

Food Safety Supervisor Certificate – Complete Hospitality Training

Canonical: <https://cht.edu.au/news/food-safety-supervisor-certificate/>

Details:

A Food Safety Supervisor is a specific, named role with statutory duties — not a job title a business can assign informally. This page covers what the role is, who can hold it, what the person is actually responsible for day to day, and the rules that differ by state.

For which certificate you personally need, see what food safety certificate do I need . For the standard behind it, see Standard 3.2.2A . For the enrolment process, see how to get a Food Safety Supervisor certificate .

What the role is

Under Standard 3.2.2A, which commenced 8 December 2023 , a category one or category two food business must appoint a Food Safety Supervisor before it engages in a prescribed activity, and that supervisor's certificate must have been issued within the immediately preceding five years . The appointment duty is clause 3.2.2A—11 ; the five-year test sits in the definitions clause 3.2.2A—2 .

A prescribed activity is worth defining, because it is the trigger for the whole standard: the handling by the business of any unpackaged potentially hazardous food that is either used in preparing ready-to-eat food to be served to a consumer, or is itself ready-to-eat food intended for retail sale by that business. The appointment has to be in place before that starts — not before the first inspection.

The FSS is the person who:

knows how to recognise, prevent and alleviate food safety hazards in that business

has the authority and ability to supervise other people handling food and to give direction about safe handling

is reasonably available to the business — not a name on a form

That third element is where businesses most often fall short in substance while appearing compliant on paper. "Reasonably available" means working on site, or genuinely contactable — by phone, for instance — to give guidance on handling high-risk unpackaged food. A supervisor who is rostered off and unreachable is not reasonably available, and a single supervisor covering a seven-day operation needs a real answer to what happens on their days off. Nominating a person who is rarely on site satisfies nobody at an inspection.

Queensland Health puts the test in practical terms: the supervisor should physically work on site and oversee day-to-day food handling, or be easily contactable where documented food handling procedures are in place. Short absences such as holidays of up to 30 days are workable on that basis, but extended leave requires another supervisor to be appointed . In Queensland the supervisor must also be reasonably available to be contacted by two audiences — the local government that issued the licence, and the people who handle food in the business.

And where the certificate itself comes from

One piece of drafting explains every state difference further down this page. Standard 3.2.2A defines a food safety supervisor certificate as certification by either

(a) a registered training organisation , or

(b) an organisation recognised by the relevant authority under the state's own Act.

Limb (b) is an open invitation for a state to build its own scheme on top of the national units. New South Wales is the only state that has taken it up. Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia rely on limb (a) alone, which is why in those states the RTO's Statement of Attainment is the certificate and in NSW it is a separate document. The NSW scheme is not a departure from the national standard; it is the standard used as designed, by one state out of eight.

Who can be one

The requirement is competency, not seniority. An FSS does not have to be the owner or the head chef — it must be someone who holds the right units and genuinely has authority over food handling. In Victoria, s 19GA(3) of the Food Act 1984 says expressly that the supervisor may be the proprietor .

| Sector | Units required | | --- | --- | | Hospitality | SITXFSA005 and SITXFSA006 — together the SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision skill set | | Retail | SIRRFSA001 , or the two hospitality units | | Health and community services — aged care, hospitals, children's services | HLTFSSE001 + HLTFSSE005 + HLTFSSE007 , Release 1 of each. The published minimum competency standard for that sector in Victoria and Queensland , so a hospitality FSS is not a valid FSS in an aged care kitchen there | | Food processing | FBPFYSY2002 , or FBPFYSY1002 in Queensland |

Food handler training alone — SITXFSA005 by itself — does not make someone a Food Safety Supervisor anywhere in Australia. The FSS-level unit is SITXFSA006 . This is the single most common and most expensive misunderstanding in the area: a business that has sent staff on a one-day food handling course and believes it now has a supervisor does not have one.

Three points of precision on that sector row, because it is commonly stated wrongly:

Standard 3.2.2A names no sector units at all. The health and community services requirement is a state determination, published by Safe Food Victoria and by Queensland Health.

New South Wales names no sector-specific units in its published supervisor requirements, and Western Australia publishes HLTSS00061 — the three HLTFSSE units bundled as a skill set — as an accepted equivalent rather than a sector mandate, and does not confine health or childcare businesses to it.

Safe Food Victoria also confirms there is no Victorian requirement to train beyond the minimum competencies listed , so a provider recommending an extra module for Victorian compliance is recommending something Victoria has not asked for.

