

How to Get a Food Safety Supervisor Certificate – Complete Hospitality Training

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

Details:

Getting a Food Safety Supervisor certificate is a four-step process, and step one is working out which state's rules apply to you — because in one state the process has an extra leg that the others do not, and a Statement of Attainment that satisfies the law everywhere else does not satisfy it there.

This page is the process. For what the role involves once you hold it, see Food Safety Supervisor certificate . For the standard creating the obligation, see Standard 3.2.2A .

Before step one: does the business even need an FSS?

Both category one and category two businesses need one under Standard 3.2.2A, which commenced 8 December 2023 . The appointment duty is clause 3.2.2A—11 , and it applies to both categories; the only obligation that separates them is the records clause 3.2.2A—12 , which falls on category one alone.

Category one is a caterer or food service operation that processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into food that is both potentially hazardous and ready to eat — in practice, anyone with a kitchen who cooks. Category two is retail sale of ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food the business did not make, where slicing, weighing, repacking, reheating and hot-holding do not count as making it.

And the appointment has to be in place before the first prescribed activity. A prescribed activity is 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. That is the trigger, and it means the supervisor has to exist before opening day rather than before the first inspection.

But the trigger for being caught at all is set by state law, and in two states it is not the category:

Queensland — holding a food business licence , under s 86 of the Food Act 2006 . Broader than the standard: a licensed business that would not be category one or two still needs an FSS. Section 86 requires the supervisor to be in place within 30 days after the licence is issued , and for the licensee to at all times continue to have one, with a maximum penalty of 50 penalty units . 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.

Victoria — the premises class declared under s 19C . Classes 1, 2 and 3A need one; Classes 3 and 4 do not. Where a declaration applies, s 19GA(1) puts the duty on the proprietor to ensure there is a supervisor, and s 19GA(2) exempts premises using a quality assurance food safety program that includes competency-based or accredited staff training.

New South Wales — the food itself (s 106A): ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous, not prepackaged.

Western Australia — being a category one or two business, applying Standard 3.2.2A directly under the Food Act 2008 .

And the older duty that applies either way

If the answer is "we are not caught", that resolves the prescriptive tools and not the underlying duty. Clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 has applied to every Australian food business since 2000 : the business must ensure persons undertaking or supervising food handling operations have skills in, and knowledge of, food safety and food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activities . No course, no certificate, no refresher period — but a live obligation. A Victorian Class 3 or Class 4 premises with no FSS duty still answers to it.

Step 1 — Confirm you need the supervisor level, not the handler level

There are two distinct things people call a "food safety certificate", and the gap between them is one unit:

Food handler training — SITXFSA005 . For anyone handling food. Under Standard 3.2.2A this does not even have to be accredited: a free, non-accredited course covering safe food handling, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising, and personal hygiene satisfies the law, and so does possessing skills and knowledge commensurate with the activity.

Food Safety Supervisor — SITXFSA005 plus SITXFSA006 , together the SITSS00069 skill set. For an appointed supervisor; a business must have at least one and may appoint more than one.

If you only need handler-level training, this is the shorter path . The rest of this page is about the FSS level.

SITXFSA005 on its own does not make anyone a Food Safety Supervisor in any Australian state. If a course does not name SITXFSA006 , it is not an FSS course.

And confirm the person, not just the course

Worth doing at this step rather than after the certificate arrives, because in Victoria the certificate is only one of three tests. Section 19G of the Food Act 1984 defines a food safety supervisor as 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 — meaning a standard approved in writing by Safe Food Victoria or by an equivalent State, national or international body; and

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

The course answers limb 2 only. Limb 3 is the one businesses fail without noticing: nominating a junior casual because they were the one free to attend the course does not satisfy s 19G, however current their certificate. Section 19GA(3) expressly allows the proprietor to be the supervisor, which is often the cleanest answer for a small venue.

