



Meals on Wheels  
Queensland

# Food Safety Training: Working in a Meals on Wheels Kitchen



Created by Queensland Meals on Wheels  
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Queensland Meals on Wheels - Food Safety Training Workbook 2021.

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## Introduction

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with Meals on Wheels! We love welcoming volunteers to the Meals on Wheels family and we hope that you enjoy helping us to make a difference in the community.

According to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) Standard 3.2.1 Food Safety Programs, Meals on Wheels kitchens must have, and follow, an accredited Food Safety Program. Therefore, it is incredibly important that all kitchen workers understand, and abide by, the food safety requirements outlined in their Service's Food Safety Program. To assist in building volunteers food safety knowledge, a video series and workbook has been developed by Queensland Meals on Wheels.

Whether you are a new volunteer or are doing this training to refresh your knowledge, we hope that you learn something that will help to keep yourself and our clients safe.

This workbook covers the key content of the videos along with quiz questions on the various processes that are undertaken in the kitchen, from receiving ingredients to delivering the food to clients. Your Service may not have all of the processes included in this workbook, but we highly recommend you complete the workbook in full.

**Following these processes and your supervisor's instructions will help you, others and our clients to stay safe. Enjoy your role in the Meals on Wheels family!**

## Hygiene

The hygiene of workers in the kitchen is very important, as poor hygiene can lead to contaminated food.

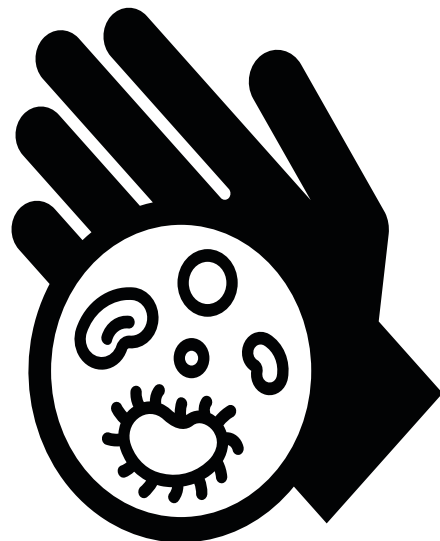
If you are feeling unwell, do not attend. If you begin to feel sick while you are volunteering, tell your supervisor and go home. We don't want you to handle food if there is any chance it could cause contamination of the food.

### When working in a kitchen you must:

- Wear clean clothes
- Wear enclosed shoes
- Remove jewellery
- Tie up hair out of face (if you have long hair)

You should **wash your hands whenever** you:

- Start or change to a new activity
- Work with ready to eat foods
- Handle raw food
- Use the bathroom
- Cough, sneeze or use a tissue
- Eat and/or drink
- Smoke
- Touch your hair or scalp



It is also important you practice good hand hygiene to avoid cross-contaminating food.

To **wash your hands correctly**, follow these steps:

1. Wet hands with clean, running water.
2. Turn tap off and apply soap.
3. Lather hands with soap by rubbing them together. Don't forget to lather back of hands, between fingers and under nails.
4. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice).
5. Rinse well under clean, running water and then dry hands.

## Hygiene Quiz - Circle the correct answer

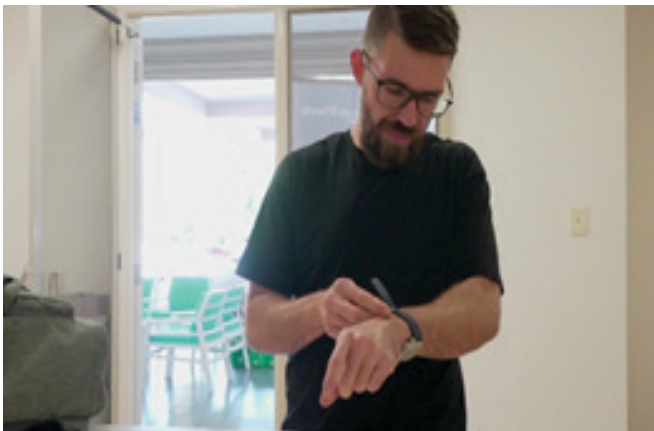
1. **When working in a kitchen, when are you required to wash your hands?** (There may be multiple correct answers)
  - a. After touching your hair
  - b. Only when you start work
  - c. After handling raw chicken
  - d. After your lunch break
  
