

FOOD PREMISES DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES



CITY OF MELBOURNE

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Cover Image: Interior of Chin Chin restaurant. Photo Credit: Josie Withers

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PERMITS

Starting a new food business in the City of Melbourne may require permits, licences or registrations across departments or from other organisations.

We've developed an online assessment tool to help you understand which permits your business requires. Access the tool at www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/self-assessment-business

You can also contact our Business Concierge Officer on ph. 9658 9658, who can help you identify which permits you require and guide you through the permit approval process.

Please refer to our contacts list on page 12 of this guide.



REGISTRATION PROCESS

The *Food Act 1984* requires all businesses that handle, prepare, package, store, serve, supply and repackage food to be registered with their local council. The registration process is outlined below.

1. Submit your floor plans

Submit your floor plans using the [New Food Premises Assessment form](#).

We recommend submitting your floor plans before constructing or altering a food premises. This allows us to provide valuable information to ensure your premises meets the legal requirements, and can prevent costly changes and delays.

The floor plans should:

- be drawn to a professional standard and to a scale no less than 1:50
- show the proposed finishes of floors, walls and ceilings
- show the location of fixtures, fittings, hand basins, sinks, toilets, on-site bin storage and all other equipment.

We'll assess your floor plans within 15 working days.

A five-day priority service is available for an additional fee.

2. First on-site inspection

Once we have assessed your floor plans, we will send you a report with details about how to organise the on-site inspections. The first on-site assessment should be arranged when you are close to the final construction. At this inspection, an Environmental Health Officer will advise you of any outstanding works to complete before you schedule the final inspection.

3. Final on-site inspection

At the final inspection, the Environmental Health Officer will check your food premises meets the specifications listed in this guide. You'll also need to show them copies of your Food Safety Program and Food Safety Supervisor's Certificate.



DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS

Design and layout

Your food premises needs to be designed and constructed according to the type of food activities that will be performed. The correct design and layout can help streamline work practices, reduce cleaning and maintenance, and prevent cross contamination.

To prevent food contamination, your premises must be designed so the flow of food is in one direction from receipt to storage, preparation, packaging, serving and disposal.

You will need to provide adequate storage space for dry goods, fresh fruit and vegetables, cutlery, crockery, cooking utensils, personal belongings and chemicals.

All food preparation areas, cool rooms, freezer rooms and dry food storage areas must be large enough to prevent overcrowding of food, equipment or staff working in these areas.

Floors

Floor finishes need to be appropriate for the activities conducted on the food premises. They must also be:

- able to be effectively cleaned
- unable to absorb grease
- laid so there is no ponding of water
- unable to harbour pests.

Where floors are intended to be cleaned using a hose to flush with water, a floor waste is required.

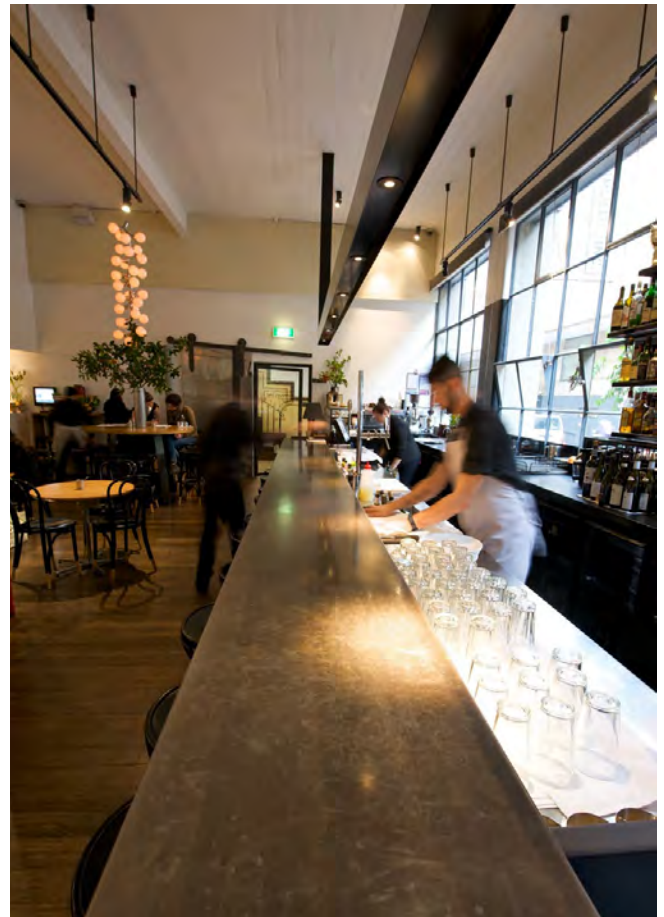
The floor finishes table on page 4 can help you decide which flooring is suitable for your business.

Walls and Ceilings

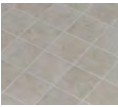




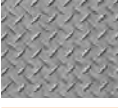
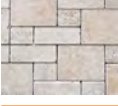



Walls and ceilings must also be appropriate for the activities conducted on the food premises. They must be sealed to prevent the entry of dirt, dust and pests, and be able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

Service pipes, electrical wiring and other services should be concealed in walls and ceilings, or fixed on brackets with at least 25 mm clearance between the pipe and vertical surface.


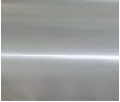

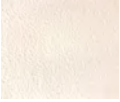






The wall finishes table on page 5 lists the suitability of common wall finishes based on their location.



Suitability of floor finishes

EXAMPLE	FINISH	SUITABLE FOR						COMMENTS
		Food preparation areas	Servery	Dry store	Refrigerators/freezers	Bin storage area	Eating areas	
	Ceramic or porcelain non-slip tiles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Epoxy grout is required to achieve non-porous joints.
	Quarry tiles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Commercial-grade vinyl	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Highly durable, low maintenance.
	Epoxy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A minimum of three coats of epoxy sealant is required to achieve sufficient durability.
	Polished, sealed concrete	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
	Timber-look vinyl planks	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Unlike other timber and timber-look planks, vinyl timber planks are waterproof.
	Non-slip stainless steel				✓	✓	✓	Some non-slip stainless steel has intricate raised patterns which makes cleaning very difficult. We recommend that simpler patterns are used in food storage areas.
	Natural stone tiles (including marble, granite, slate and travertine)		See comments			✓	✓	These tiles are porous and require sealing at least every 12 months depending on foot traffic.
	Cement (encaustic) tiles		See comments				✓	
	Timber, engineered timber and timber-look laminate						✓	Timber finishes should be sealed.
	Carpet or carpet tiles						✓	

Suitability of wall finishes

EXAMPLE	FINISH	SUITABLE FOR						COMMENTS
		Food preparation areas	Servery	Dry store	Refrigerators/freezers	Bin storage area	Eating areas	
	Ceramic or porcelain tiles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Epoxy grout is required to achieve non-porous joints.
	Stainless steel	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Welded joints and waterproof screw covers must be used.
	Vinyl wall sheeting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Highly durable, low maintenance.
	Painted plaster	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Plaster must be smooth. Paint must be washable. Adequate splashbacks will need to be provided above sinks and basins.
	Sealed concrete	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	A minimum of three coats of epoxy sealant is required to achieve sufficient durability.
	Natural stone panels and tiles (including marble, granite, slate, travertine)		See comments			✓	✓	These tiles are porous and require sealing at least every 12 months depending on foot traffic.
	Feature brick		See comments				✓	Brick is generally unsuitable for food handling areas. In some instances, brick walls with unraked joints and treated with an epoxy sealant have been approved, however, this significantly changes the appearance of the finish.
	Concrete bricks					✓	✓	
	Timber, engineered timber and timber-look laminate		✓				✓	Timber finishes must be connected with a 'tongue and groove' joint with a smooth and sealed finish.
	Cement (encaustic) tiles		See comments				✓	These tiles are porous and require sealing at least every 12 months depending on the location.

PLUMBING FIXTURES

The number and size of sinks required depends on the type and quantity of food being prepared, the number of staff and whether you have a dishwasher for sanitising equipment. You must be able to easily carry out all washing and cleaning without posing a risk to food safety.

All sinks and hand basins should be permanent fixtures, connected to a continuous supply of hot and cold potable water and drained to sewer.

Hand washing facilities

- located where they can be easily accessed by food handlers
- provided within food preparation areas
- provided immediately adjacent to the toilets
- designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face
- supplied with soap and paper towels.



Sink for washing utensils and equipment

Food businesses must have a double or triple bowl sink or a single bowl sink and dishwasher for washing and sanitising equipment.

The sink(s) need to be large enough to fit the largest piece of equipment that will be washed.



