

# Fact Sheet

## Food safety after COVID-19 temporary business closure

**If your food business has been closed for a period of time due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, this fact sheet provides information and advice on how to ensure your food is safe and suitable when the business re-opens.**

**General safety – entering a building that has not been occupied for some time**

- Ensure gas, electricity, water and sewerage services, as well as equipment have been checked by the relevant authorities and licensed tradespeople before use (if necessary).
- Allow for adequate ventilation in the premise by opening windows and doors.

### Food

One of the main factors that food businesses need to consider before re-opening to the public is what to do with food that was left in the store during closure.

#### Prepared/cooked/ready-to-eat/thawed foods

Any potentially hazardous pre-prepared or thawed foods that was not used prior to closure should be discarded.

#### Refrigerated or frozen foods

Conduct an audit to check the expiry dates on refrigerated and frozen foods. Discard any food that passed its use-by date during the closure period.

#### Dry goods

Similarly to refrigerated or frozen goods, dry goods should have their expiry dates checked, and be discarded if they expired during the closure period.

Check packaging for any damage or pest activity and discard if affected.

#### Pest control

It is important that food is kept safe and protected from pests. Inspect food storage for any pest infestation or activity.

Check screens on windows, doors and other openings and check that weather strips at the base of doors are still intact. If not, replace/repair prior to reopening.

Engage professional help and have your premises treated for pests by a licenced pest control provider if necessary.

#### Equipment maintenance and calibration of thermometers

Check temperatures of fridges, freezers and hot food storage equipment before re-stocking with food.

Have all temperature measuring devices been located and calibrated?

#### Clean and sanitise surfaces and food utensils

Before any food preparation is undertaken all food contact surfaces and equipment must be cleaned and sanitised.

Cleaning and sanitising includes cleaning all equipment, food contact surfaces (benches) and utensils to:

- Remove dirt, grease and food scraps
- Clean with appropriate cleaning agent (e.g. detergent)
- Sanitise using a chemical sanitiser, hot water or commercial dishwasher.

If using a hot water sanitising method, ensure the item is fully immersed in hot water of 77°C or above for at least 30 seconds.

#### Stay informed

Stay up-to-date with guidance published by FSANZ, Queensland Health and Redland City Council's Health and Environment Unit.

For more information contact Environmental Health, Redland City Council on (07) 3829 8999 or visit our website [www.redland.qld.gov.au](http://www.redland.qld.gov.au).