Western Australia is the one jurisdiction that names the skill set by code , citing SITSS00069 directly, and it expressly accepts online delivery — its provider table carries a dedicated online-course column. WA also publishes SIRRFSA001 and the superseded SITSS00051 (SITXFSA001 + SITXFSA002) among its accepted equivalents, which is how older certificates continue to be recognised there.

And what makes someone a supervisor in Victorian law specifically

Victoria does not test "holds a certificate". Section 19G of the Food Act 1984 sets three limbs, all of which must be satisfied. A food safety supervisor is a person who:

knows how to recognise, prevent and alleviate the hazards associated with the handling of food at, or from, the premises; and

has met an appropriate food safety competency standard for premises of the same nature as the premises; and

has the ability and the authority to supervise other people handling food at, or from, the premises, and to ensure that handling is done safely.

A food safety competency standard means a standard approved in writing by Safe Food Victoria , or by a relevant State, national or international statutory or regulatory body. That is the legal status of the unit table above — approved in writing, not merely suggested.

The certificate speaks only to limb 2. Limb 3 is the one businesses fail without noticing: a competent casual with no standing to direct other staff does not satisfy s 19G however current their certificate. That is the legal reason the supervisor is usually a chef, manager or owner.

What the supervisor's own unit actually assesses

The two hospitality units are not quizzes, and the difference between them is exactly the difference between a food handler and a supervisor.

SITXFSA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety is the handler's unit. It requires hygienic food handling in line with organisational procedures, demonstrating each of the following on at least three occasions : correct hand-washing procedures; appropriate use of uniform and personal protective equipment; effective personal health and hygiene practices; and hygienic food service. It also requires the procedures for reporting unsafe hygiene practices. Its subject is your own conduct.

SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices is the supervisor's unit, and its subject is the whole system. It requires the correct methods of controlling food hazards at each of nine critical control points :

Receiving

Storing

Preparing

Processing

Displaying

Serving

Packaging

Transporting

Disposing

It also requires the procedure to calibrate a temperature probe so that readings are accurate, and the procedure for reporting incidents of food contamination. The approach is HACCP-style hazard management rather than personal hygiene, which is why this is the unit the supervisor role turns on.

The probe calibration requirement is worth pausing on. Almost every temperature record a food business keeps depends on a probe being accurate, and an uncalibrated probe produces records that are worse than none — they document compliance that may not have happened.

Both units, and both skill sets, have been on our scope since 10 June 2022 at the extent deliver and assess.

What the supervisor actually does day to day

The certificate is the entry ticket. The work is ongoing, and in a category one business it is substantial.

Making sure handlers are trained before they start. Standard 3.2.2A requires each food handler doing a prescribed activity to have completed training before engaging in it. That training must cover safe

handling of food, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising of premises and equipment, and personal hygiene — and it does not have to be accredited. Free, non-accredited courses satisfy the standard, and no refresher period is mandated. A business may also recognise prior learning itself, through competency-based training, in-house education, a food safety induction completed at another food business, or relevant previous industry experience. The duty is to keep skills and knowledge current, which is a judgement the supervisor makes.

Knowing that the older duty still applies. Clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 has required every Australian food business since 2000 to ensure persons undertaking or supervising food handling have skills in, and knowledge of, food safety and food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities . It is outcome-based — no course, no certificate, no refresher — and Standard 3.2.2A did not replace it. A supervisor therefore has two questions to answer at an inspection, not one: are the prescriptive tools in place, and is the competence actually there.

Owning the substantiation records, if the business is category one. Category one businesses — anyone who processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into potentially hazardous ready-to-eat food, which is most of hospitality — must make and keep records covering:

Receipt of potentially hazardous food at 5 °C or below, or 60 °C or above

Storage under temperature control

Process steps achieving pathogen reduction

Minimising time at growth-permitting temperatures

Cooling and reheating within the specified timeframes

Display under temperature control

Transport under temperature control

Cleaning and sanitising of food contact surfaces and equipment

Those records must be kept three months and be accessible at the premises . Category two businesses do not carry this tool — the whole difference between the two categories is one clause, 3.2.2A—12 . See how long do I need to keep records for .

Being the person an authorised officer talks to. In practice the supervisor is who an environmental health officer asks for the records, the certificate and an explanation of the process steps.

Which businesses must have one

Both category one and category two businesses need an FSS. But the trigger for the duty is set by state law, not by the standard, and in two states it is not the category at all. The regulatory guidance draws the line in one sentence: enforcement, penalties, business classification and any state-issued certificate are matters for the state's own Act, not for the Code.

