

Healthy at work: Food safety and COVID-19

2 minute read | Produced: 2020 | Revised: August 2021



Key points:

- There is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted through food.
- Maintain effective hygiene and follow social distancing rules to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- Practice effective hygiene, cleaning and sanitising.
- Exclude ill workers.

Healthy at work: Food safety and COVID-19

There is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted through food. The best way to prevent the community spread of the virus at your workplace is for everyone to maintain effective hygiene and follow social distancing rules.

The Food Standards Code requires food businesses to take all practicable steps to prevent contamination of their food service or processing environment regardless of COVID-19.

Workplaces can adopt these steps, which can be achieved through:

Effective hygiene

- Regular handwashing
- Cleaning and sanitising facilities and equipment
- Maintaining strict requirements around worker health and hygiene
- Implementing social distancing.

Cleaning and sanitising

- All eating and drinking utensils
- All food contact surfaces.

It's recommended to review your cleaning and sanitising practices to ensure general surfaces like door handles, switches and other high-touch areas are also cleaned frequently and effectively.

Check if you're covering the Australian Government Guidelines for routine environmental cleaning on the Department of Health website. You should add anything to your standard procedures for cleaning and disinfection of your business premises if necessary.

Employee health and hygiene

- Employees showing symptoms of COVID-19 must not attend work
- Food handlers who know or suspect they are unwell with COVID-19 or other illness must report this to their supervisor
- Unwell food handlers must be excluded from food handling activities or from the workplace entirely until they are professionally deemed safe to return to work.

Tips to prevent transmitting the virus

- Normal best-practice prevention measures will reduce the risk of transmitting COVID-19.
- Maintain good personal hygiene, especially handwashing
- Follow any social distancing requirements requested by the Australian and New Zealand Government
- Keep equipment and surfaces clean and sanitised
- Exclude ill workers

Source: Food Standards Australia New Zealand – COVID-19 Advice for food businesses on general health and hygiene (June 2020)

Remember:

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- Maintain effective hygiene and follow social distancing rules to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- Keep equipment and surfaces clean and sanitised.
- Exclude ill workers.