

Hospitality and entertainment

In order to understand the safety requirements for hospitality and entertainment and your obligations for safety you must consider and understand relevant legislation and codes of practice.

What law applies

Legislation, employer obligations

About the hospitality and entertainment industry

What hospitality and entertainment industry includes, some major hazards

Risk management

What is risk management? An outline of the risk management process

General hazards

Including manual tasks, heat stress, electricity, noise and hazardous substances

Other hazard

Including gas, fire, biological waste, sharps, occupational violence and fatigue

What law applies

In order to understand the workplace health and safety requirements for hospitality and entertainment, and your obligations under the law you must consider and understand relevant legislation and codes of practice.

General health and safety obligations

To understand your obligations and safety requirements you must be familiar with the:

Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 which imposes obligations on people at workplaces to ensure workplace health and safety. The *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* also helps you to meet your workplace health and safety obligations through:

- The *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008* which describes what must be done to prevent or control certain hazards which cause injury, illness or death
- codes of practice, which are designed to give practical advice about ways to manage exposure to common risks. In particular, the *Risk Management Code of Practice 2007* should be read in conjunction with information on PPE.

Every Queensland employer must have **workers' compensation** insurance. Most employers insure with WorkCover Queensland, while a small number of large organisations have their own insurance. This insurance coverage ensures that employees injured at work receive financial support.

What you must do

It is a requirement of the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* that risks must be assessed and control measures then implemented and reviewed to prevent or minimise exposure to the risks.

If the *Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2008* describes how to prevent or minimise a risk at your workplace you **must** do what the regulation says. If there is a code of practice that describes how to prevent or minimise a risk at your workplace you **must** do what the code says or adopt and follow another way that gives the same level of protection against the risk.

If there is no regulation or code of practice about a risk at your workplace you **must** choose an appropriate way to manage exposure to the risk. People must, where there is no regulation or code of practice about a risk, take reasonable precautions and exercise proper diligence against the risk.

See the *Risk Management Code of Practice 2007* for further information.

Specific Codes of Practice for the hospitality and entertainment industry

These are codes of practice that describe the main health and safety problems linked to the hospitality and entertainment industry and gives practical advice on how to address them:

- Cash in Transit 2001
- First Aid 2004
- HorseRidingSchools, Trail Riding Establishments and Horse Hiring Establishments 2002
- Noise 2004
- Occupational Diving Work 2005
- Compressed Air Recreational Diving and Recreational Snorkelling 2005
- Plant 2005
- Recreational Technical Diving 2001
- Risk Management 2007 including:
 - Supplement 1: Hazard identification
 - Supplement 2: Risk assessment
 - Supplement 3: Control, implement, monitor and review

Where these risks exist at your workplace you **must** either:

- do what the code says, or
- adopt another way that identifies and manages exposure to the risk, and
- ensure you take reasonable precautions and exercise proper diligence.

Please note, from 18 November 2004 the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* was amended so that:

- all advisory standards that were in force on that day were continued as codes of practice and now expire 10 years after their commencement, and
- all existing industry codes of practice that were in force on that day now expire 10 years after their commencement.

About the hospitality and entertainment industry

The hospitality and entertainment industry covers a large number of workplaces that provides services like accommodation, meals and drinks as well as theme parks and music.

Hazards in this industry include:

- manual tasks
- heat stress
- electricity
- plant, equipment and machinery
- hazardous substances
- noise.

Employers and workers must recognise these hazards and effectively address any that pose a significant threat in their workplace.

Risk management

Employers have an obligation to identify and assess risks as well as take steps to reduce these risks.

The hierarchy of control in risk management is, in order of preference:

1. elimination
2. substitution
3. separation
4. redesign
5. administration
6. personal protective equipment.

Once you have put a control option into practice, you should review it to ensure its effectiveness.