Step 2 — Identify your sector

The required units change by sector, and in two states the health sector set is the published minimum rather than one option among several.

| Sector | Units | | --- | | Hospitality | SITXFSA005 + SITXFSA006 (SITSS00069) | | Food retail | SIRRFSA001 , or the two hospitality units | | Health and community services | HLTFSE001 + HLTFSE005 + HLTFSE007 , Release 1 of each — the published minimum in Victoria and Queensland | | Food processing | FBPFYSY2002 , or FBPFYSY1002 in QLD |

Getting this wrong is expensive: a hospitality FSS certificate does not make you the Food Safety Supervisor of an aged care kitchen in Victoria or Queensland.

Four points of precision, because this table is commonly misstated:

Standard 3.2.2A names no sector units at all. This 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. Western Australia publishes HLTSS00061 — the same three HLTFS units bundled as a skill set — as an accepted equivalent rather than a mandate, and does not confine health or childcare businesses to it.

Safe Food Victoria accepts the two hospitality units and SIRRFSA001 as alternatives to each other for both hospitality and retail, so the hospitality pair covers a Victorian deli as well as a restaurant. It also confirms there is no Victorian requirement to train beyond the minimum competencies listed .

And the limit on CHT: of the three health units, only HLTFS001 is on our scope . HLTFS005 , HLTFS007 and FBPFY2002 are not. So we cannot complete the health and community services set, and a hospital, aged care or childcare kitchen needs a provider that holds all three. Check any provider's scope on training.gov.au before enrolling — including ours.

Western Australia is the one state that names the skill set by code , citing SITSS00069 directly in its requirements, and it expressly accepts online delivery — its provider table carries a dedicated online-course column. It also lists the superseded SITSS00051 (SITXFA001 + SITXFA002) among its accepted equivalents.

Step 3 — Complete the training with an RTO, and get your USI first

Only a Registered Training Organisation can issue a nationally recognised Statement of Attainment. For nationally recognised training, a Unique Student Identifier (USI) is generally required before a qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued , unless an applicable exemption applies. See the official USI exemption guidance . A USI is free at usi.gov.au . If you already have one, recover it rather than creating another.

What the training actually covers

The supervisor unit is not a quiz. SITXFA006 Participate in safe food handling practices requires you to demonstrate the correct methods of controlling food hazards at each of nine critical control points — receiving, storing, preparing, processing, displaying, serving, packaging, transporting and disposing — plus the procedure to calibrate a temperature probe so readings are accurate, and the procedure for reporting food contamination incidents.

SITXFA005 Use hygienic practices for food safety, which you also need, requires hygienic food handling in line with organisational procedures, demonstrating each of the following on at least three occasions : correct hand-washing; appropriate use of uniform and personal protective equipment; effective personal health and hygiene practices; and hygienic food service. Plus the procedures for reporting unsafe hygiene practices.

That structure tells you what to expect: this is assessed by demonstration, not by multiple choice, and "on at least three occasions" means the assessment cannot be compressed into a single moment. It is also the most useful test to apply to any advertised course — ask across how many assessment occasions hand washing is observed, rather than how many hours the course runs.

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

Recognition of prior learning

RPL is available in principle for initial certification and is assessed against the same evidence requirements — it is an assessment, not a waiver. Victoria actively encourages it. NSW encourages it for initial certification. If you have years of kitchen experience, raise RPL at enrolment rather than after.

If you already hold one of the two units, what you want is credit transfer under Standard 1.7 rather than RPL under Standard 1.6. Credit transfer needs no reassessment; your existing Statement of Attainment is the evidence. We first verify the evidence and equivalence, check that the units fit your training product, and check for licensing or regulatory restrictions before granting credit. See ASQA's credit-transfer guidance .

Step 4 — The extra leg, if you are in New South Wales

This is where the process diverges, and it is the single most common compliance failure in the area.

The reason only NSW has a step 4 is one line of drafting. 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. NSW is the only state that has exercised limb (b). Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia rely on limb (a), which is why there the Statement of Attainment is the certificate.

Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia — you are done at step 3. The Statement of Attainment is the compliance artefact. Keep it where you can produce it: to your council's environmental health officer in Victoria, to an authorised officer in Queensland and WA. All three recognise a Statement of Attainment from any Australian RTO, regardless of where that RTO is located.

One caution on that last point, because it trips people up in the other direction. WA Health publishes a table of RTOs offering food safety supervision training, but that table is a convenience listing of self-notified providers, not an approval register . A provider absent from it is not disqualified, and a provider claiming to be "WA-approved" is describing a scheme that does not exist. WA's actual test is national registration.

New South Wales — you are not done. NSW issues its own FSS certificate , and you must obtain it from a provider on the NSW Food Authority's approved list . Section 106B(3) defines the certificate as a document stating the holder is qualified to be a food safety supervisor, issued in accordance with the regulations by an approved training organisation. The RTO's approval must come from the Authority under Food Act 2003 s 106H ; ASQA registration alone is not enough. An approved RTO carries a NSW Food Authority approval number separate from its national RTO code , and the Authority revises the approved list at least annually . The Statement of Attainment is a prerequisite, not a substitute — an approved RTO issues two separate documents .

The NSW certificate also carries content the national units do not. It must cover four mandatory key focus areas :

Allergen management

Cleaning and sanitising practices

Safe egg handling

Food Act offences

That fourth one is the one usually dropped from lists of three, and it is the reason a plain national Statement of Attainment is insufficient in NSW: the approved RTO has to wrap NSW-specific content around the national units. Once issued:

the approved RTO must issue it within 10 working days of successful completion

it is valid five years from the date of issue , statutorily

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

the appointment duty itself carries 50 penalty units for an individual and 100 for a corporation, with a narrow statutory defence allowing food to be processed and sold by retail on not more than 30 days while a replacement supervisor is appointed

you may not be the FSS for any other premises or mobile catering business — s 106B(1)(b) is a statutory bar

NSW permits eligible temporary interstate workers to use approved interstate RSA certification if they remain resident outside NSW, can produce the required evidence and understand NSW liquor obligations. Permanent movers and people performing security or RSA marshal duties must meet NSW training and competency-card requirements; eligible holders can use bridging instead of the full NSW RSA course. Bridging eligibility requires certification within five years for QLD, WA, SA or TAS, or a national Statement of Attainment or RSA refresher within three years for VIC, ACT or NT. See the NSW recognition and bridging rules .

We cannot complete step 4 for you. We deliver the relevant national units and issue a Statement of Attainment on successful completion, but we are not on the NSW Food Authority's approved provider list — verified by reading that list in full on 1 September 2026. CHT therefore cannot issue the NSW FSS certificate, and the four NSW key focus areas are not certified through CHT. For NSW certification you need a provider from the Authority's own list. This is stated plainly because a business relying only on a CHT Statement of Attainment in NSW does not hold what NSW law requires.

After you have it

Be reasonably available. The appointment is not a paperwork exercise. An FSS must have the authority and ability to direct food handling and must be reasonably available — on site, or genuinely contactable by phone — to advise on handling high-risk unpackaged food. A supervisor who is rostered off and unreachable does not satisfy this. Queensland Health treats short absences such as holidays of up to 30 days as workable where documented procedures are in place, but requires another supervisor for extended leave. Victoria confirms the supervisor need not be on the premises at all times, but must be able to know how food is being handled when absent.

Set up the records, if the business is category one. Category one businesses must make and keep records substantiating compliance for eight practice areas: receipt 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; and cleaning and sanitising of food contact surfaces and equipment. Keep them three months , accessible at the premises . A business that can demonstrate compliance to an authorised officer's reasonable satisfaction by other means is not required to keep them, but the officer may then require the records. See how long do I need to keep records for .

