

## Food Safety Policy – Children’s Services

<b>Date adopted</b>	25 September 2025
<b>Adopted by</b>	Executive Leadership Team (ELT)
<b>Review due</b>	September 2028
<b>Responsible officer</b>	Manager Child, Families and Youth
<b>Records reference</b>	11630620

### 1. Purpose

Melton City Council is committed to:

- effective Food Safety practices at the service that comply with legislative requirements and meets best practice standards
- minimising the risk of Scalds and Burns to children from Hot Drinks
- ensuring the safety of all children and adults attending the service
- taking all reasonable precautions to reduce potential hazards and harm to children attending the service
- ensuring adequate health and hygiene procedures are implemented at the service, including safe practices for handling, preparing, storing and serving food
- promoting safe practices in relation to the handling of hot drinks at the service
- educating all service users in the prevention of scalds and burns that can result from handling hot drinks
- complying with all relevant legislation and standards, including the Food Act 1984 and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

This policy should be read in conjunction with Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play Policy.

This policy has been adapted from PolicyWorks Catalogue by the Early Learning Association Australia

### 2. Application And Scope

This policy applies to services responsible for the direct education and care of children at Melton City Council programs including offsite excursions and activities. This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Person in day-to-day charge / Responsible Person’s, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending Melton City Council programs and activities.

### 3. Background

Food Safety is very important in early childhood service environments. Young children are often more susceptible to the effects of food borne illness than other members of the community. Foodborne illness (including gastrointestinal illness) can be caused by bacteria, parasites, viruses, chemicals or foreign objects that are present in food. Food provided by a children’s service:

- must be fit for human consumption

- must not be tampered with or contaminated
- must not have deteriorated or perished.

Safe food practices can also assist in reducing the risk of a severe allergic reaction (e.g. anaphylaxis) by preventing cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed Food Allergies (refer to Anaphylaxis Policy and Asthma Policy).

Organisations that provide food to children have a Duty of Care to protect children from all hazards and harm. Employers are also required, under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, to provide a healthy and safe working environment for employees and contractors, and to ensure that other individuals, including children, parents/guardians, visitors and the general public, are not endangered when attending the workplace.

In addition, employees, visitors and contractors are responsible for complying with appropriate workplace standards and procedures that have been implemented to protect their own health and safety, and that of others.

The Food Act 1984 aims to reduce the incidence of foodborne illness by ensuring that food manufactured, transported, sold, prepared and stored is safe, unadulterated, fit for human consumption and will not cause food poisoning. Under the Act, local councils in Victoria are required to classify every food premises in their municipality according to its food safety risk.

Early childhood services are expected to confirm their food safety risk classification and related requirements with the local council in the area in which they operate.

Class 1 food premises describe those that predominantly handle potentially Hazardous Food that is served to vulnerable people. Early childhood services that provide Family Day Care (FDC) are exempt in the Class 1 category. Class 4 food premises describe those whose food handling activities pose low risk to public health.

Services only supplying low risk snacks such as cut fruit, milk, bread and cereals are classified as Class 4 (low risk). Class 4 services are not required to have:

- a Food Safety Program
- a Food Safety Supervisor
- an annual council inspection.

Class 4 services must ensure that staff/educators have the skills and knowledge needed to safely handle food in their work roles. Council may also, at its discretion, inspect premises under the Food Act 1984 (e.g. to investigate complaints or conduct a spot check). Individual councils may also require services to complete a Food Safety audit or plan, especially when the service is operating a special event such as a sausage sizzle. Further information about Class 4 food premises can be obtained from the Department of Health website (see Sources).

Standard 3.3.1, in Chapter 3 of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code), is one of the national food safety standards that outlines the responsibilities of food businesses to ensure that the food they produce is safe. This particular standard applies to Australian food businesses that provide meals for vulnerable persons (those who are at greater risk of being affected by foodborne illness), such as the very young, the elderly and individuals who are immunocompromised due to disease or treatment for other illnesses. Standard 3.3.1 requires such businesses to have a documented food safety program.