2. **What are the clothing requirements when working in a kitchen?**
  - a. Wear clean clothes and enclosed shoes
  - b. Long hair should be tied up and out of the face
  - c. Accessory items such as jewellery should be removed
  - d. All of the above
  
3. **What song is helpful to sing to know the right amount of time to wash your hands?**
  - a. Happy Birthday
  - b. Advance Australia Fair
  - c. Happy Birthday sung twice
  - d. Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

## Entering the Kitchen

When you enter a Meals on Wheels kitchen, there are a few things you need to do to ensure that you are following safe food practices. Before you start working in the kitchen, remember to complete your kitchen induction with your Supervisor.

Upon entering the kitchen:

Remove your jewellery and/or watch



Put on a clean apron and hair net/cap



Wash your hands



It is important these steps are followed to ensure that food does not become contaminated by hair, dirt or other physical items such as metal from jewellery.

As part of your induction, you should be made aware of the fire evacuation procedures and how to correctly use fire safety equipment.

**To use a fire blanket:**

1. Pull down sharply on tabs



2. Hold it in front of you and roll fabric back to protect your hands



3. Gently place the fire blanket over cooking oil fires from the close side of the fire to the far side



4. Turn off the heat source and leave the blanket over the burnt area.
5. Dial '000' to call the fire service and let them remove the blanket when they deem it safe to. Do not allow anyone but the fire service to remove the blanket.

Everytime you **leave** the kitchen, make sure to take off your apron and hair net. Place all dirty aprons in a laundry pile and dispose of hair net in the bin.



## Entering the Kitchen Quiz - Circle the correct answer

**1. Why should jewellery be removed when working in a kitchen?**

- a. To avoid contamination of food
- b. So that it doesn't get damaged
- c. In case it gets lost from falling off
- d. All of the above

**2. Who can remove a fire blanket?**

- a. Only the fire service
- b. The supervisor
- c. Anyone
- d. The supervisor or fire service

**3. What should you do any time you exit the kitchen?**

- a. Say goodbye to your supervisor
- b. Take off your hair net and apron
- c. Make sure your hair is tied up and jewellery is off
- d. Remove your name badge

## Food Storage

### Storage Temperature

To ensure potentially hazardous food are not exposed to the temperature danger zone, food items must be stored under temperature control. This will assist in preventing the growth of harmful bacteria. The following conditions should be adhered to:

- Fridge temperature must be kept at 5°C or below
- Freezer temperature must be kept at -18°C or below
- Temperatures of fridge/freezer units must be checked twice daily

To avoid contamination, the following must be adhered to:

- Use food grade containers
- All food is covered and packaging is intact
- Storage areas are kept clean, dry and pest free
- Food is stored separately from chemicals
- Food is stored off the ground
- Raw food is stored below cooked food
- Food is labeled with what food is inside, when it was opened and it's use-by date

Potentially hazardous food must always be kept under temperature control. Therefore, it is important that food items are checked when delivered to your Service. When receiving a **food delivery from a supplier**, Services must:

- Temperature check a randomly selection of potentially hazardous food items on each delivery to ensure they have been transported at a safe temperature.
- Randomly select a few frozen food items and check they are frozen hard, not partially thawed, upon delivery.
- Check for damaged packaging.
- Look at use-by dates to make sure that foods are not out of date.

If food is deemed unsafe, do not accept the delivery. If food is deemed safe, the delivery can be accepted and the food should:

- Be stored in the correct location using stock rotation methods. Put the food with the closest use-by date at the front.
- Not be overstocked in fridges and freezers as this will reduce the circulation of cold air.

