take samples for analysis, for example food samples or environmental swabs

You don't need to fear these inspections and you are encouraged to build a good relationship with the authorised officer, who wants to make sure food for sale to the community is safe and suitable.

More information

For information about starting a food business contact the Shire's Governance and Risk Coordinator, Ibrahim Macrae on (08) 9162 6649 or email governance@cocos.wa.gov.au

Frank Mills
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER