

# Eat Safe Brisbane

## Food Safety Rating Guide



*Dedicated to a better Brisbane*

**Eat Safe Brisbane encourages a safe and healthy city as part of Council's Brisbane Vision 2031.**

## **Eat Safe Brisbane food safety rating scheme – measuring food safety standards**

Brisbane is a great place to live, work and relax – it's a safe, green and prosperous city, valued for its friendly and optimistic character and enjoyable lifestyle. Brisbane City Council, with the support of key industry representatives, delivers a regulatory rating scheme called Eat Safe Brisbane.

All licensed food businesses within Brisbane receive a food safety star rating based on an assessment conducted by Council under the *Food Act 2006* (the Act) and the Food Safety Standards (FSS). The display of Eat Safe Brisbane star ratings is voluntary for food businesses.

### **Your role**

As a food business operator you have a responsibility and duty of care to ensure that any food for sale at your business is safe and suitable for human consumption. This is a legal requirement of the Act.

### **Our role**

Council has a responsibility to monitor and regulate all food businesses to ensure that they meet their legislative responsibilities under the Act and the FSS.

The aim of Eat Safe Brisbane is to work together and provide both assistance and incentive to achieve and maintain the highest standards in food safety. Eat Safe Brisbane ensures our food industry is among the world's best in safety standards.

## **What is Council's Eat Safe Brisbane scheme?**

Eat Safe Brisbane aims to improve food safety compliance to ensure safe food for consumers.

The assessment of a food business takes into account all food handling processes. Council conducts audits of your business to ensure you comply with the requirements of the Act and FSS and to determine if you can effectively manage food safety risks.

Food business operators are expected to be able to demonstrate the management of food safety risks to a Council Officer at any time.

On the day of your food safety audit, Council will assess food safety practices within your business. When the audit is complete, you will receive a food safety star rating.

To ensure minimum food safety standards, Eat Safe Brisbane food safety audits are mandatory. You can choose to display your star rating, if your business is rated three stars and above.

**Since the introduction of Eat Safe Brisbane, there has been a significant increase in community awareness of food hygiene standards when dining out.**

## Good news for Brisbane's food industry

Eat Safe Brisbane provides benefits to businesses, consumers and Council including:

- recognising and rewarding high-performing businesses
- consumer confidence in Brisbane's food industry
- potential annual fee savings
- businesses may require fewer audits
- free marketing opportunities for your businesses
- allowing Council to focus resources on poor performers.

## Are there costs involved?

Eat Safe Brisbane is designed to reward good operators, with no additional financial or regulatory burden for businesses that are compliant with the requirements of the Act.

**Food safety risks can be managed and controlled with good food hygiene practices and documented procedures.**

## The food safety audit process

Council will audit and assess all food safety risks associated with your food business. The results of this assessment will be formally documented on a food safety audit proforma and retained for official records. Evidence of food safety performance is collected through:

- visual inspections
- discussions with staff
- examination of documentation or other evidence as required
- observation of business activities.

Any necessary requirements or recommendations for improvements will be documented in the food safety audit proforma and provided to the business following the audit. For more information to help you prepare for the audit, please visit [brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permits](https://brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permits).

## Results of the food safety audit

Council will discuss findings of the food safety audit with you, a food safety supervisor, or a nominated senior person representing your business and provide further information if necessary.

Council will also work with the nominated food business representative to ensure any risks or non-compliances are identified. From that point, you will need to complete any corrective actions and resolve any risks to food safety. The amount of time allowed to correct risks to food safety will depend on the severity, scale or immediate risk. Businesses that do not complete these tasks may face further enforcement action.

Don't forget that Council is here to help – a Council Officer can provide expert advice in relation to any corrective actions needed.

**If you have achieved a rating of *three stars or more*, you can opt-in to have your results displayed at your business and on Council's website.**

## How the Eat Safe Brisbane rating works

Food safety ratings or stars are determined from the findings of the audit. The food safety audit proforma is used by a Council Officer to record your practices and procedures for handling and preparing food. Any non-compliance issues identified are documented and the final results calculated to give the food business a star rating.

The proforma contains the food safety requirements outlined in the Act and the FSS. It is the food business' legal responsibility to comply with these. Any breach of these provisions are noted and tallied to give an overall representation of the compliance against the Act.

The three non-compliance options within the proforma represent the various levels of risk.

Minor non-compliant means there is a small, low-risk breach that can be easily fixed during the normal course of business. These issues are less likely to present a hazard to consumers. Examples include:

- slightly broken fixtures, fittings or equipment
- cracked tiles
- very minor cleaning issues.