Bars

Bars require a glass washer and a rinsing sink in addition to a separate hand basin. If fresh fruit is frequently used for drinks, such as cocktails, then access to a food preparation sink is also required.

Sink for food preparation

A separate food preparation sink is required where food handling involves washing fruit, vegetables, fish or other food items.

Cleaner's sink

All types of food premises will need an on-site cleaner's sink. This is used solely for floor cleaning activities and disposing of dirty water.



Water supply, sewage and waste water disposal

You must supply a potable water source with adequate volume, pressure and temperature.

You will need a hot water system with sufficient capacity for peak operating times for cleaning and sanitising the food premises and equipment.

Your premises must have an effective sewage and waste water disposal system for all sewage and waste liquid produced by the business.

Grease traps

Grease traps or arrestors should be located outside the food preparation area.

Your local water authority can provide further information on grease traps. Their contact details are listed on page 12.

MECHANICAL VENTILATION

A mechanical exhaust system must be installed above cooking equipment and dishwashers if their total maximum electrical power input is greater than 8kW or total gas input is greater than 29Mj/h.

If a mechanical exhaust system is required, you will need to engage the services of a private [building surveyor](#) for installation.



FIXTURES, FITTINGS AND EQUIPMENT

All surfaces need to be smooth, durable, impervious, and free from gaps and cavities that may allow rodents, insects and other pests to enter, breed and nest.

Cooking equipment

Cooking equipment should either be easily movable, butted against walls or other equipment, have their joints sealed, or placed at least 150 mm from walls.

Lighting

Lighting must be sufficient for food handlers to see whether areas and equipment are clean, to detect signs of pests and to see the food and equipment they handle.

Light fittings, including those in cool rooms and freezer rooms, should be fitted with shatterproof glass or plastic. This facilitates cleaning and prevents food contamination if they break.

Cold and Frozen storage

You will need refrigerators to store all perishable foods at or below 5°C.

Freezers must be able to keep food frozen (usually below -15°C) to maintain product quality and shelf life.

Wheels or castors should be fitted to chest freezers and upright refrigerators to allow for easy cleaning underneath.

Cool rooms and freezer rooms must have adequate shelving and must have an external thermometer gauge. You must not store food at ground level.

Self-serve hot or cold display

Self-serve units should have a protective sneeze guard to act as a physical barrier between the customers' breath and the food. You will need to provide serving utensils such as tongs, serving spoons or forks.

WASTE STORAGE

Waste management and bin storage

All bins and waste containers must be stored inside your property. When deciding where to store bins, consider your premises' design and layout to prevent cross contamination. The on-site bin storage location must be indicated on the floor plans you submit.

Bins may only be placed outside on public property the evening before a scheduled collection.

You will need to engage an independent commercial waste company to collect and dispose of all waste. The details of the proposed commercial waste collection service must be provided to a City of Melbourne Environmental Health Officer before your business can operate.

Under exceptional circumstances where on-site bin storage is not possible; your business may have access to designated on-street locations called 'prescribed areas'. Contact the Waste Standard team to discuss on-street storage eligibility and apply for a permit. To read more about city waste laws, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/citywaste.

Although we don't provide kerbside bin collection services for food and drink businesses, we do operate 5 garbage compactors and 11 recycling hubs in the central city area that accept business waste. These services are designed for businesses that generate small quantities of waste and are not suitable for large commercial operations. To determine if the locations are suitable for your business, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/compactors. Our Environmental Health Officers will demonstrate how you can register to use and operate the right waste compactor.

To learn more about the City of Melbourne waste management requirements, including prescribed areas, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/citywaste.



OTHER STORAGE AREAS

Personal belongings storage

To prevent the contamination of food, you will need to provide a separate room or locker for storing clothing, footwear and other personal belongings.

If storage outside a food preparation area is not possible, provide a designated enclosed cupboard.

Cleaning equipment and chemical storage

You must also provide a cleaner's cupboard or other clearly designated storage space for storing mops, cleaning chemicals and cleaning equipment.

Chemicals and cleaning equipment must be stored separately to food items and food contact surfaces.

Pest control

Pests include birds, rodents and insects. Your food premises must be constructed and designed to prevent the entry of pests by ensuring:

- screens are fitted to doors and openings
- self-closing doors, fly strips or air curtains are fitted to all door entries
- all holes are sealed, including gaps to all floors, walls, ceilings and service pipes where they pass through floors, walls and ceilings.