General hazards

Manual tasks

What are manual tasks, how to minimise the risk

Slips, trips and falls

What causes slips, trips and falls, how to minimise the risk

Plant, equipment and machinery

What are the hazards associated with plant and how to minimise them

Burns and scalds

What causes burns and scalds, how to avoid them

Heat stress

Who is at risk, how to reduce the risk

Noise

When is noise a problem, how to minimise the risk

Electricity

What are electrical hazards, how to minimise the risk

Hazardous substances

What is involved with hazardous substances, what are the steps to take

Manual tasks

Manual tasks may require repetitive or forceful movement or awkward postures. They may be activities in which a person has to lift, lower, push, pull, carry, move or restrain an object.

Injuries related to manual tasks are generally caused by physical stress and strain over a long period of time.

In the hospitality and entertainment industry, manual tasks risks include:

- carrying boxes
- stacking shelves
- cleaning cooking equipment
- stretching for pots and pans
- bending and balancing while serving.

Ways to control hazards

- Arrange for deliveries to be unloaded directly to where they are needed.

- Use forklifts or pallet jacks to unload deliveries.
- Buy smaller, lighter cartons of stock.
- Use smaller pots and pans.
- Provide easy access shelving, or store heavier items in middle shelves and lighter items up higher.
- Ensure workers are trained in safe lifting methods.
- Share lifting tasks.
- Install a rubbish chute.
- Use smaller, lighter rubbish bins and move them by trolley.
- Place regularly-used items and equipment in easy-to-reach places.
- Use smaller trays and baskets for clearing tables.
- Carry only a limited number of plates and glasses at any time.
- Introduce buffet style service instead of table service.
- Redesign drive-through or servery windows to reduce the need to stretch. Provide a chute if possible.
- Fix tables and chairs in permanent positions so they don't have to be stacked, moved or set up daily. If this is not possible, use chair trolleys or light/collapsible furniture.
- Provide loading areas close to storage areas.

Slips, trips and falls

There is always a risk of slips and falls where food and beverages are prepared and served. These can be caused by cluttered walkways, poor lighting or busy work areas.

Ways to control hazards

- Clean up spills and dropped food immediately.
- Erect warning signs if floors are freshly mopped.
- Use floor cleaning products that remove oil and grease.
- Minimise moisture buildup on floors.
- Cover normal flooring with a non-slip material (if possible) or use non-slip mats.
- Wear non-slip shoes.
- Keep walkways free of clutter.
- Replace steps with ramps.
- Install food lowering devices.
- Restrict the number of people entering the kitchen (for example, install a servery between the kitchen and dining room).
- Install adequate lighting, especially in delivery and storage areas.
- Install roofing in the unloading area to keep rain off workers.
- Design the delivery area so unloading is done as close as possible to the storage area.

Plant, equipment and machinery

The term 'plant' refers mainly to machinery with moving parts that may cause injuries. These include mixers, slicers and mincers. In the hospitality and entertainment industry, knives are also considered to be kitchen plant.

Employers have a duty to provide training on how to use any plant, equipment or machinery in the workplace.

Ways to control hazards

- Purchase pre-made salads and sliced foods.
- Fix machines firmly to benches.
- Fit guards to plant, machinery and equipment with moving parts.
- Display operating instructions and safety information near plant, machinery and equipment.
- Regularly maintain appliances and machines in good working conditions. Tag and do not use a faulty appliance or machine.
- Check electrical equipment is safe to use.
- Use the right knife for the task, and cut away from the body. Secure cutting boards before use and use correct knife sharpening and carrying techniques.
- Be careful when using pressure vessels, for example espresso machines.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as mesh gloves or gauntlets.

Burns and scalds

There is always a risk of burning or scalding where hot food and beverages are prepared and served.

Ways to control hazards

- Place warning signs or stickers near hot equipment or surfaces.
- Add a gravity feed chute from the deep fryer to an external receptacle to eliminate the need to handle hot cooking oil waste.
- Use automatic food lowering devices where available
- Cover equipment containing hot fat or fluids, when not in use.
- Use a tray or trolley to serve hot liquids, plates or utensils.
- Warn serving staff or customers if plates are hot.
- Follow safe working practices (for example, when using an espresso machine or deep frying food).

