

# Mobile and temporary food premises guidelines

## 1. Introduction

This guide outlines the requirements to set up and operate a mobile or temporary food premises in the Northern Territory (NT). The *NT Food Act 2004* requires a person to register the premises where food intended for sale is handled or sold.

When food is made or handled for sale the premises used and food handling operations conducted must comply with various standards and requirements including the;

- *NT Food Act 2004 and Food Regulations 2014*; and
- *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* – Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4

## 2. Setting up a mobile or temporary food premises

If you are intending to set up a mobile or temporary food premises, approval is required from an Environmental Health Officer in NT Health prior to operating the business.

Other information to help you start a business can be found in the Northern Territory Government - [Start a business guide<sup>1</sup>](#).

### 2.1 Mobile food premises/temporary food premises

There is a difference between a mobile food premises and a temporary food premises including the associated requirements and where they may be appropriate to operate.

**Mobile food premises** is a vehicle that is capable of moving from place to place to sell food. Mobile food premises are considered permanent premises where their layout does not change when moved, they are self-sufficient and can trade from various locations with minimal setup and minimal reliance on other infrastructure. For example, has holding capacity to capture and transport wastewater used within the vehicle. Vehicles used to transport food only are not considered to be a mobile food premises.

**Temporary food premises** may be a marquee, tent, trailer or any combination of these that are setup prior to the event and dismantled or packed down after operating. Temporary food premises have a reliance on infrastructure at the event. For example, the disposal of wastewater using facilities provided at the event. Temporary food premises are operated at occasional and infrequent intervals such as at markets, fetes, fairs, festival, shows or other major events.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/start-a-business>

## 2.2 Trade waste permits

Depending on the set up and operation you may also require a trade waste permit from the relevant authority. **Contact the Power and Water Trade Waste team** who can provide you with information on [approval to discharge trade waste to sewerage](#)<sup>2</sup>.

## 2.3 Land use

Obtaining a mobile or temporary food premises registration does not grant permission to trade at any location. Permission to trade from a certain location is subject to further approval which is not obtained from NT Health.

### Events and Markets

If you are trading at an organised public event or market you will need to obtain permission from the event organiser directly.

### Private Land (Outside of organised major events or markets)

Trading from private land may be restricted or require planning approval. **Contact a Planner at Development Assessment Services (DAS)** who can provide you with information. Find out more by [contacting a planner](#)<sup>3</sup>.

### Public Land (Outside of organised major events or markets)

Trading from public land will depend on the location and who is responsible for managing the land. Approval will be required from the local council or land council or other relevant land manager such as *Parks and Wildlife* or *Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics* - [Road Reserves for NTG managed road sides](#)<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.4 Use of kitchens for food preparation

It is important to ensure that your mobile or temporary food premises is designed to cater for the level of food preparation associated with your business. Preparing food prior to operating at an event or market introduces additional risks to food safety. It is preferred that all food preparation is carried out onsite on the day of trade.

If preparation of food prior to an event is necessary for certain foods, this activity requires approval from an Environmental Health Officer. Where considerable preparation of food is required prior to operating at a market or event, a domestic kitchen may not be suitable to meet the necessary standards. For more information refer to the Home-based food business guidelines.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.powerwater.com.au/developers/water-development/trade-waste>

<sup>3</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/property/land-planning-and-development/contact-a-planner>

<sup>4</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/driving/management/road-reserves-advertising-and-activities>

## 2.5 Risk class and requirements

Food businesses in the Northern Territory are classified using the [NT food business risk classification framework](#)<sup>5</sup>. The classification depends on the inherent food safety risks that exist in a food business. The highest risk category is Priority 1 (P1), followed by P2, P3 and then P4, which is the lowest risk category.

## 3. Structural requirements

All food premises must be designed and constructed in accordance with [Food Standards Code 3.2.3 - Food Premises and Equipment](#)<sup>6</sup>. The design and construction must comply with these standards and be appropriate for the activities of the food business. The following provide a summary of relevant sections from Chapter 3.2.3 and is not an exhaustive list. Refer to the diagrams in section 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 for an example of a typical setup.