### What is potentially hazardous food?

Any food that may contain harmful bacteria and is capable of supporting the growth or formation of toxins to unsafe levels if handled or stored incorrectly, this includes prepared meals as well as:

- Raw and cooked meat and food containing meat
- Dairy products
- Seafood
- Processed fruits and vegetables
- Cooked rice and pasta
- Foods containing eggs

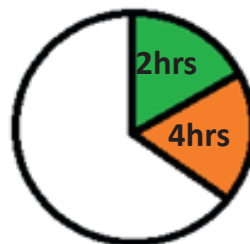
### Temperature Danger Zone

In order to stop bacteria growing on potentially hazardous food, items should not be kept in the temperature danger zone, which is between 5°C and 60°C, for more than 2 hours. Therefore, it is important that food is stored under correct temperature control.

### What to do with food that has been in the temperature danger zone:



For 2 hours or less → Use immediately or place back under temperature control.



For 2-4 hours → Use immediately or discard.



Discard as it is unsafe to consume

## Food Storage Quiz - Circle the correct answer

1. **Which of these food items are classed as potentially hazardous foods?** (there may be more than one correct answer)
  - a. Raw and cooked meat
  - b. Cooked pasta
  - c. Cracked nuts
  - d. Bread
  
2. **What is the temperature danger zone?**
  - a. Between 5 and 50 degrees Celsius
  - b. Between 0 and 60 degrees Celsius
  - c. Between 5 and 60 degrees Celsius
  - d. Between 0 and 50 degrees Celsius
  
3. **How long can foods be in the temperature danger zone before they must be thrown out?**
  - a. 2 hours cumulative
  - b. 4 hours cumulative
  - c. 5 hours cumulative
  - d. 3 hours cumulative

## Preparation and Skills

When working in the kitchen, you are likely to be responsible for the preparation of food which includes using a knife and other kitchen utensils. During preparation, it is also important to keep in mind how to safely handle potentially hazardous food and prevent cross-contamination. When potentially hazardous food is being prepared, it is important to note that this counts towards the time food spends in the temperature danger zone e.g. if chicken is prepared on the bench for 40 minutes, this means it has spent 40 minutes in the temperature danger zone.

### To use a knife safely, remember to:

- Use a sharp knife as it is safer than using a blunt knife because it requires less force and there is less chance of the knife slipping.
- Hold the knife by your side when walking and tell people if you are nearby.
- Not leave knives laying around or in the sink.
- Ask your supervisor for tips on knife techniques for chopping different foods.

### Preparing Allergen Meals

It is important that *allergen friendly* meals are prepared with care, as contamination can result in severe consequences for both the client and the Service. To safely manage allergies:

- Prepare food for clients with allergies separately.
- Use different equipment and utensils or clean before use.
- Wash hands prior to preparing meals.
- Clean food contact surfaces thoroughly.

Preventing contamination of meals is also important. This can be done by:

- Keeping raw and cooked food separate at all times.
- Using a separate chopping board and utensils for raw and cooked meat.
- Using colour coded chopping boards for specific food items e.g red for raw meat.
- Letting your Supervisor know if you think food has/could have been contaminated.



## Preparation and Skills Quiz - Circle the correct answer

1. **Which statement is incorrect?** (there may be more than one correct answer)  
*“When preparing a meal for a client with allergies...”*
  - a. They should be prepared in a separate location from other meals
  - b. Different utensils should be used
  - c. You shouldn’t change gloves or wash hands between tasks
  - d. Equipment and utensils must be cleaned prior to use
  
2. **Lasagne was in the danger zone for preparation for 1hr. It was then cooking for 45mins before it reached a core temperature of 60°C. Once it was cooked it was left at room temperature during plating for another hour. What should you do with the lasagne?**
  - a. Discard the lasagne immediately as it is not fit to be delivered to clients
  - b. Pack into eskies and deliver immediately
  - c. Put it back into the oven until it reaches 75°C
  - d. Tell the delivery drivers to start at the last client on the run and work their way back
  