Queensland is broader than the standard: the trigger is holding a food business licence under s 86 of the Food Act 2006 . A licensable food business is one involving the manufacture of food; the retail sale of unpackaged food by an entity other than a non-profit; or the sale, on at least 12 days each financial year , of meals prepared by a non-profit at a particular place. Section 86 requires a licensee to have a supervisor within 30 days after the licence is issued and to at all times continue to have one, with a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units . A licensed business that would not be category one or two still needs an FSS, and a non-profit holding a licence is not relieved by the standard's fundraising exemption.

Victoria turns on the premises class , declared under s 19C , with councils classifying on the highest-risk activity undertaken at the premises. Where a s 19C declaration requires a supervisor, s

19GA(1) puts the duty on the proprietor to ensure there is one:

| Class | Typical premises | FSS required? | | --- | --- | --- | | 1 | Hospitals, day procedure centres, residential aged care, children's services, Meals-on-Wheels-style delivery, supported residential services for aged persons | Yes | | 2 | Restaurants, cafes, pubs, hotels, clubs, taverns, function centres, mobile vans, sushi, chicken and pizza shops, supermarkets, delis, caterers, canteens, fast food, juice bars | Yes , with limited community-group exemptions | | 3A | B&Bs, farm stays, guesthouses, nature retreats, motels cooking potentially hazardous food for immediate consumption; and hot-fill acidic products | Yes | | 3 | Unpackaged low-risk food, pre-packaged distribution, shell eggs, short community-group cooking | No | | 4 | Pre-packaged low-risk food, sausage sizzles, tea and coffee, wine tasting, whole uncut fruit and vegetables | No |

Safe Food Victoria states the rule as Class 1, most Class 2 and Class 3A premises must have a supervisor. Classes 1, 2, 3 and 3A are registered with council; Class 4 notifies rather than registers.

A Class 2 community group escapes the FSS duty only if all three conditions hold: the proprietor is a community group, it operates no more than two consecutive days at a time, and most of the people handling food are volunteers. Under s 19GA(2) premises running a quality assurance food safety program that includes competency-based or accredited staff training are also exempt — note the training condition is part of the exemption, not an optional extra. Safe Food Victoria points businesses to the FoodSmart tool to build a compliant program.

The Victorian sanction is not a fine

This is the most commonly missed fact about the Victorian scheme, and it changes how a business should weigh the risk. No monetary penalty attaches to s 19GA. Where NSW and Queensland both attach penalty units to the equivalent failure, Victoria's sanction is registration-based : failing to comply with the food safety supervisor requirement is a ground for refusal of registration or renewal , or for revocation or suspension of the registration of the food premises .

That is not the lighter option. A fine is a cost; a suspended registration is a closed business.

One person, how many sites?

This differs sharply, and the NSW position is a statutory bar rather than a matter of judgement.

| | Multi-site FSS? | | --- | --- | | New South Wales | No. Section 106B(1)(b) prohibits a person being FSS for any other premises or mobile catering business | | Victoria | Yes, if each relevant council is satisfied — and where the premises sit in different municipalities, each council must be satisfied separately | | Queensland | Yes — a licensee may have more than one FSS, and there is no bar on one person covering multiple sites | | Western Australia | Not addressed in the material reviewed |

A multi-venue group in NSW therefore needs a separate certified FSS for each premises. A group operating across NSW and Victoria cannot run one model in both. Victoria also confirms that the supervisor does not have to be on the premises at all times , but must be able to know how food is being handled when they are not there.

Duties attaching to the certificate

New South Wales carries the heaviest documentary duty, and its certificate is a different document from everyone else's. Section 106B(3) defines it: a document stating that the holder is qualified to be a food safety supervisor, issued in accordance with the regulations by an approved training organisation . RTOs must be approved by the NSW Food Authority under Food Act 2003 s 106H — ASQA registration alone is not enough — and an approved RTO carries a NSW Food Authority approval number that is separate from its national RTO code , on a list the Authority revises at least annually .

The NSW certificate covers four mandatory key focus areas : allergen management, cleaning and sanitising practices, safe egg handling, and Food Act offences. That fourth one is usually left off lists of

three, and it is the reason a plain national Statement of Attainment is insufficient there — the approved RTO has to wrap NSW-specific content around the national units. An approved RTO must issue the certificate within 10 working days of successful completion, and the Food Authority caps what may be charged for issuing it, separately from the training fee. Confirm the current cap with the Authority rather than relying on a figure printed anywhere, including here.

