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Food Safety Supervisors: Know your Role & Responsibilities



5 Star Services for Aged Care, Childcare & Retirement Living

What is the role of a Food Safety Supervisor?

The role of a Food Safety Supervisor (FSS) is to manage the overall food safety of a business. The FSS must ensure that any food item is prepared and served as per food safety guidelines.

It's also the job of a FSS to recognise and prevent the risks associated with food handling in a food business, such as dining establishments and catering services.

As the supervisor for Food Safety, they not only have to possess the knowledge in preparation and storage but also set an example for their team by practising the proper procedures.

Indeed, the function of a supervisor is not one to be taken lightly. And with food hygiene and safety being the foundation of a successful business in the industry, it's their job to maintain safety standards and practices that promote productivity and put a stop to incidents of food-borne illnesses in consumers.

What are FSS's Responsibilities?

- Ensuring that the business complies with all relevant food safety standards, codes and your Food Safety Program.
- Keeping the Food Safety Program up-to-date and ensuring all staff know how and when to manage records.
- Performing checks on the business for any breaches of food safety.
- Identifying any potential food safety hazards and putting control measures in place to prevent them.
- Ensuring all staff receive the proper training on the correct food safety practices.
- Monitoring all employees in the workplace and ensuring that they maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.
- Handling any issues of noncompliance when they arise.
- Acting as a point of contact for all Food Handlers in the business, as well as food safety authorities.

The FSS role typically includes:

- Being aware of all relevant food safety legislation and standards that are applicable to the food business.
- Monitoring all food handlers to make sure that all food handling tasks are properly and safely carried out.
- Knowing how to recognise, prevent and alleviate food safety hazards in the food business.
- Ensuring that food handlers maintain safe personal hygiene.
- Ensuring that a business's food safety program is up-to-date and accurately maintained.
- Completing all required training and holding the necessary statement of attainment or certificate
- Being 'reasonably available' to the business's food handlers and its local council during operating hours.



The Food Safety Supervisor's Abilities

- Has the ability and authority to be able to supervise other people handling food in the business and ensure that it is done safely
- Knows how to identify, prevent and alleviate food-handling hazards
- Takes reasonable steps to ensure that the food business is free from food-related hazards
- Has completed accredited food safety training for the food sector that they are currently working in.



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The Food Safety Supervisor's Abilities

The FSS doesn't have to be on the premises at all times. However, they must be able to know how food is being handled when they are not on the premises. Similarly, this applies to businesses that operate across a number of shifts or when a person from outside the business is the food safety supervisor.

This skill set reflects the skills required to prevent, recognise and address food handling hazards in a health or community services workplace. The role includes supervising other people handling food to ensure it is safe for consumption and ensuring food handling practices adhere to the organisation's Food Safety Program.



Minimum Competency Standard

- HLTFS001 'Follow basic food safety practices (Release 1)'
- HLTFS005 'Apply and monitor food safety requirements (Release 1)'
- HLTFS007 'Oversee the day-to-day implementation of food safety in the workplace (Release 1)'



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What do Staff & Supervisors have to know?

Food handlers must have the skills and knowledge that they need to handle food safely as they carry out the work that they are responsible for. They do not need skills and knowledge for other jobs in the business. For example, in a catering business, someone who makes sandwiches will need skills and knowledge that are quite different from the skills and knowledge needed by someone who does the cleaning for the business.

However, if some staff help with other work when people are away, or sometimes supervise other food handlers, then they must also have the skills and knowledge for this other work, as well as the skills and knowledge to do their regular work.

Staff skills and knowledge must include food safety and food hygiene matters. Food safety issues cover what staff must do to food to keep food safe. Food hygiene practices cover what staff must do to keep things clean so they do not contaminate food.



How do I make sure that Staff have appropriate skills & knowledge?

- Formal training
- 'In house' training by a qualified training organisation (eg OSCAR Care Group) or the owner of the business
- Giving staff food safety and food hygiene information for them to read
- Operating rules that set out the responsibilities of food handlers and their supervisors
- Sending staff to food safety courses run by a qualified training organisation (eg OSCAR Care Group)
- Hiring a Training consultant to run a course for the staff of the business
- Recruiting staff with formal industry-based training qualifications and skillsets.



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How can I comply with the skills & knowledge requirement?

- Have you identified the food handling and safety risks in your business?
- What food handling tasks do different staff members carry out?
- Have staff been told or shown how to handle food safely within your business?
- Is someone responsible for making sure any set procedures or rules are followed?
- Do you have the equipment and space that staff need to keep work areas clean?
- Businesses which ensure that their food handlers have safe food handling skills & knowledge, who supervise the work of their staff, & who regularly remind them about safe food handling practices, should find it easy to comply with the skills & knowledge requirement.



6 Ways to ensure compliance

1. Training & Qualifications
2. Toolbox Talks with Staff
3. Regular documented meetings
4. Memos
5. Daily verification of all documents & Food Safety Practise requirements
6. Follow up on corrective actions and close-outs



Do your staff need formal or 'in house' Food Safety Training?

Shannon Kee, **OSCAR** Care Group Operations Manager, can assist. Please call or email Shannon via our contact details below.

**BOOK NOW!
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References:

<https://www.foodsafety.com.au/faq/topic/food-safety-supervisor-info>

<https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/HLTSS00061>

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/food-safety/food-businesses/food-safety-training-skills-knowledge/food-safety-supervisors>

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/safetystandards/safetypractices/skills/Pages/default.aspx>



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