3. **Chicken breast has been in the temperature danger zone for a total of 1 ½ hours during preparation and cooking. What should you do with it?**
  - a. Discard it, it is contaminated
  - b. Place under temperature control until it is ready to be packaged and delivered
  - c. Leave it on the bench, it is almost time for it to be packaged
  - d. Eat it, it’s not safe for the clients

## Cooking

To comply with Food Safety Standards, there are a number of critical control points that must be met when cooking potentially hazardous foods. This includes:

- Reaching minimum core temperature of 75°C during cooking. To check temperature, insert a thermometer into the centre of the meal.
- Meat juices should run clear, with the exception of beef steak.
- The temperature danger zone applies to cooked foods as well as uncooked foods. Bacteria are reduced to safe levels with cooking, however, the remaining bacteria can grow again if left in the danger zone after cooking.
- Always following the 2hr/4hr rule, do not leave food at a temperature below 60°C for more than 2hrs during cooking. So be mindful of the time spent in the danger zone during and after cooking.

To ensure your Service can provide evidence that these critical control points have been met, documentation should be kept in the form of **Food Safety Program records**. Your Food Safety Program Records must be able to demonstrate that:

- Food was stored at correct temperatures throughout the preparation and cooking stages.
- Food was not in the temperature danger zone for more than 2 hours during the preparation and cooking.
- It was cooked to a safe temperature (above 75°C).

**Remember** allergen friendly meals should be cooked separately to prevent cross-contamination.



## Cooking Quiz - Circle the correct answer

1. **What is the minimum temperature potentially hazardous foods must be cooked to in order to be safe for consumption?**
  - a. 70°C
  - b. 80°C
  - c. 75°C
  - d. 85°C
  
2. **Why is it important that Food Safety records are kept?**
  - a. To ensure that food is safe for consumption
  - b. In case records need to be traced if a client feels unwell
  - c. To comply with the food safety program
  - d. All of the above
  
3. **Bacteria can grow on food even after it is cooked.**
  - a. True
  - b. False



## Packaging and Presentation

Meal presentation is a bit different in Meals on Wheels compared to serving meals on plates like you would at home or at a restaurant. Presenting the meals in a way that is visually appealing is important to promote client's appetite and may take some practice. If the meal is presented poorly, this can have significant effects on the health of our clients if it causes them to eat less food than what they require. This can increase their risk of malnutrition and, can also damage the Services reputation or result in a loss of clients.

### Meal presentation and portions

To assist in meal presentation and nutritional value, ensuring consistency of portion sizes is very important.

Each meal should meet the relevant portion size requirements as outlined in the *National Meal Guidelines* for Meals on Wheels Services. For example, the protein component should be a minimum weight of 100g (120g if fish), 90g of carbohydrates and 150g of vegetables.

The use of portion control utensils, like ice-cream scoops or ladles, will assist in ensuring consistency.

For guidance and assistance with portion sizes and presenting meals, consult with your supervisor. They will be able to show you how much of each part of the meal to serve up, as well as how to make it look nice.

**Remember** allergen friendly meals should be packaged separately using clean utensils.

### Label requirements

When packaging meals, it is important that labels are clearly visible and the lid is properly sealed. It is best practice to label all meals with the:

- Name of the meal
- Ingredients & allergens
- Use by date
- Where it was made (address & name)
- Storage and reheating instructions

All allergen friendly meals should also be labelled clearly as not containing the allergens in question.



## Packaging and Presentation Quiz - Circle the correct answer

**1. Why is meal presentation important?**

- a. Because it helps build an appetite
- b. It helps to retain and attract clients
- c. It helps to ensure that clients eat well
- d. All of the above

**2. How can you ensure portions are consistent when serving food?**

- a. Eyeballing the food amounts to make sure they look similar
- b. Food portions do not need to be consistent
- c. Using a portion control utensil like an ice-cream scoop
- d. Using your hands to scoop up and distribute food

**3. According to best practice, what information should be on food labels?**

- a. The name of the meal, details of where it is made, ingredients and allergens, use by date, storage and reheating instructions
- b. The name of the meal and use by date
- c. Nothing, Meals on Wheels meals don't need to be labelled
- d. Nutrition information panel with nutrient breakdown of the meal

## Serving and Reheating

Whilst each Meals on Wheels is different, Services typically serve a combination of hot, chilled or frozen meals. For each different type of meal, there will be different temperature and storage requirements.