Notify, if your state requires it. Queensland requires notification 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, stops being an FSS, or changes contact details, under s 88 — each breach carrying up to 50 penalty units . Victorian councils may request the FSS's name and qualifications in writing under s 19GB, to be supplied within 7 days of that request. NSW has no ongoing notification duty — ss 106E and 106F were repealed in 2013.

Check your food handlers are trained. Every handler doing a prescribed activity must have completed training before starting it. Standard 3.2.2A mandates no refresher period for handlers, no accreditation, and no record keeping of the training, but the business must ensure their skills and knowledge stay

current — and that judgement is yours. Prior learning may be recognised by the business itself through competency-based training, in-house education, a food safety induction completed at another food business, or relevant previous industry experience.

Diarise five years. The requirement is that the certificate was issued within the preceding five years. Nobody will remind you.

Know your renewal path , because they differ sharply:

| | Recertification | | --- | --- | | Victoria | Course repeated, or an RTO refresher. RPL actively encouraged ; superseded course codes remain valid. Safe Food Victoria publishes no refresher period of its own and says prior training does not usually need repeating — the five years reaches Victoria through the Code, applied by the Food Act 1984 | | New South Wales | Approved RTO only, within 90 days of expiry; 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 | | Queensland | RPL not accepted for the five-yearly recertification — Queensland Health states it flatly, and the complete course must be repeated | | Western Australia | Five years; RPL pathway not specified |

A group operating in both Victoria and Queensland cannot run one renewal model in both.

And know what the sanction actually is where you operate , because Victoria is the outlier:

| | Sanction for having no supervisor | | --- | --- | | Victoria | No monetary penalty. Nothing attaches to s 19GA. The consequence is refusal of registration or renewal, or revocation or suspension of the premises' registration | | New South Wales | Up to 50 penalty units (individual) or 100 (corporation), plus 25 / 50 for failing to keep the certificate on the premises | | Queensland | Up to 50 penalty units under s 86 | | Western Australia | Not separately stated |

The Victorian row is not the lenient one. A fine is a cost; a suspended registration is a closed business. Penalty unit values are indexed annually, so confirm the current amount with the regulator rather than relying on a dollar figure printed anywhere.

What it costs and how long it takes

This page does not quote a training price or a course duration, because a figure printed on a page ages badly and a stale figure is worse than none. Confirm both directly.

Two things regulators do publish, and both are useful as a check on a provider rather than as a planning figure:

New South Wales caps what an approved RTO may charge to issue the state FSS certificate , separately from the training fee, and requires it to be issued within 10 working days of successful completion. If a NSW provider is charging a separate certificate fee, check the current cap with the Food Authority rather than accepting the provider's figure.

The assessment requirements are the real duration test. Nine critical control points, temperature-probe calibration, and four practices evidenced on at least three occasions each. Treat any course that claims to cover all of that in a single sitting with caution — the question to ask is how the three-occasions requirement is met, not how few hours it takes.

Checklist

Confirm the business is caught, and by which trigger — category, licence, premises class or the food itself. If it is not caught, check clause 3 still.

Confirm you need the supervisor level, not just handler training.

Confirm the person satisfies all three limbs of the definition, including authority , not only the course.

Confirm your sector's unit set, especially if it is health and community services in Victoria or QLD.

Create or recover your USI before enrolling.

Complete the units with an RTO; raise RPL or credit transfer at enrolment if you have the experience or already hold a unit.

If NSW, obtain the state certificate from a provider on the NSW Food Authority's approved list, and check its approval number as well as its RTO code.

Store the certificate where you can produce it, and in NSW on the premises .

Notify the regulator if Queensland; be ready to answer a council request within 7 days in Victoria.

Set up the category one records if they apply.

Diarise the five-year recertification and check whether your state accepts RPL for it.

Where we can help

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

For Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia that is the whole process, for hospitality and — in Victoria — for retail as well. For New South Wales it is step 3 of 4, and the last step needs an approved provider. For health and community services in Victoria or Queensland it is not the right product at all, because only HLTFS001 of the three required units is on our scope.

