

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

# FAQs – COVID-19 and Food Businesses

## Can COVID-19 be transmitted via food?

No – current advice from the World Health Organisation (WHO) & Department of Health is that COVID-19 is not transmitted by food. Further information can be found on the [FSANZ website](#)

## Are gloves and mask required for food handlers?

The Food Standards Code does not require gloves or masks, but it does require that food handlers protect the food from contamination and businesses can require the use of gloves by food handlers. As COVID-19 is not known to be transmitted by food and due to the current shortage of masks, it should be considered that masks are kept for essential services.

## Self-serve areas (e.g. bread, nuts, salad bars) – are they safe?

It is advisable that business increases cleaning & sanitising of utensils such as scoops and tongs OR introduce a method such as using a single use bag or gloves (if available) to dispense. Businesses may want to consider how these areas will be monitored.

## Can shopping centres keep their chairs in the food court and mall areas for their patrons to use?

The removal of chairs is encouraged with the intent that people will not be able to congregate in these areas as per the Commonwealth direction to maintain strict social distancing.

## Is outdoor dining ok?

No - outdoor dining is not permitted, take away only.

## Does sitting for a coffee count as dining?

Yes.

## Can food trucks still operate?

Yes – food trucks generally offer take away food. People will be required to practice social distancing when ordering and picking up food. However, 'food truck festivals' are not permitted.

## Many businesses are now changing their business model from dine-in to take away – what should these businesses consider to ensure that their food is safe and compliant with regulations?

SA Health has developed a fact sheet to assist food businesses with this transition, please refer to 'Pre-prepared packaged meals for home delivery or pick-up FAQs'.



## Will food safety inspections continue as usual at the moment?

Yes - maintaining confidence and oversight of food safety in the food supply continues to be a significant priority for the Australian food regulators and the Australian food regulation system.

Inspections provided by inspectors will continue in a similar manner as currently conducted, with the following additions:

- Increased focus on maintaining personal hygiene (e.g. increased hand washing)
- Social distancing practices (1.5 metre separation between persons)

## What do we do when a food business has limited space and maintaining social distance will be difficult?

If social distancing is not possible, it may be necessary to introduce alternative mechanisms such as video conferencing or provision of electronic data on key food safety system performance measures as a means to demonstrating compliance with regulatory food safety obligations. Each council should consider alternative ways to inspect as reducing the spread of COVID-19 in an overriding imperative.

## Are food transport vehicles and home delivery services such as Uber, still permitted to operate?

Food transportation and home delivery services are encouraged to continue to operate to assist with social distancing.

Measures should be taken to ensure the food is kept safe during transportation, further information can be found on the [FSANZ website](#)

## Are farmers markets allowed to operate?

Yes, food stalls at farmers markets around South Australia are allowed to operate as long as they comply with the principles of social distancing. They can only provide take away meals and they cannot encourage mass gatherings. These businesses must fully comply with the Food Standards Code, but most importantly they must have an operable hand wash basin with paper towel and soap.

## Food businesses are having difficulty sourcing food grade sanitiser – is there an alternative?

Bleach is an inexpensive chemical that can be used to sanitise. If possible, source plain, unscented bleach. Diluted bleach solutions (see below) should be made up every 24 hours as the chemical breaks down and becomes ineffective after this time. Contact time may vary between brands but 10 minutes is a good rule of thumb.

Utensils, equipment and surfaces can be left to air dry (no rinsing required) unless stronger concentrations than recommended are used.

Concentration for sanitising with bleach

### Bleach for Food Contact Surfaces, Equipment (200ppm)

Water	4% Chlorine (household bleach)	12.5% Chlorine	65% Chlorine (hypochlorite granules)
5L	25mL	10mL	0.8g
10L	50mL	20mL	1.6g
50L	250mL	100mL	8g

### Bleach for Walls, Floors, Ceilings (1000ppm)

Water	4% Chlorine (household bleach)	12.5% Chlorine	65% Chlorine (hypochlorite granules)
5L	125mL	50mL	4g
10L	250mL	100mL	8g
50L	1250mL (1.25L)	500mL	40g

## For more information

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