

# HOME BASED FOOD BUSINESS GUIDE



## RUNNING A FOOD BUSINESS AND PREPARING FOOD FOR SALE IS DIFFERENT FROM COOKING FOOD FOR THE FAMILY.

The City of Kingston allows businesses to operate a domestic kitchen if they can comply with the requirements of the *Food Act 1984* and the Food Standards Code Australia New Zealand. You will also need to meet the Home Occupation requirements under Victorian Planning Laws.

This information pack is designed to help guide you through the process and make sure you can comply with the Food Standards as a home-based food business within Kingston. It can also assist you to decide if it is going to be viable for you to run your business from home.

### ? IS YOUR HOME SUITABLE AS A HOME BASED BUSINESS?

Take the test below to establish whether your home is suitable:

- Does your kitchen have a double bowl sink?
- Will you have space in the kitchen for a separate hand basin?
- Are you going to have enough storage space to separate your business and home food activities?
- Is your home free from pets?
- Are your kitchen surfaces sealed and free from exposed wood?
- Are you aware of the application fee and ongoing registration costs?
- Will the operations of your home based business have no impact on the amenity of the surrounding area?

✓ **YES?** - If you answered yes to all of the items on the list, read on to find out more about the registration process and requirements.

✗ **NO** - If you answered no to any of the items on the list, your kitchen doesn't meet the requirements. There are alternatives you can consider.

**! Other suitable options that could be considered include:**

- A separate dedicated kitchen set up at home in a garage or separate room within the home
- Hiring an existing commercial food premises
- Hiring a community venue with a commercial kitchen setup.

## RISK CLASSIFICATION

There are several classes of food premises, Class 1 (highest level of legal requirements), Class 2, Class 3 and Class 4 (lowest level of legal requirements).

**1, 2, 3 and 3a** premises must register with Council.

**Class 4** premises must complete a notification form and forward to Council.

**Class 1** Child Care, Aged Care and Hospital kitchens  
(This is not applicable for home based businesses.)

**Class 2** Applies to the handling/preparation of potential hazardous foods. This would include meat dishes, rice dishes, dairy products, dumplings, further processing of fruits/vegetables and cakes that contain custard, fresh cream or fresh fruits

**Class 3** Applies to the handling/preparation of low risk food such as cakes (that do not contain the above), or the storage of pre-packaged potentially hazardous foods (as noted above). This would include the preparation of jams, dried fruits, flour, grains and cereals

**Class 3a** Accommodation getaways and home based businesses that make chutney, relish and sauce type products using a hot fill process.

**Class 4** Applies to the retail sale of pre-packed low risk foods such as chocolate bars, packaged tea etc. These premises must notify Council by completing a notification form

**Note:** Class 2 and Class 3a food premises are required to have a nominated Food Safety Supervisor.



## GENERAL FIT-OUT REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ You will require a double bowl sink for washing and sanitising equipment and utensils.  
*This may not be required if you have a single bowl sink and a dishwasher capable of reaching 82°C which can accommodate your largest equipment.*
- ✓ You will require a separate sink for food preparation such as washing vegetables or fruit (if this is part of your process)  
*Other options may be available depending on your food handling processes. Approval will be required from Council.*
- ✓ You will require a separate hand washing basin/sink in areas where food handlers work and where they can be easily accessed  
*Hot and cold water must be provided through a single outlet operated by a hands-free tap, push button or single lever*
- ✓ Adequate refrigerator / freezer storage must be provided  
*These must be separate to the domestic refrigerator/freezer used in the home*
- ✓ All dry ingredients, utensils, equipment and cleaning chemicals must be stored separately to those used in the home
- ✓ All walls, floors, ceilings, benches and cupboards must be in a good condition and finished with a smooth, durable, impervious material capable of being readily cleaned
- ✓ Adequate ventilation must be provided over all cooking appliances and food heating equipment
- ✓ The premises must be pest proof to prevent the entry of rodents, birds, animals and insects
- ✓ The premises must have adequate waste disposal measures in place  
*Bins must be suitable for the volume of garbage and recyclable matter accumulated by the food business and emptied or removed on a regular basis.*



## OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ During preparation, packaging, and transport - no smoking, outdoor pets, children or other activities are permitted in the food preparation areas  
*Kitchens should be free of personal items, cleaned down and sanitised before each operation*
- ✓ Home based food businesses cannot be approved if there are indoor pets such as cats and dogs. Keep pets securely outside
- ✓ Domestic kitchens are only suitable for small scale activities  
*Large scale food activities need to be conducted from a commercial kitchen. For example, larger commercial equipment would not be suitable in a domestic setting*

## LABELLING

All packaged food must comply with labelling requirements specified in Food Standards Code, Clause 1.2.1 - Requirements to have labels or otherwise provide information.

Any labelling claims made on packaging such as 'free from' must be validated at a NATA approved laboratory and maintaining a 'free-from' claim can be difficult within a domestic kitchen, given the cross-over of use. If unsure, contact your Environmental Health Officer to discuss further.

## PERMITS AND REQUIREMENTS

We're here to help! The best place to start is to contact Council on 1300 653 356 and ask to speak with an Environmental Health Officer. We can discuss your food business ideas and your ability to meet food safety requirements.

As part of the application process, you are also required to contact:

City of Kingston Statutory Planning Department  
Ph: 9581 4131

City of Kingston Building Department  
Ph: 9581 4131

South East Water  
Ph: 131 694



## APPLICATION PROCESS

Formally submit your application for review to the Environmental Health Department by following the below steps:

### STEP 1

Visit [kingston.vic.gov.au/new-food-business](http://kingston.vic.gov.au/new-food-business) to complete the application form.

It's recommended that you upload a hand-drawn floor plan to scale with your application (see the application form for more information).

### STEP 2

Pay the application fee (can also be paid at the time of registration)

Charges are a general guide and your Environmental Health Officer will confirm the fee based on the complexity of the application and planned food activities of your business.

Visit [kingston.vic.gov.au/foodbusiness](http://kingston.vic.gov.au/foodbusiness) for applications fees.

### STEP 3

Your completed application form (and floor plan, if provided) will be reviewed by an Environmental Health Officer, who will approve your application, subject to conditions being met.

### STEP 4

Subject to conditions being met, a final inspection is to be scheduled PRIOR to the production of food for sale from your business. Please allow up to three working days for an inspection to be scheduled.

### STEP 5

Ensure the following items are addressed prior to the final inspection:

- All fit out works are completed
  - All surfaces have been cleaned and sanitised
  - Warm water is available
  - All hand wash basins are stocked with liquid soap and paper towel
  - All hot and cold storage units are turned on and holding at the minimum required temperature
  - Food Safety Program is on-site and appropriate record sheets are filled in
- Go to: [Food safety programs - health.vic](http://Food%20safety%20programs%20-%20health.vic)
- Food-grade sanitiser is on-site
  - Digital probe thermometer is on-site

### STEP 6

Once all outstanding items from the final inspection are suitably addressed, the registration fee is payable (annual fee) as well as the new premises application fee if unpaid.

Visit [kingston.vic.gov.au/foodbusiness](http://kingston.vic.gov.au/foodbusiness) for fees.

### STEP 7

A certificate of registration is issued upon receipt of payment.

### STEP 8

A Food Safety Assessment will be undertaken shortly after initial registration. This is also a requirement as part of your annual registration.





### STEP 9 - FOODTRADER

If you are planning to sell your food to the public at an event, an approved open space or similar, once you have registered your home-based business (fixed premises) you then need to register your business (temporary premises) on Foodtrader. Once approved, you need to submit a Statement of Trade (SOT) at least two days prior to each event for approval by the Council where the event is being held.

Visit [foodtrader.vic.gov.au](http://foodtrader.vic.gov.au) for further information.





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-  PO Box 1000, Mentone 3194
-  1300 653 356
-  TIS 131 450
-  [info@kingston.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@kingston.vic.gov.au)
-  [kingston.vic.gov.au](http://kingston.vic.gov.au)