A copy must be kept on the premises — or, for mobile catering, at the proprietor's business address — and produced on request under s 106G, with maximum penalties of 25 penalty units for an individual and 50 for a corporation. NSW also attaches penalties to the appointment duty itself: 50 penalty units for an individual and 100 for a corporation, with one narrow statutory defence allowing food to be processed and sold by retail on not more than 30 days while a replacement supervisor is appointed. There is no ongoing duty to notify the regulator — ss 106E and 106F were repealed in 2013.

The classic NSW error follows from this. An approved RTO issues two separate documents: the nationally recognised Statement of Attainment, and the NSW FSS certificate. A business that keeps only the Statement of Attainment on premises has not satisfied s 106G. NSW also does not recognise interstate certificates; every other state does.

Queensland inverts the emphasis. There is no on-premises certificate duty of the same kind, but there is an active notification duty under s 88, and it is of the supervisor's name and contact details: within 30 days of the licence being granted, and within 14 days after a person becomes an FSS, after a person stops being an FSS, or after an FSS's contact details change. Each breach carries a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units.

Victoria sits between the two. The Statement of Attainment must be producible to the council environmental health officer, and under s 19GB the council may request the FSS's name and qualifications in writing, to be provided within 7 days of that written request.

Western Australia imposes no certificate duty of any kind, and one caution is worth stating because it is the same shape as "OLGR-approved" in liquor. WA Health publishes a table of RTOs offering food safety supervision training, including interstate providers, but that table is a convenience listing of self-notified providers, not an approval register. WA requires national registration, not WA approval. A provider absent from the list is not disqualified, and a provider claiming to be "WA-approved" is describing a scheme that does not exist.

Keeping it current

The five-year rule is about the date of issue, not an expiry stamp. A Statement of Attainment never expires as a record of competency; it simply stops satisfying Standard 3.2.2A once it is more than five years old.

Renewal pathways differ, and this is where a group operating in more than one state gets caught:

Queensland will not accept RPL for the five-yearly recertification. Queensland Health states it flatly: the complete course must be repeated every five years, though some RTOs offer a refresher for previous holders.

Victoria does the opposite and actively encourages RPL or recognition of current competency; superseded course codes remain valid. Safe Food Victoria publishes no Victorian refresher period at all, and notes that prior training "does not usually" need repeating — the five years reaches Victoria through the Code, applied by the Food Act 1984, rather than through a Victorian instrument.

New South Wales requires recertification through an approved RTO and only within 90 days of expiry; past that the full course applies. Recertification is available only to someone who already holds or held a NSW certificate, not every approved RTO offers it, and it must be completed with a single approved RTO rather than split across providers.

Western Australia does not state a position on RPL for the refresh.

What we can and cannot provide

We hold SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision and SITSS00068 Food Handling on our scope of registration, both since 10 June 2022.

In Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia , our nationally recognised Statement of Attainment is the compliance artefact for the hospitality pathway — and in Victoria it also satisfies Safe Food Victoria's published minimum competency standard for the retail sector, because the two hospitality units and SIRRFS001 are accepted as alternatives to each other.

In New South Wales it is not enough on its own. We deliver the correct national units, but we are not on the NSW Food Authority's approved provider list — verified by reading that list in full on 1 September 2026. We cannot issue the NSW FSS certificate that s 106G requires you to keep on the premises, and the four NSW mandatory key focus areas are not certified through us. For NSW compliance you need a provider from the Authority's list.

In health and community services , in either Victoria or Queensland, we cannot complete the required set either: of the three units those regulators publish, only HLTFS001 is on our scope . HLTFS005 , HLTFS007 and FBPF002 are not. A hospital, aged care or childcare kitchen needs a provider holding all three on scope.

Both limits are stated plainly because getting either wrong carries consequences, and because no provider's marketing is a substitute for the regulator's own list or for training.gov.au.

About us

We are Complete Hospitality Training , RTO 3722, CRICOS 04242E. Level 3, 28 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000, and 410 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010. Contact melbourne@cht.edu.au or +61 3 9654 1554 .

See also Food Safety Supervisor , food handling , virtual food handling , how long does a Food Safety Supervisor certificate last in Victoria and all courses .

We link to the relevant course and regulatory sources in this guide. Check those sources for current requirements, and confirm course availability, delivery, fees and entry requirements with us before enrolling.

Source records and further guidance

We link the unit records and regulator guidance relevant to this page below. Check the current source before making an enrolment, licensing or employment decision.