Toilet facilities

All toilet facilities must be provided with hand basins that supply warm running water and suitable hand-drying facilities.

Toilets should not be entered directly from a food preparation area, but through an air lock. An air lock is a buffer zone between a food area and the toilet that stops contaminated air entering a kitchen.

Your toilet facilities must be kept clean and operating properly whether on-site or off-site.

General requirements

Name of proprietor

The name of the proprietor needs to be prominently placed at the front of the premises. This is a specific requirement under the *Food Act 1984*.

Melbourne Café Pty Ltd



USEFUL CONTACTS

City of Melbourne

Health and Wellbeing

Phone: 9658 8831

Email: health@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Planning Team

Phone: 9658 7678

Email: planning@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Building and Construction

Phone: 9658 6839

Waste Services

Phone: 9658 9658

Email: enquiries@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Grease traps

City West Water

(all City of Melbourne suburbs excluding those listed below)

Phone: 131 691

Website: citywestwater.com.au/business/trade_waste/grease_traps.aspx

South East Water

(South Yarra, Southbank, South Wharf and Port Melbourne)

Phone: 9552 3662

Website: southeastwater.com.au/Business/Pages/FoodOilInterceptorService.aspx

Liquor licence

Victorian Commission for Gambling and

Liquor Regulation (Liquor Licence)

Phone: 1300 182 457

Website: vcglr.vic.gov.au

Building surveyors, builders and plumbers

Victorian Building Authority (VBA)

Phone: 1300 815 127

Website: vba.vic.gov.au

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Building surveyor	A building surveyor ensures building work complies with the legal requirements and issues building permits allowing works to commence. They will conduct inspections of building work and issue a permit upon satisfactory completion.
Environmental Health Officer	Environmental Health Officers are responsible for carrying out measures to protect public health, including administering and enforcing legislation and providing support to minimise risks to the public.
Equipment	Examples of equipment include refrigerators, cool rooms, bain maries, utensils or appliances used in connection with food handling or cleaning the food premises.
Fixtures and fittings	Examples of fixtures and fittings include benches, shelves, sinks, hand basins, cupboards and light fittings.
Floor plans	A drawing that shows the shape, size, and arrangement of rooms in a building as viewed from above.
Food business or food premises	A business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves the: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• handling of food intended for sale, or• sale of food, regardless of whether the business enterprise or activity is of a commercial, charitable or community nature.
Food contact surfaces	Any surface that touches food such as knives, pots, chopping boards and plates.
Food preparation area	A food preparation area is any space where food and/or drinks are washed, prepared, cooked, poured and/or served.
Food storage area	A food storage area is any place where food is stored. It includes dry stores, cool rooms, freezer rooms and off-site storage areas.
Impervious	A finish that does not allow water, oil or other fluids to absorb or pass through.
Permanent fixture	A permanent fixture is equipment that once installed is considered a permanent addition to the property. Permanent fixtures are structurally anchored to the ground or plumbed for water circulation.
Potable water	Potable water is safe drinking water that is fit for human consumption.
Proprietor	The owner of the business.
Sanitising	Sanitising is the process of killing food poisoning bacteria (that you cannot see) and is achieved by using heat and/or chemicals. You must use both a detergent and a sanitiser.

How to contact us

Online:

melbourne.vic.gov.au

In person:

Melbourne Town Hall – Administration Building
120 Swanston Street, Melbourne
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Telephone:

03 9658 9658
Business hours, Monday to Friday
(Public holidays excluded)

Fax:

03 9654 4854

In writing:

City of Melbourne
GPO Box 1603
Melbourne VIC 3001
Australia



Interpreter services

We cater for people of all backgrounds
Please call 03 9280 0726

03 9280 0717 廣東話
03 9280 0719 Bahasa Indonesia
03 9280 0720 Italiano
03 9280 0721 普通话
03 9280 0722 Soomaali
03 9280 0723 Español
03 9280 0725 Việt Ngữ
03 9280 0726 عربي
03 9280 0726 한국어
03 9280 0726 हिंदी
03 9280 0726 All other languages

National Relay Service:

If you are deaf, hearing impaired or speech-impaired,
call us via the National Relay Service: Teletypewriter (TTY)
users phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 03 9658 9658
9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (Public holidays excluded)

melbourne.vic.gov.au



CITY OF MELBOURNE