- Implement routine safety checks (for example, check that deep fryers and grills are turned off before closing time).
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as heat resistant gloves and aprons.
- Use a waiter's cloth to protect arms while carrying hot plates or trays.
- Ensure workers are trained in the use of hot beverage machinery such as espresso machines.
- Take notice of warning signs regarding hot equipment.
- Train workers in preferred techniques for handling hot items such as:
 - opening doors and lids of steam heated equipment away from the body;
 - keeping saucepan or pot handles pointing away from the edge of a stove and make sure the handles are not over hotplates;
 - using dry cloths to pick up hot items in order to avoid scalding; and
 - removing all utensils from pans.
- Install windows in the kitchen door to help prevent accidents involving workers carrying hot foods or beverages. Alternatively, provide entrance and exit doors.
- Redesign the kitchen so work areas are away from heat sources.

Heat stress

Workers are at risk of heat stress when unloading supplies, working in kitchens or during service delivery.

Ways to control hazards

- Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen when unloading outside.
- Install a roof over the delivery and unloading area to keep heat off workers.
- Take frequent breaks away from a hot kitchen.
- Wear cool clothing in the kitchen eg cotton or light wool.
- Take regular breaks in a cool area with a glass of water.
- Maintain a comfortable temperature in the kitchen using ventilation, extraction or air conditioning.
- Install a serving counter between the kitchen and dining area to reduce the need for people to enter the kitchen.
- Redesign the kitchen so work areas are away from heat sources.
- Ensure workers are educated about the risks of heat stress.

Noise

The hospitality and entertainment industry can be a noisy work environment.

Sources of noise can include:

- beeping signals in food processes
- radios
- two-way headsets used in drive-through services
- kitchen noises
- coffee grinders
- dishwashers,

Modern restaurants often do not have good acoustics due to minimalist interior design. For example hard reflecting surfaces do not reduce noise.

You may have a noise problem in your workplace if you have to raise your voice to talk to someone standing 1m away.

Ways to control hazards

- In a drive-through, position speakers so they are close to the drivers and can be operated at a low volume.
- Play recorded or live music at a comfortable volume.
- Contain kitchen noise.

Electricity

The hospitality and entertainment industry uses electrical appliances extensively. Electric carving knives, toasters, sandwich presses, ovens, food warmers, coffee machines and milk shake makers are just a few examples.

Because these appliances are continuously and heavily used, they must be cleaned, maintained and checked regularly; otherwise their electrical safety may be compromised. Remember... electric shock may be fatal.

Electrical accidents at work are usually caused by:

- using faulty equipment
- working with damaged leads
- unsafe work practices
- a combination of all these

Ways to control hazards

- Avoid using electrical appliances if possible.
- Use splashproof or waterproof appliances wherever possible.
- Install safety switches.

- Arrange for a qualified electrician to regularly test equipment.
- Continually check that electrical leads are not frayed or damaged. If they are, do not use the appliance.
- Be trained in electrical safety and the correct use of appliances.
- Avoid using double adapters or extension leads.
- Install more power points in the kitchen.
- Keep leads away from hot plates, hot equipment and walkways.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment such as rubber soled shoes.
- Guards or restrictor plates should be fitted to equipment where appropriate.
- Ensure leads and cables are not running across hot surfaces or walkways where they could be easily damaged.
- Ensure any pressure vessels (such as espresso machines) are fitted with low level cut-off devices.
- Make sure equipment is fitted with safety valves, water level and pressure gauges where required.

Hazardous substances

Many cleaning products, like oven cleaners, contain substances that may cause adverse health effects. Any hazardous substance used in a workplace must be managed according to the Hazardous Substances Regulation and *Hazardous Substances Code of Practice 2003*.

