

# Preparing your food business for the coronavirus pandemic



With the current COVID-19 (or novel coronavirus) pandemic we are experiencing in Australia and its notable impact to food businesses, Byron Shire Council would like to share important information during these challenging times to assist you in maintaining safe food for your customers. Supportive information about business planning and financial assistance that your business may be eligible for is also included.

## Food Safety

### Hand Washing

This is the best method to clean your hands. Soap and detergent is very effective in killing the coronavirus. Food handlers are encouraged to more frequently wash their hands with warm soapy water especially after touching their body, money or moving in between tasks. Where possible avoid touching surfaces, money or your body e.g. face or mouth.



Where hand washing is not practical, use hand sanitisers with at least 60% alcohol content.

### Hand Sanitisers

It is good practice to encourage the use of hand sanitisers for customers e.g. at the counter or in a communal area that is easily accessible.

Signs saying “**Sanitise Hands Here**” or similar are recommended (an internet search can show examples).



### Social Distancing

Allow adequate space for people to queue when ordering to maintain adequate distance from each other.

It may mean you will have to configure your premises to accommodate people when queuing. Dining areas may need to be changed to allow a minimum of 1m distance between seating too.

### Cross Contamination

Remove or restrict access to high contact equipment/utensils to reduce risk of cross contamination e.g. remove any salt/pepper shakers, sugar, menus, forks, knives and napkins on tables.



Shared condiments e.g. sauces & dressings should be restricted to behind the counter for food handlers to dispense.

Avoid handling cash and promote the use of EFTPOS tap and pay. Ensure EFTPOS machines are wiped clean with detergent/sanitiser in between customers. A simple way to encourage the use of EFTPOS can be a message saying – ***“To help prevent the spread of coronavirus, card transactions are our preferred method of payment. Thank you”.***

### Cleaning/Sanitising

High hand contact surfaces such as light switches in toilets, door handles, straw dispensers, table tops, chair frames, counters or anywhere customers interface with the premises should be frequently cleaned with detergents/sanitisers.

### Staff Wellbeing

Staff must stay home if showing any signs of illness.



# Fixed Food Businesses

## Coronavirus Information



Continually monitor the advice from the World Health Organisation and Australia's Chief Medical Office and review your approach regularly. As the impacts of coronavirus continue to evolve, businesses may start to consider other ways to operate that best accommodates the rapidly changing environment. Be mindful that some changes could involve new food safety requirements e.g. from eat in to the delivery of prepared meals to clients. Please contact Council on ph. 6626 7107 if you are making changes so we can support you during this time.

### Have a Plan In Case Of Disruption To Normal Business Operations

If trade is slowing down, or you have decided to temporarily close, consider bringing forward tasks that would ordinarily occur later in the year. For example bring forward cleaning tasks of large equipment, fixtures or fittings that ordinarily get cleaned every 3/6/12 months e.g. exhaust canopies, defrost freezers, clean the cool-room, behind cooking equipment, deep fryers, ceiling fans, light covers etc...

Attend to repairs or minor servicing of display cabinets, bain-maries, air conditioners etc... Patch holes, reseal or paint surfaces, remove rust and attend to damaged or chipped shelving, coving, chipped tiles etc... The following link from the Australian government contains other advice for businesses when things don't go to plan

<https://www.business.gov.au/New-to-business-essentials/When-things-dont-go-to-plan>.



### Support Services

The Australian and State governments are now offering financial support and other services. Please refer to the web links below for useful information –

#### Financial assistance

<https://www.ato.gov.au/General/New-legislation/The-Australian-Government-s-Economic-Response-to-Coronavirus/>

<https://www.business.gov.au/risk-management/emergency-management/coronavirus-information-and-support-for-business/boosting-cash-flow-for-employers>

#### Support for small businesses

<https://www.business.gov.au/risk-management/emergency-management/coronavirus-information-and-support-for-business>

#### How does COVID-19 effect food businesses

[https://www.foodsafety.com.au/blog/how-does-covid-19-affect-food-industry?utm\\_source=Facebook&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_campaign=afs\\_art](https://www.foodsafety.com.au/blog/how-does-covid-19-affect-food-industry?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=afs_art)

#### Food safety

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/covid-19-and-food-business>

Council is here to help support you during these challenging times. For further questions please contact the Environmental Health team at Council on 6626 7107 or [PES@byron.nsw.gov.au](mailto:PES@byron.nsw.gov.au). Environmental Health officers will be visiting you in the coming months to offer support and clarify any queries or concerns.

Council will work together with you in minimising the impacts to your business and safeguard the local community.



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