Serving **hot meals** is called **cook-serve**. In this system:

- Hot meals are cooked, packaged and then delivered hot.
- Meals may be placed in a hot-hold cupboard before being delivered to clients to ensure they are kept at above 60°C. Meals must be kept at above 60°C until they reach the client.

Serving **chilled meals** is called **cook-chill**. In this system:

- Chilled meals are cooked, packaged and then cooled before being delivered.
- Meals are to be cooled as quickly as possible or at least be cooled from 60°C to 21°C within 2 hours and then from 21°C to 5°C and below within another 4 hours (6 hours in total). The temperatures and times followed during the cooling process should be documented in the Food Safety Program records.
- Placing food in shallow containers will help to cool the food item more quickly.

Serving **frozen meals** is called **cook-freeze**. In this system:

- Frozen meals are cooked, packaged and then frozen before being delivered.
- Meals are to be frozen as quickly as possible or by cooling then freezing. A blast chiller or freezer is typically used.
- Meals must remain frozen hard and not partially thawed.

**Use-by Dates:** Every meal must be labelled with a use-by date.

- Hot meals should be eaten immediately
- Cold meals have a use-by date of three days after being made
- Frozen meals have a use-by date of three months after being made

### Reheating

Some Services may cook the meal in advance and reheat before delivery. Meals must be rapidly reheated to 75°C within 2 hours, with the core temperature being checked and recorded in the Food Safety Program records.

## Serving and Reheating Quiz - Circle the correct answer

**1. Which statement is incorrect?**

- a. Hot meals must be kept at 60°C or above
- b. Cold meals must be kept at 5°C or below
- c. Frozen meals must be kept frozen hard, not partially thawed
- d. All meals must be kept between 5°C and 60°C

**2. Which of the answers indicates the correct use by date?**

- a. Cold meal: 3 days after being made
- b. Hot meal: 1-2 days after being made
- c. Frozen meal: 5 days after being made
- d. All meals must be eaten immediately after being delivered

**3. Which statement is correct regarding reheating time and temperature?**

- a. Food must be reheated to 60°C (minimum) within 1hr
- b. Food must be reheated to 60°C (minimum) within 2hrs
- c. Food must be reheated to 75°C (minimum) within 2hrs
- d. Food must be reheated to 75°C (maximum) within 2hrs

**4. How can food be kept hot between reheating and delivery?**

- a. In a hot hold cupboard above 60°C
- b. In a combi oven above 60°C
- c. Being left out on the bench
- d. a or b

## Packing for Meal Delivery

Packing meals into eskies can be quite an art. It is likely that your Service has a specific packing method to make it easier for delivery drivers and to keep the food under safe temperature control. **Note**, meals must be delivered within 2 hours of being packed for delivery.

It is recommended that Services:

Pack the meals into eskies right before they are taken for the delivery run.

Use a *Run Sheet* to pack the meals in order of delivery. To minimise the time eskies spend open, meals for the last client on the run should be packed on the bottom, with meals for the first client being at the top.

Ice or heat packs should be used between meal layers in order to help keep them under temperature control.

During the run, eskies should only be opened once the driver arrives at the client's house to remove their meals.

If the **client is home**: hand them their meals or if needed place them in the fridge/freezer (unless it is a hot meal).

If the **client is not home** to receive their meals, meals should not be left unattended as they will quickly move into the temperature danger zone. Instead, take the meals back to the Service unless other arrangements have been made with the client (e.g you have access to their fridge/freezer).



A **test meal** is a meal that is taken on a delivery run and temperature checked at the start and end of the run. The purpose of this is to ensure that a safe temperature is maintained for the duration of the run so that meals are safe to consume.