Skin irritation is a very common health problem resulting from exposure to a hazardous substance. Other problems include occupational asthma, chemical poisoning, chemical burns and long term serious diseases such as cancer. People can breathe in a hazardous substance, accidentally swallow it, or absorb it through their skin.

An employer is legally obliged to assess the risk of every hazardous substance used or produced in the workplace; and if necessary, take steps to control the risk. Carry out an assessment every five years unless there are significant changes to the workplace or methods of work.

Note: Employers should also be aware that occasionally workers may develop skin sensitivity or allergy to certain foodstuffs, e.g. seafood. Although these are not hazardous substances, you may need to provide gloves for these workers or remove them from exposure when that food is being prepared.

To identify hazardous substances:

- Check container labels for signal words such as 'poison', 'hazardous' and 'warning'.
- Check that you have a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) from the suppliers. The MSDS details hazards associated with the substance and recommends safety measures.

- Inspect the workplace to see if people are exposed to the hazardous substances, if safety precautions are in place, and if the precautions are effective.
- Record the date of the assessment, the product containing the hazardous substance, the degree of risk, control measures and the type and timing of monitoring and/or health surveillance (if required).
- If there is a significant health risk, you must keep the following records for 30 years: the risk assessment report, monitoring results and health surveillance reports.
- If there is no significant health risk and exposure is controlled, keep the risk assessment for at least five years.

For more information about how to conduct detailed assessments, read the *Hazardous Substances Code of Practice 2003*.

Ways to control hazards

- Keep a copy of every relevant MSDS in a central register for quick access by staff. In a large workplace, have more than one register.
- Check that all containers are labelled with the product name and information about safe handling.
- If possible, substitute hazardous substances with less hazardous substances
- Do not use drink containers to store hazardous substances.
- Train workers in safe handling procedures.
- Use correct storage facilities.
- Introduce control measures according to the degree of risk (for example, use full arm length rubber gloves when cleaning the oven; or do not continue to use a particular product).
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (for example, gloves, face shield or cotton overalls).

Other hazards

Gas

When is gas a problem, how to reduce the risk

Fire

What causes fire, how to avoid them

Biological waste

What are biological waste hazard, how to minimise the risk

Sharps

What is involved with sharps hazard, what are the steps to take

Violence

Who is at risk, how to reduce the risk

Fatigue

When fatigue is a problem, who is at risk, how to minimise the risk

Gas

Many kitchens use gas because it is a quick and efficient energy source. However workers are at risk of burns, gas leaks and gas bottle explosions.

Ways to control hazards

- Implement and follow safe work practices.
- Keep cooking equipment clean and maintained.
- Install a gas shutoff valve and train staff in its use.
- Know what to do in the event of a gas leak.
- Use gas equipment only in areas that are well-lit and free of draughts.
- Use only qualified people to change gas bottles.
- Locate gas equipment in a well-lit and draught-free area.

Fire

There is a high risk of fire in a commercial kitchen.

Ways to control hazards

- Maintain electrical equipment.
- Take special care when deep frying.

- Clean exhaust fans and hoods to prevent a build up of residue.
- Dispose of rubbish that may pose a fire hazard.
- Know where fire fighting equipment is stored and be trained in its use, e.g. fire hose reels, fire blankets and fire extinguishers.
- Know what to do in case of an emergency (for example, never throw water on an oil fire). Make sure staffs are trained in emergency procedures.
- Implement an evacuation plan and train employees in fire safety procedures.
- Make sure your evacuation plan includes procedures to provide prompt treatment for burns and smoke inhalation.

Talk to your local fire station for more advice.

Biological waste

Hospitality and entertainment workers may come into contact with blood and body fluids, for example a worker may be required to clean up a blood or vomit spill, dispose of a discarded needle and syringe or handle soiled laundry. This may expose workers to infection risks, including blood-borne viruses such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV (the virus that can cause AIDS).