Requirement	Mobile Food Premises	Temporary Food Premises
Handwashing facilities	A permanent fixture plumbed to the vehicle with a hot and cold water supplied through a single tap outlet. Supply of liquid soap and paper towel.	A hand washing facility with running water, preferably warm if possible. Supply of liquid soap and paper towel.
Equipment washing <i>Note: Spare clean equipment such as containers and serving utensils should be provided where possible to minimise the need for washing of equipment onsite. Where equipment is to be taken offsite for cleaning and sanitising, this should be stored in a suitable 'dirty tub' that is clearly labelled so that there is no risk of contaminating clean equipment or food.</i>	A permanent fixture plumbed to the vehicle with a supply of hot and cold water, consisting of a double bowl sink (in addition to the hand washing facility). The bowls are to be of a size that allows for cleaning/sanitising of the largest piece of equipment.	A washing facility for cleaning and sanitising of equipment onsite. Where a double bowl sink is not provided, a bucket system is permitted. If using buckets this will consist of a 3 bucket system – hot soapy water, hot clean water and a hot sanitising solution. This will allow you to clean in the 1 <sup>st</sup> , rinse in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and then sanitise in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> bucket.
Water Supply	A sufficient supply of potable (drinking) water is to be supplied to cater for all equipment/hand washing, food preparation and cleaning needs for the duration of trade. If a connection to reticulated tap water is not available adequate storage capacity will need to be provided. Any tank or container that is used for storing water, is to be clean and sealed to ensure water does not become contaminated prior to use.	

<sup>5</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/risk-classification-in-food-businesses>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/Pages/default.aspx>

Requirement	Mobile Food Premises	Temporary Food Premises
Adequate Space	The vehicle needs to be fit for its purpose and be of a sufficient size to enable the production of safe and suitable food. Adequate storage needs to be provided for all food and equipment so that it is stored safely. Storage on the floor or ground is not appropriate.	The setup needs to be fit for its purpose and be of a sufficient size to enable the production of safe and suitable food. Adequate storage needs to be provided for all food and equipment so that it is stored safely. Storage on the floor or ground is not appropriate.
Floors, Walls and Ceilings	All walls, floors, ceilings, benches and cupboards must be in good condition and finished in a smooth, durable, impervious material free of crevices/gaps and capable of being effectively cleaned using liquid and chemicals.	All walls, ceilings, and tables must be in good condition and able to be kept clean. Walls and ceilings should be provided to any area where food is exposed to protect from contamination. Flooring needs to be a surface that does not pose a food safety risk. Loose ground such as dirt, dry grasses or mulch can pose a risk to food and must be covered with a clean temporary material such as a tarp or suitable matting. Where the premises is setup in an existing structure that provides adequate protection of food, walls and/or a ceiling may not be required.
Cold Storage <i>Note: refrigerators should be turned on prior to placing food in them to ensure they have time to come down to correct temperatures. For events of long durations that are in remote locations, mobile coolrooms will be required.</i>	All high risk foods in storage are to be maintained at or below 5°C. Ideally this should be by use of a refrigerator. Eskies can be used with monitoring of ice levels and stacking are required to ensure correct temperatures are maintained at all times.	
Hot Holding <i>Note: bain maries and pie warmers should be turned on prior to placing food in them to ensure they have time to come up to correct temperatures.</i>	All high risk foods that are held hot prior to service are to be maintained at or above 60°C at all times. This should be by use of a bain marie, pie warmer, insulated boxes, or other alternatives such as keeping food on a heat source such as a hot plate. This must be monitored throughout operation using a probe thermometer.	

Requirement	Mobile Food Premises	Temporary Food Premises
Adequate Ventilation	Ventilation should comply with the Building Code of Australia. For small benchtop equipment natural ventilation and/or domestic range hoods may be adequate. Where considerable cooking equipment is installed such as open grills and deep fryers, commercial canopies will be required.	Ventilation needs to be adequate so that fumes from cooking equipment do not cause a nuisance. Mechanical ventilation may not be required where cooking equipment such as BBQ's are used in a marquee, however the equipment needs to be placed so that fumes and emissions can easily escape.
Pest proof and waste disposal	The vehicle is to be designed so that when it is not in operation it can be sealed tight for storage so that there are no potential entry points for pests. Adequate bins with lids are to be used for the amount of garbage generated and emptied on a regular basis throughout trade. All waste is to be removed from the premises when not in operation.	Any equipment is to be cleaned after use and stored in a way that pests cannot gain access. i.e. trailers are to be sealed tight, and marquees or tents should be folded and stored in bags. Adequate bins with lids are to be used for the amount of garbage generated and emptied on a regular basis throughout trade.

## 4. Operational requirements

### Transport

Potentially hazardous foods must be transported under temperature control and protected from contamination i.e. in sealed containers with lids. Refer to cold storage and hot holding sections above. For further information please visit the [NT Transporting food website](#)<sup>7</sup>.

### Food safety training

It is your responsibility to ensure all food handlers have adequate skills and knowledge. Free non-accredited online training is available at [I'm Alert](#)<sup>8</sup> or Department of Health Victoria - [Do Food Safely](#)<sup>9</sup>.

### Cleaning and sanitising

A food grade sanitiser is required for sanitising all utensils, benches and surfaces that come into contact with food. The premises must be kept in a clean and sanitary condition at all times, this includes all fixtures, fittings, utensils, and equipment.