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 , all courses and the student toolkit .

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.

How long does the training take?

It varies by provider and delivery mode, and no figure is published here because one on a page ages badly. The more useful measure is the assessment: nine critical control points, probe calibration, and four practices evidenced on at least three occasions each. Confirm the current schedule with us before planning around a date.

Can I do it online?

Often, for the training itself — Western Australia expressly accepts it and publishes an online-course column in its provider table, and Victoria and Queensland impose no restriction. NSW certification has additional constraints; check with an approved provider.

Do I need a USI first?

For nationally recognised training, a USI is generally required before your qualification or Statement of Attainment can be issued, unless an applicable exemption applies. We can explain the requirements for your enrolment. See the official USI exemption guidance (<https://www.usi.gov.au/students/create-your-usi/exemptions-usi>). Creating a USI is free; recover an existing one rather than creating another.

I already did food handling. Do I get credit?

Yes — SITXFSA005 is common to both, so you would typically only need SITXFSA006. Raise it before enrolling so it is handled as a credit transfer under Standard 1.7, which needs no reassessment, rather than as a repeat. We first verify the evidence and equivalence, check that the units fit your training product, and check for licensing or regulatory restrictions before granting credit.

Is a one-day food handling course enough to make me an FSS?

No. That is the most common and most expensive misunderstanding in this area. A one-day handler course is SITXFSA005. The supervisor role needs SITXFSA006 as well.

Why does New South Wales have an extra step?

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.

Does the person need anything beyond the certificate?

In Victoria, yes. Section 19G requires the supervisor to know how to recognise, prevent and alleviate the hazards at those premises, to have met an approved competency standard, and to have the ability and the authority to supervise other food handlers. The certificate answers only the middle limb.

Does my employer arrange this?

Often, but the credential is yours and stays on your national training transcript against your USI. The compliance duty is the business's.

I trained in Melbourne and we are opening in Sydney. Do I need to redo it?

You need the NSW FSS certificate from an approved NSW provider. NSW does not recognise interstate certificates. Your Statement of Attainment remains valid and is a prerequisite to that certificate.

Can I be the FSS for more than one venue?

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

What happens if my certificate lapses?

The business is non-compliant from the point the certificate is more than five years old. In NSW there is a statutory defence allowing not more than 30 days of trading while a replacement is appointed, and recertification must happen within 90 days of expiry through an approved RTO that offers recertification; the NSW Food Authority (<https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/fss-food-safety-supervisors>) says some approved RTOs offer it.

Can I use RPL to recertify after five years?

In Victoria yes, and it is encouraged. In Queensland no — expressly excluded. In NSW only through an approved RTO within the 90-day window. Western Australia does not state a position.

What is the penalty if we have no supervisor?

NSW: up to 50 penalty units for an individual, 100 for a corporation. Queensland: up to 50 under s 86. Victoria: no monetary penalty — the sanction is refusal, revocation or suspension of the premises' registration, which is the larger exposure, not the smaller one.

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

Yes. Those activities make you category two, which still requires an FSS and trained handlers. What you avoid is the category one records obligation under clause 3.2.2A—12.

We are not category one or two at all. Anything to do?

Clause 3 of Standard 3.2.2 still applies, and has since 2000: skills and knowledge of food safety and hygiene commensurate with the work. No course and no refresher are specified, but the competence has to be there.

Does our charity sausage sizzle need one?

Standard 3.2.2A exempts food handling at fundraising events raising funds solely for community or charitable purposes. But in Queensland a non-profit selling prepared meals on at least 12 days a financial year is a licensable food business and needs an FSS, and in Victoria the activity may put the premises in Class 3 or 4 with its own rules — the Class 2 community-group exemption needs all three of a community-group proprietor, no more than two consecutive days at a time, and mostly volunteer handlers.