



# Environmental Health Guidelines for Opening a Food Business

## Introduction

The prospect of starting a food business can be daunting, however this document can help you to understand legal requirements and the process of approvals within the Ashburton District Council, to make the transition into the food industry a little easier.

Consulting with an Environmental Health Officer regarding your business is highly recommended for you to receive appropriate advice on setting up your food business. Environmental Health Officer's at the Ashburton District Council can be contacted by calling 307 7700 during business hours.

## ***Need Some Advice?***

First things first:

- Do you know what sort of food business you wish to operate?
- What will you be producing?
- Who will you be selling your food too?
- Where do you intend to run your business from?

These things may seem obvious but it is imperative that you have the answers for these questions before contacting the Council, otherwise it will be difficult for the council departments to give the right advice.

Other considerations:

You may need to consider all or some of the following and council can give advice on;

- District planning policy, and applying for resource consent
- Building consents and fire safety
- Food business registration, food control plans, food handler training
- Liquor licensing
- Trade waste disposal and grease traps

You can contact the Ashburton District Council on 307 7700, or check our website [www.ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz)



## **Legal Requirements**

It is important for you to understand the legal requirements of opening and running a food business. Knowing what is required of you before developing your business will save you time and possibly money later.

### ***Environmental Health***

The Food Hygiene Regulations 1974 set out the standards for the construction and operation of a food premises. It is a legal requirement for food businesses to be registered under the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974 before manufacturing or trading in the food industry. The Certificate of Registration will be issued by the Council's Environmental Health Officer only when the premises comply with the Regulations. The Food Hygiene Regulations 1974 can be viewed at [www.legislation.co.nz](http://www.legislation.co.nz). An application form for registering a food business can be found in the food safety section of our website [www.ashburtondc.govt.nz](http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz)

Food businesses can also choose to operate with a food safety programme which assesses the risk at each stage of food preparation and examines how to reduce that risk. If you wish to operate with a food safety programme, it must first be approved by the District Health Board. For more information on food safety programmes please go to <http://www.cpublichealth.co.nz/>

### ***Building Control***

A building consent is required for any plumbing work and most building work. The Building Act 2004 sets out the standards for building codes, fire safety, toilets, access and egress, plumbing and drainage. When applying for building consent 2 sets of scaled professionally drawn plans and elevations must be submitted to building control indicating;

- Designation of all rooms
- All major fittings and appliances
- Areas external to the building like grease traps and bin store areas
- Details of floor, wall and ceiling finishing materials

It is strongly suggested that a professional architect with experience in the food industry is employed to ensure that your submitted application reaches the standard required to reach a timely approval. All plumbing and drainage works must be carried out by a licensed plumbing contractor. Building information can be found at <http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz/services/building/>.

### ***Liquor Licensing***

If you wish to sell liquor at your premises or have a BYO option for patrons you will require a liquor license and a manager's license. Information relating to the different types of liquor licenses that are issued and how to obtain them can be found at <http://www.ashburtondc.govt.nz/services/liquor+licensing.htm>.



### **Labelling and Food additives**

If you are manufacturing a product to be sold to the public it must be correctly labelled according to the Food Standards Code. Labels must display the following information;

- The name of the food
- The batch identification number
- Name and address of supplier
- Mandatory warning statements and declarations of certain ingredients that may be harmful as set out in the Code
- Food additives
- Ingredients list
- Date marking – use by, best before etc
- Directions for storage
- Nutritional information

For more information on food additives and food labelling you can go to <http://www.nzfsa.govt.nz/labelling-composition/publications/a-nz-food-standards-code/labelling-guide/index.htm> or call the New Zealand Food Safety Authority on 04 894 2500.

### **Food Handler Training**

No persons shall be issued with a Certificate of Registration for food premises (except a vehicle used solely for the carriage or delivery of food for sale) unless -

- That person has been issued with a Council recognised Certificate in Food Hygiene or another qualification approved by Council; or
- There is, working on the food premises, a Manager or a staff member with specific responsibility for staff training in food hygiene, who has been issued with a Certificate in Food Hygiene, a Certificate in Basic Food Hygiene or other qualification approved by Council.

An Environmental Health Officer may grant an exemption from the training requirements if they are satisfied that it would be unreasonable or impractical to insist on compliance, having regard to the type of premises or types of food being sold.

### **What now?**

Now that you have read and understood this document and all that is required of you for starting and operating a food business, please contact the Ashburton District Council's Environmental Health Officer for further assistance.

*And good luck!*