### Safe food temperatures, time and processing

A digital probe thermometer is required to monitor temperatures of potentially hazardous foods. Alcohol swabs are required to sanitise the probe before it is used in ready to eat foods. For further information on temperature control and operational food safety requirements please visit the NT [Food safety and regulations webpage](#)<sup>10</sup>.

### Packaged food labelling

All food that is packaged prior to operating and is sold as a packaged product must be labelled in accordance with Food Standard 1.2.1. Visit [Food Standards Australia and New Zealand](#)<sup>11</sup> for further information and useful labelling tools. Food products labelling can be complex and you should seek advice from an independent food analyst especially if you are making any claims (e.g. allergens) or require product shelf-life testing.

### Fruit, juicing and smoothies at market stalls

For information on fruit processing such as cutting, juicing and making smoothies at market stalls please visit the [NT Fruit and vegetables at market stalls webpage](#)<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/food-safety-and-regulations/temperature-control/transporting-food>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.imalert.com.au/v6/?sub=nt>

<sup>9</sup> <https://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/index.php/en/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/food-safety-and-regulations/temperature-control/transporting-food>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/labelling/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/food-safety-and-regulations/market-stalls-and-food-trucks/fruit-and-vegetables-at-market-stalls>

## **Waste**

All oil and water used during the operation is to be stored appropriately and discarded under a trade waste permit. Some markets and events have designated disposal points for this purpose, otherwise it is your responsibility to take this offsite and dispose of correctly. No water used in the business for washing, is permitted to be disposed of in garden beds or down drains at the event.

## **Gas Safety**

Installation and connection of gas appliances in a mobile or temporary food premises are required to be carried out by a licenced gasfitter. Gas Safety is not regulated by NT Health. For more information refer to the [NT Worksafe Gas Safety webpage](https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/gas-safety)<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/gas-safety>



## 4.1 Typical setup of a temporary food premises





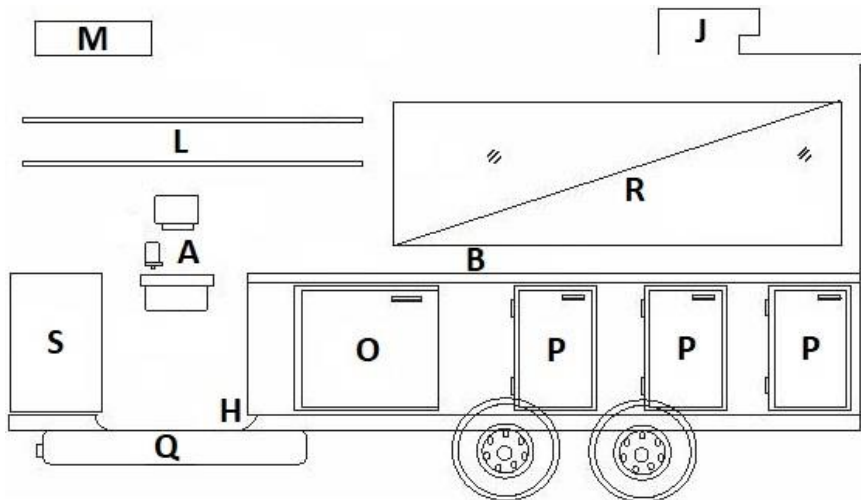
## 4.2 Typical setup of a temporary food premises

