Eat Safe Brisbane

Food Safety Rating Guide

Supported by:

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

In 2010, Brisbane City Council introduced **Eat Safe Brisbane**, a food business regulatory rating scheme, in partnership with key industry representatives.

All licensed food businesses within Brisbane receive a food safety star ‘rating’ based on an assessment conducted by Council under the **Food Act 2006**, **Food Safety Standards** and good management practices. 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 **Food Act 2006**.

Our role

Brisbane City Council has a responsibility to monitor and regulate all food businesses to ensure that you meet your legislative responsibilities under the **Food Act 2006** and the **Food Safety Standards**.

The aim of **Eat Safe Brisbane** is to work together and provide both assistance and incentives to achieve and maintain the highest standards in food safety. **Eat Safe Brisbane** ensures our food industry continues to be among the world’s best in safety standards.
What is Council’s Eat Safe Brisbane scheme?

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

The assessment of a food business takes into account all the food handling processes within the operation. Council will undertake a food safety audit of your business to ensure you comply with the requirements of the Food Act 2006 and Food Safety Standards to determine if you can effectively manage food safety risks.

It is reasonable to expect that as a food business operator, you can manage all food safety risks within the normal business function. You 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 rating audit, Council will assess food safety practices conducted 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. Only the display of star ratings, if your business is rated 3 stars and above, is voluntary.

Since the implementation of Eat Safe Brisbane there has been a significant reduction in complaints relating to food-borne illness and infection.

Good news for Brisbane’s food industry

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

- recognising and rewarding high-performing businesses
- providing consumers with confidence in Brisbane’s food industry
- allowing for potential annual fee savings
• reducing the number of audits for businesses that demonstrate very good food safety practices
• providing free marketing opportunities for businesses and giving Brisbane’s food industry a competitive edge
• allowing Council to focus resources on poor performers.

Are there costs involved?

Eat Safe Brisbane is designed to reward good operators and means no additional financial or regulatory burden if your business is compliant with the requirements of the Food Act 2006.

The food safety audit process

Council will audit and assess all food safety risks associated with your 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
• observation of business activities.

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

Any necessary requirements or recommendations for improvements in food safety practices will be documented and provided to you in an inspection report following the audit. For more information to help you prepare for the audit process please visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane
Results of the food safety audit

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

Council will also ensure the nominated food business representative acknowledges identified food safety risks or non-compliances. 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.

If your business does not complete corrective tasks in a timely manner, you may face further enforcement action.

Don’t forget that Council is here to help – the Environmental Health Officer can provide you with expert advice in relation to any corrective actions required.

If you have achieved a rating of 3 stars or more, you can opt-in to having your results publicly displayed on your premises and on Council’s Eat Safe Brisbane website at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane

Eat Safe Brisbane boosts customer confidence and provides a competitive edge for your business. In addition, high performing food businesses will receive incentive-based benefits such as lower fees and fewer audits by Council.

How the Eat Safe Brisbane rating works

Food safety ratings or stars are determined from the findings of the food audit. The Food Safety Audit Proforma is used by the Environmental Health Officer to record your practices and procedures in handling and preparing food.
Any non-compliance issues established are documented and the final results calculated to give your business a star rating.

The Food Safety Audit Proforma has two sections.

**Section A – Compliance Details** contains the food safety requirements outlined in the *Food Act 2006* and the *Food Safety Standards*. It is your legal responsibility to comply with these. Any infringements of these provisions are noted and subsequently tallied to give an overall representation of the compliance against the *Food Act 2006*.

The three non-compliance selections within Section A represent the various levels of risk.

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

- slightly defective 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 breaches are found.

**Major non-compliant** is more serious. It suggests a breach of the standard and exposes a high risk to food safety. You may not be able to quickly or easily rectify 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 may be taken in the form of food improvement notices, on-the-spot fines, suspension or prosecution.
**Critical non-compliances** are associated with matters that pose the highest risk to producing safe food. These areas are deemed to be fundamental in providing safe food to consumers. If you fail to comply with any of the critical requirements, serious enforcement action may be taken in the form of food improvement notices, on-the-spot fines, immediate suspension of licence or prosecution. Examples include:

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

**Section B – Good Management Practices** contains a list of management documents that identify and control food safety hazards in the handling of food in a food business. These documents are seen as effective tools in managing food safety risks associated with any food operation.

The points associated with each management document kept are totalled to give the Section B rating. These documents must be maintained on a frequent basis and kept on site at all times.

If you can provide examples of these documents, Council will maintain confidence that you can operate at a higher level of compliance and reward your business through higher overall ratings.

Scores from both Section A and Section B are added together to calculate your overall star rating. Free marketing material from Council will be provided if you achieve 3 stars or more and decide to opt-in to publicly display your rating.

What do the star ratings mean?

**Excellent Performer**
Fully compliant with the *Food Act 2006* and overall very high standard of food safety management practices.

**Very Good Performer**
High standard of compliance with the *Food Act 2006* and overall good standard of food safety management practices.

**Good Performer**
Good level of compliance with the *Food Act 2006* and overall acceptable standard of food safety management practices.

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

**No star**
A general failure to comply with the *Food Act 2006* with major effort required to rectify issues.

**Non-Compliant Performer**
A general failure to comply with the *Food Act 2006* with major effort required to rectify issues.
5 star rating – how can you reach this?

To achieve a 5 star food safety rating, you 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 in Section A during the food safety audit
- you have achieved 14 points or greater in ‘Good Management Practices’ – Section B
- the previous food safety audit has no outstanding requirements.

Keeping your star rating

You must maintain a 3 star rating or above to receive free marketing display material for star ratings from Council. If, at a later audit, acceptable food safety standards have not been maintained, Council may withdraw your food safety star rating.

How often will your businesses be audited?

Council will conduct a scheduled audit on your business at a frequency aligned with your star rating. Very good and excellent performers will be subject to fewer audits, while businesses performing poorly will be audited more frequently.

Council may also conduct audits on a more frequent basis if complaints are received or if deemed necessary.
Let your stars shine – 3 stars and above

If your business has achieved an overall rating of 3 stars or above you can opt-in to have your rating displayed publicly on your premises and published on Council’s Eat Safe Brisbane website (www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane) that the public can also access.

What if you disagree with your star rating?

You can make a formal application for an audit review where your star rating can be reviewed. A fee applies for audit reviews. A senior Council officer will then review the audit results and determine if the star rating should be revised. An application for an audit review must be made within five days from the date of the audit. Supporting documentation will be required to justify the review request. If the review is found in your favour, the audit review fee will be refunded. Conditions apply.

Can you improve your star rating?

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

If your business rated 2 stars or below, a waiting period of 90 days will apply. If your business rated 3 stars or above, you must wait six months. Conditions apply.

For review applications and additional terms and conditions of the review process, please visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane

Please visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane for further details of Brisbane City Council’s food safety rating scheme, Eat Safe Brisbane.
Resources/references

Brisbane City Council

www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/EatSafeBrisbane

EatSafeBrisbane@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Phone (07) 3403 8888

National Standards

- FSANZ Food Safety Standards
  3.1.1 Interpretation and Application
  3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements
  3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment

Queensland Health Guides/Fact Sheets

- 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

- www.legislation.qld.gov.au