HLTFSE001 Follow basic food safety practices

SITXFSA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety

SITXFSA006 Participate in safe food handling practices

SITSS00069 Food Safety Supervision Skill Set

SITSS00068 Food Handling Skill Set

Food Safety Supervisor certificate requirements (New South Wales)

Food Standards Code — Standards 3.2.2 and 3.2.2A (food safety practices and food safety management tools)

Unique Student Identifier (USI) requirements for RTOs

Does the FSS have to be the owner?

No. It must be someone competent, with authority over food handling, who is reasonably available to the business. In Victoria s 19GA(3) expressly permits the proprietor to be the supervisor, but does not require it.

What does "reasonably available" actually mean?

Working on site, or genuinely contactable — by phone, for example — to advise on handling high-risk unpackaged food. Queensland treats holidays of up to 30 days as workable where documented procedures exist, but requires another supervisor for extended leave. Victoria confirms the supervisor need not be on site at all times, but must be able to know how food is being handled when absent. It is a substantive test, not a paperwork one.

Which unit makes me a supervisor rather than a handler?

SITXFSA006. SITXFSA005 on its own is food handler training and does not make anyone an FSS in any state. The difference between the two skill sets is exactly that one unit.

What makes someone a food safety supervisor in Victorian law?

Section 19G of the Food Act 1984 sets three tests, all of which must be met: knowing how to recognise, prevent and alleviate the hazards at those premises; having met an appropriate food safety competency standard for premises of that nature, meaning one approved in writing by Safe Food Victoria or an equivalent body; and having the ability and the authority to supervise other food handlers. The certificate answers only the second.

Why does only New South Wales issue its own certificate?

Because Standard 3.2.2A allows it. The Standard defines a supervisor certificate as certification by either a registered training organisation or an organisation recognised by the relevant authority under the state's Act, and NSW is the only state to have exercised that second limb.

Can I be FSS for my two cafes?

In NSW, no — that is a statutory bar under s 106B(1)(b). In Victoria yes, if each council is satisfied, and each council separately where the venues are in different municipalities. In Queensland yes.

What if my FSS leaves?

You need another certified FSS. In Queensland you must notify the regulator within 14 days of the change. In NSW there is a statutory defence allowing not more than 30 days of trading while a replacement is appointed, and you must have the replacement's certificate on the premises.

What is the penalty if we have no supervisor?

It depends on the state, and Victoria is the outlier. NSW: up to 50 penalty units for an individual, 100 for a corporation. Queensland: up to 50 penalty units under s 86. Victoria: no monetary penalty at all — the sanction is refusal, revocation or suspension of the premises' registration, which is a larger commercial exposure rather than a smaller one. Penalty unit values are indexed annually, so confirm the current amount with the regulator.

Is the certificate mine or the business's?

The Statement of Attainment is yours — it stays with you and is recorded against your USI on your national training transcript. The compliance obligation is the business's.

Does my certificate expire after five years?

Not as a record of competency. It stops satisfying Standard 3.2.2A once it was issued more than five years ago, which in practice means the business must arrange recertification.

Can I use RPL to recertify?

In Victoria, yes, and it is encouraged. In Queensland, no — expressly excluded for the five-yearly recertification. In NSW, only through an approved RTO within 90 days of expiry, and only if you already hold or held a NSW certificate.

Do I need an FSS if I only reheat and slice?

Yes. Reheating, slicing, weighing, repacking and hot-holding make you category two, which still requires both the training and the supervisor. What you avoid is the category one records obligation under clause 3.2.2A—12.

We are not category one or two. Are we outside all of this?

You are outside the three prescriptive tools, but not outside food safety law. Clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 has applied to every Australian food business since 2000 and requires skills and knowledge commensurate with the work. In Victoria, Class 3 and Class 4 proprietors are in exactly that position.

Does my aged care kitchen need a different FSS?

In Victoria and Queensland, yes — HLTFSE001, HLTFSE005 and HLTFSE007 are the published minimum competency standard for health and community services, so a hospitality certificate does not qualify someone there. Only HLTFSE001 is on our scope, so you need a provider holding all three.

I hold a Victorian certificate and we are opening in Sydney. Am I covered?

No. NSW does not recognise interstate certificates, and requires its own certificate from an RTO approved under s 106H.

How quickly should the certificate arrive?

Certification must be issued within 30 calendar days of the completion of assessment, provided you have completed the product and paid all agreed fees. In New South Wales the state certificate has a shorter clock of 10 working days, which is a NSW requirement only.

How long does the training take, and what does it cost?

Both vary by provider and delivery mode, and neither is published here because a figure on a page ages badly. Confirm the current schedule and fee directly with us — see Food Safety Supervisor (/courses/food-safety-supervisor/).