The temperatures of a test meal must be recorded weekly or as outlined in the Food Safety Program.

Remember Meals on Wheels delivers **'More than just a meal'**. We provide an opportunity for the vulnerable people in the community to have a social interaction.



Your Service might like to find a way to spend a bit more time with clients who need the social connection without having the pressure of the 2 hour delivery time frame. You could do this by increasing the number of meal runs and reducing the number of clients on each run or rearranging runs so that these clients are visited last.



## Packing for Meal Delivery Quiz - Circle the correct answer

- 1. Can you leave meals in an eskie at a client's house unattended?**
  - a. Yes, it is fine to leave meals at a client's house
  - b. Yes, but you should leave them in the shade
  - c. No, take the food out of the esky and leave the food at the front door
  - d. No, meals in an eskie are not to be left at a client's home if they are not home to receive them
  
- 2. Where in the esky do you put the meals for those that are last on the delivery run?**
  - a. At the bottom
  - b. At the top
  - c. In the middle
  - d. It doesn't matter where
  
- 3. When should an esky be opened?**
  - a. When driving to make it easier to get meals out at each client's home
  - b. Only to take meals out when delivering to the client
  - c. At all times
  - d. None of the above

## Cleaning and Sanitising

To ensure food is prepared safely and to prevent cross contamination, it is important that kitchens are kept clean and sanitary.

### Cleaning vs sanitising

Cleaning and sanitising are two different things.



Cleaning is the process of removing visible dust, dirt and stains from equipment using detergent and water.



Sanitising is the process of removing micro-organisms or food poisoning bacteria using chemicals

When cleaning and sanitising, it is important to clean a surface or object first to remove physical hazards such as dirt or food pieces, before sanitising to remove micro-organisms.

The Food Safety Program contains a cleaning schedule that shows who is responsible for cleaning and sanitising certain equipment and areas in the kitchen and at what frequency. Check the cleaning schedule each day to see what you are responsible for cleaning before and after the kitchen is done preparing food. Cleaning and sanitising should also occur during meal preparation before new tasks are started to ensure that equipment and surfaces are clean.

**Remember,** before you leave, make sure to dispose of your hair net and put your apron in the dirty laundry.



## Cleaning and Sanitising Quiz - Circle the correct answer

- 1. In what order should cleaning and sanitising be completed?**
  - a. Sanitise and then clean
  - b. Clean and then sanitise
  - c. The order doesn't matter
  - d. Cleaning and sanitising are the same thing
  
- 2. When does cleaning and sanitising need to be done? (There may be more than one correct answer)**
  - a. Throughout meal preparation as required
  - b. At the end of each day
  - c. At the start of each day where circumstances require it
  - d. At the end of each week
  
- 3. The process of removing microorganisms or food poisoning bacteria using chemicals is called:**
  - a. Microorganism Elimination Process (MEP)
  - b. Cleaning
  - c. Sanitising
  - d. Chemical clean
  
- 4. Where will you find the cleaning schedule?**
  - a. In the bathroom
  - b. In the Food Safety Program
  - c. Near the handwashing sink
  - d. In the office

## Quiz Answers

### Hygiene

1. a, c, d                      2. d                      3. c

### Entering the Kitchen

1. a                      2. a                      3. b

### Food Storage

1. a, b                      2. c                      3. b

### Preparation and Skills

1. c                      2. a                      3. b

### Cooking

1. c                      2. d                      3. a

### Packaging and Presentation

1. d                      2. c                      3. a

### Serving and reheating

1. d                      2. a                      3. c                      4. d

### Packing for Meal Delivery

1. d                      2. a                      3. b

### Cleaning and Sanitising

1. b                      2. a, b, c                      3. c                      4. b

## Acknowledgment of Food Safety Training Completion

I ..... herby declare that I have completed the Food Safety  
Training Workbook and understand the information outlined.

Date .....

Signature .....

Supervisor .....

Signature .....