## 4. Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

Term	Definition
<b>Communicable Disease Section</b>	Responsibility for communication and advice in relation to infectious diseases on behalf of the Secretary of the Victorian DH
<b>Department of Health (DH)</b>	The State Government department responsible for the health and wellbeing of Victorians, and with oversight of the administration of the <i>Food Act</i> 1984.
<b>Food allergies</b>	<p>Some foods and food ingredients, or their components, can cause severe allergic reactions including anaphylaxis (refer to <i>Anaphylaxis Policy</i>).</p> <p>Less common symptoms of food allergy include infantile colic, reflux of stomach contents, Eczema and chronic diarrhoea and failure to thrive in infants.</p> <p>Food allergies are often caused by peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, sesame seeds, fish and shellfish, soy and wheat. For further information on food allergies <a href="http://www.allergyfacts.org.au">www.allergyfacts.org.au</a></p>
<b>Food Safety</b>	(In relation to this policy) ensuring food provided by the service is fit for human consumption.
<b>Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)</b>	A bi-national Government agency with the responsibility to develop and administer the <i>Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code</i> (the Code), which details standards and requirements in areas such as food additives, food safety, labelling and genetically modified (GM) foods. Enforcement and interpretation of the Code is the responsibility of State/Territory departments and food agencies within Australia and New Zealand.
<b>Hazardous Food</b>	Food containing dangerous biological, chemical or physical agents, or food in a condition that has the potential to cause adverse health effects in humans.
<b>High Risk Foods</b>	Bacteria that has the potential to cause food-poisoning can grow and multiply on some foods more easily than others. High-risk foods include meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products, small goods, cooked rice/pasta and prepared salads (such as coleslaw, pasta salads, rice salads and fruit salads). Food that is contained in packages, cans or jars can become high-risk once opened, and should be handled and stored appropriately.
<b>Hot Drink</b>	Any container holding a liquid that has been heated or boiled, and that remains above room temperature (25°C) for any period of time.
<b>Scalds</b>	Burns by hot fluids, steam and other hot vapours

## 5. Related Documents

Name	Location
Local Government Act 2020	<a href="https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020">https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020</a>
Relevant legislations and standards include but are not limited to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian New Zealand Food Safety Standards Code</li> <li>• Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</li> <li>• Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010</li> <li>• Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011</li> <li>• Food Act 1984 (Vic)</li> <li>• National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety</li> <li>• Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</li> <li>• Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008</li> </ul>
Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Health Services (2019), A guide to the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children's centres: <a href="#">A guide to the management and control of gastroenteritis outbreaks in children's centres</a></li> <li>• Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code: <a href="#">Food Standards Code   Food Standards Australia New Zealand</a></li> <li>• Department of Health – Food Safety <a href="#">Food safety</a></li> <li>• Keeping Food Safe: <a href="#">Food safety and storage   Better Health Channel</a></li> <li>• Introducing Standard 3.2.2A: Food safety management tools: <a href="#">Introducing Standard 3.2.2A: Food safety management tools   health.vic.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Food Safety Library: <a href="#">Food safety library</a></li> <li>• DoFoodSafely: <a href="#">Home - DoFoodSafely</a></li> <li>• The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – Kids Health Info: <a href="#">Kids Health Info: About Kids Health Info</a></li> <li>• Kidsafe Australia: <a href="#">NBAM BurnSafe Resources   kidsafe Australia</a></li> </ul>

Name	Location
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration of First Aid</li> <li>• Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions</li> <li>• Asthma Management</li> <li>• Child Safe (MCC)</li> <li>• Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing</li> <li>• Dealing with Medical Conditions</li> <li>• Dealing with Infectious Diseases</li> <li>• Diabetes and Seizures</li> <li>• Excursions, Regular Outings and Service Events</li> <li>• Hygiene</li> <li>• Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness</li> <li>• Interactions with Children</li> <li>• Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play</li> <li>• Occupational Health and Safety</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Supervision of Children</li> </ul>

The master document is controlled electronically. Printed copies of this document are not controlled. Document users are responsible for ensuring printed copies are valid prior to use. If printing, please think about whether you need to print in colour.