Ways to control hazards

- Instruct workers to:
 - Treat all blood and body fluids as potentially infectious and always adopt safe working procedures where there may be contact with blood and body fluids.
 - Wash hands after contact with blood and body fluids and after removing gloves.
 - Cover cuts and abrasions with a water-resistant dressing.
- Provide workers with appropriate personal protective equipment (such as disposable gloves) for tasks that involve contact with blood and body fluids.
- Develop procedures for the handling and disposal of waste that is contaminated with blood and body fluids. For example, place contaminated waste in a sealed plastic bag for disposal.
- Clean surfaces and items that are contaminated with blood and body fluids using warm water and detergent. Avoid creating an aerosol of blood and water. If disinfection is required after cleaning, use a suitable disinfectant such as sodium hypochlorite (bleach).
- Develop procedures for the sorting, handling, storage, transport and laundering of linen that is soiled with blood and body fluids.
- Provide staff with adequate amenities for hand washing, including running water, soap and single-use paper or disposable towels.

Sharps

'Sharps' refer to any object that can pierce or penetrate the skin easily. They include ice picks, broken glass, needles and syringes. Workers may be required to:

- dispose of needles that are found in toilets or carparks; or
- clean up broken glass that has been contaminated with blood.

Ways to control hazards

- Train staff in safe working practices to prevent skin penetrating injuries from sharps. For example, workers should be instructed not to manually compress garbage bags or place their hands into areas where their hands are not visible, such as into garbage bags or behind toilet cisterns.
- Develop procedures for the safe handling and disposal of sharps and instruct workers accordingly.
- Provide a sharps disposal kit containing disposable gloves, appropriate tongs and a rigid-walled, puncture resistant sharps container.
- Install features that deter sharps concealment and encourage responsible sharps disposal, eg adequate lighting and provision of sharps containers.
- Keep a register of where sharps are located so that 'hot spots' can be identified for further action.
- Undertake regular surveillance activities to ensure prompt detection and disposal of sharps.
- Provide appropriate personal protective equipment, eg sturdy gloves for garbage collection.

Employers should also provide information and training on:

- relevant infectious diseases, including how they are transmitted and their prevention
- infection control practices and procedures, including hand washing and personal hygiene
- correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- management of a blood or body fluid exposure and skin penetrating injury, including first aid, medical referral and access to counselling
- incident reporting, recording and investigation.

If a risk assessment indicates that workers have regular contact with blood and body fluids and/or discarded needles, hepatitis B vaccination may be required. Refer to the Safety Link *Vaccine preventable Diseases* for further information

Find out more about skin penetrating injuries.

Violence

People who work in the hospitality and entertainment industry may risk personal violence from aggressive or dissatisfied customers.

Ways to control hazards

- Implement guidelines for dealing with aggressive customers, and follow security-aware work practices (for example, safe opening and closing procedures).
- Minimise visibility of the cash drawer.
- Open the cash drawer only when necessary.
- Count cash in a secure room.
- Install a safe, or use a professional cash collection service.
- Redesign the workplace (if necessary) to improve the point of sale operator's visibility of the entrance.
- Provide security lighting at the entrance.
- Install window locks and a video surveillance camera.
- Reduce background noise wherever possible.
- Ensure workers are trained on security issues, including how to detect imminent aggression and defusing potentially violent situations.
- Provide a confidential means for workers to report violence.
- Provide access to support services for workers involved in a violent incident.

Additional information about protecting workers from violence can be found at [security in retail](#).

Fatigue

Workers in the hospitality and entertainment industry can suffer fatigue through shiftwork.

Fatigue is associated with:

- spending long periods of time awake
- obtaining an inadequate amount of sleep over an extended period
- obtaining an insufficient quality of sleep over an extended period.

The level of fatigue is affected by:

- workload
- length of the shift
- previous hours and days worked
- time of day or night worked.

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