*(image provided courtesy of City of Gold Coast)*

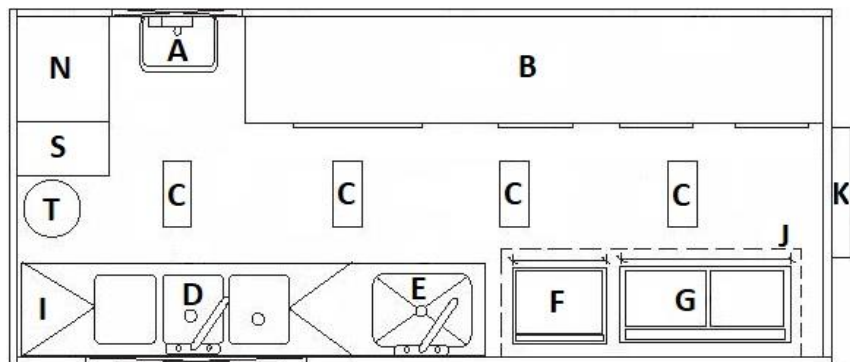
Hand washing facilities	Utensil and food washing facilities	Food handlers
<p>Container of sufficient size (e.g. 20 litres) with tap and potable water (warm running water is required unless written approval from enforcement agency)</p> <p>Liquid soap and paper towels</p> <p>Container for waste water. The waste water is to be disposed of appropriately (e.g. to sewer or without risk of entering stormwater/ waterways)</p>	<p>Container of sufficient size (e.g. 20 litres) with tap and potable water</p> <p>Hot water and/or food grade chemical sanitiser for sanitising if needed</p> <p>Provide separate washing and rinsing containers for food and for utensils, as needed</p>	<p>Ensure food, utensils and food contact surfaces are not contaminated by hands, hair, jewellery, wounds, coughs, etc.</p> <p>Clean person, attire and habits</p> <p>No smoking in stall</p> <p>Money and food handled separately</p> <p>Must have skills &amp; knowledge in food safety and food hygiene matters</p> <p>Exposed wounds covered with waterproof covering</p> <p>Avoid unnecessary contact with food by using utensils or gloves</p> <p>Hands must be washed whenever they are likely to contaminate food</p>
Food display, single use items and condiments	Temperature control of potentially hazardous food	
<p>Protect displayed food from contamination (e.g. using lids, cling wrap or sneeze barriers)</p> <p>Protect single use utensils from contamination (e.g. store handle up) and do not reuse</p> <p>Clean the outside and top of dispenser bottles and do not top-up bottles</p> <p>Provide separate serving utensils for each self-serve food</p>	<p>Cold food – ensure 5°C or below</p> <p>Hot food – ensure 60°C or above</p> <p>Check food temperature with thermometer (accurate to +/- 1°C)</p> <p>Please seek advice from your local enforcement agency if planning to use an alternative to appropriate temperature control for display of potentially hazardous food.</p>	

### 4.3 Typical floor plan of a mobile food premises

Side View



Top View



- A. Hand Wash Basin with hot/cold water and supply of liquid soap and paper towel.
- B. Food preparation bench.
- C. Lighting.
- D. Double/Triple bowl sink for cleaning/sanitising of equipment. Access to hot/cold water.
- E. Food preparation sink where water is required for food preparation.
- F. Cooktop/Grill.
- G. Deep Fryer.
- H. Vinyl flooring covered.
- I. Drain board for air drying of washed and sanitised equipment.
- J. Mechanical Exhaust extraction unit compliant with AS 1668 – screened to prevent pest/vermin entry.
- K. Screen door fitted with self-closer.
- L. Shelving.
- M. Water supply storage tank for supply to sinks, adequate capacity to supply water demand for a typical day of operation.
- N. Cupboard for storage of personal items and chemicals.
- O. Freezer capable of maintaining foods frozen rock hard.
- P. Refrigerator capable of maintaining foods below 5 degrees Celsius.
- Q. Sullage tank with capacity to capture all water used within the vehicle on a typical day of operation.
- R. Window.
- S. Cupboard for storage of dry goods.
- T. Rubbish bin – adequate in size for disposal needs and with a tight fitting lid to control odours/pests.

## 5. The application and registration process

### Step 1. [Lodgement of a food business application](#)<sup>14</sup>

Complete the application form and attach a floor plan of the proposed market stall/mobile food premises and/or photographs. Refer to section 4.1 (typical setup of a market stall) to assist you. Include a description about the types of food and processes and attach a copy of your proposed menu. Applications are processed within 30 days from the date you submit.

### Step 2. Assessment of application

An Environmental Health Officer (EHO) will contact you within 7 days to acknowledge receipt. The EHO will then assess the information and provide an initial risk classification that applies to the business and whether the proposal is suitable. Further information may be requested. It is recommended that you wait for the assessment before conducting any works or purchasing equipment.

### Step 3. Inspection and confirmation of risk classification

An inspection will be arranged with the EHO. You will be advised if the proposal complies with all the requirements. If it does not comply you will be given the option to rectify the issues and arrange a follow up inspection or withdraw the application.

### Step 4. Pay fee and decision on registration

When the risk classification is confirmed the [registration fee can be paid](#)<sup>15</sup>. Once all necessary inspections have been conducted a decision will be made on registration and a written outcome will be provided to you. If the premises complies with the Food Standards Code you will be granted a Certificate of Registration allowing you to commence trade.

### Step 5. Routine inspection and registration requirements

Registered food businesses are subject to routine inspections by an Environmental Health Officer. Food business registration is valid for 12 months. You must submit a renewal application at least 30 days before your registration expires. If you change your business's name, proprietor details, premises location or sell/close the business you must notify NT Health within 14 days. If you wish to change your food activities or a registration condition you must apply to NT Health prior to changes being made.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/register-or-renew-a-food-business>

<sup>15</sup> <https://nt.gov.au/industry/hospitality/accommodation-and-food-businesses/food-business-registration-fees>