You can still achieve a very good star rating if a small number of minor non-compliant issues are found.

Major non-compliant is more serious. It suggests a breach of the FSS and exposes a high risk to food safety. You may not be able to quickly or easily fix these issues during normal processes. Examples include:

- very unclean premises
- no hand washing facilities
- poor personal hygiene.

If any major non-compliances are found, enforcement action, such as improvement notices, on-the-spot fines, suspension or prosecution may be undertaken.

*Critical non-compliances* are matters that pose the highest risk to producing safe food. These areas are determined to be fundamental in providing safe food to consumers. If a food business fails to comply with any of the critical requirements, serious enforcement action, such as on-the-spot fines, immediate suspension of licence or prosecution, may be undertaken.

Examples include:

- incorrect temperature control
- contamination of food
- pest and vermin harbourage.

# What do the star ratings mean?

## **5 Stars - Excellent performer**

Fully compliant with the Food Act 2006.

## **4 Stars - Very good performer**

High standard of compliance with the Food Act 2006.

## **3 Stars - Good performer**

Good level of compliance with the Food Act 2006.

## **2 Stars - Poor performer**

Low level of compliance with the Food Act 2006 with more effort required.

## **No Star**

Non-compliant performer A general failure to comply with the Food Act 2006 with major effort required to rectify issues.

## Five star rating – how can I reach this?

To achieve a five star rating, a food business must achieve excellence in all the following criteria when assessed by Council:

- you have notified Council of the food safety supervisor for your business
- there are no justified complaints within the previous and current licence periods
- there are no critical, major or minor food safety risks identified during the food safety audit
- you have adequately demonstrated you are managing the food safety risks associated with safely receiving, storing, processing, displaying and transporting potentially hazardous food, and for cleaning and sanitizing your food business
- the previous food safety audit has no outstanding requirements.

## Keeping your star rating

You need to achieve a three star rating or above to receive free star rating display material from Council. Council will reassess your star rating at each food safety audit. If, at a later audit, acceptable food safety standards have not been maintained, Council may withdraw your food safety star rating.

## How often will businesses be audited?

Council will conduct an audit of your business at a frequency aligned with the star rating. Very good and excellent performers may require fewer audits, while businesses performing poorly will be audited more frequently.

Council may conduct additional audits if complaints are received or if deemed necessary.

## Let your stars shine – three stars and above

If you achieve an overall rating of three stars or above, you can opt-in to have your results displayed on Council's website.

## What if you disagree with your star rating?

You can make a formal application for an audit review if you disagree with your star rating (fees and conditions apply). A Council Officer will reassess the audit results and determine if the star rating should be changed. An application for an audit review must be made within five days from the date of the audit and supporting documentation is required to justify the request. If the review is found in your favour, the audit review fee will be refunded.

## Can I improve my star rating?

If you have made improvements to your food safety management practices since your audit and want to revise your star rating, you can request a reassessment for a fee.

If your business is rated two stars or below, a waiting period of 90 days will apply. Any food businesses with a three star rating or above must wait six months.

For review applications and additional terms and conditions of the review process, please visit [brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane](http://brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane)

Please visit [brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permits](http://brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permits) for further details of Council's food safety rating scheme, Eat Safe Brisbane.

## Resources and references

### **Brisbane City Council**

Web: [brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permitsEatSafeBrisbane](http://brisbane.qld.gov.au/laws-and-permits/food-business-licences/food-safety-permitsEatSafeBrisbane)

Email: [EatSafeBrisbane@brisbane.qld.gov.au](mailto:EatSafeBrisbane@brisbane.qld.gov.au)

Phone: 3403 8888

**National standards** – available at [foodstandards.gov.au](http://foodstandards.gov.au)

- FSANZ Food Safety Standards
  - 3.1.1 Interpretation and Application
  - 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements
  - 3.2.2A Food Safety Management Tools
  - 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment
- Australian Standard 4674–2004, Design, construction and fit-out of food premises
- Australian Standard 1668.2, The use of mechanical ventilation and air-conditioning in buildings, Part 2: Mechanical ventilation for acceptable indoor air-quality

**Queensland Health guides/fact sheets** – available at [health.qld.gov.au](http://health.qld.gov.au)

- Food Safety Supervisor Fact Sheet
- Food Safety Programs

### **Food industry associations**

- Restaurant & Catering Queensland
- Baking Industry Association Queensland
- Queensland Hotels Association
- Clubs Queensland

### **Food Act 2006 – Queensland Legislation**

- [legislation.qld.gov.au](http://legislation.qld.gov.au)