

# Operating a Food Business from Home Darebin City Council

**Published by:**

City of Darebin's Health Protection Unit

Edition Two – 2017

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide appropriate information to ensure the layout of your kitchen minimises the risk of food contamination. Good design will promote good hygiene, which will assist in the safe preparation of food. These guidelines have been developed to assist and advise people who are considering establishing a food business from home, within Darebin City Council.

Preparing food for a number of people is different from cooking for the family. You will need to think about whether you can safely prepare food from home for the usually larger number of people you are planning to serve.

You need to be registered under the Food Act with your local Council to operate a food business from home. If you are thinking about running a food business, there are few things you need to consider:

- Do I know enough about making sure the food I make is safe?
- Will I need a building or planning permit from the local Council?
- Will the kitchen's layout, equipment and storage facilities be appropriate for doing the things I plan to do?
- Is there a place to wash my hands before I start preparing food in the food preparation area?
- Is there enough room to effectively store the amount of food I plan to make?
- Will everyone working at the business know how to make sure the food they handle is safe for customers?
- The time between when you prepare the food and when it gets served
- Is there a commercial kitchen I could rent to manufacture my food?
- If renting; discuss with your real estate or landlord whether you are permitted to run a business from home.

One of the best places to start is with your local Council Health Officer. They can advise you on the changes you might need to make to your kitchen or premises to satisfy the legal requirements of running a food business.

Following these guidelines ensures compliance with Australian Food Safety Standards and the Food Act 1984, which require appropriate construction and fit out of food premises.

Separation of commercial food preparation and domestic food preparation must be maintained.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us:

### **Health Protection Unit**

274 Gower Street Preston 3072

**Phone:** (03) 8470 8658

**Fax:** (03) 9261 4880

**Email:** [health@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:health@darebin.vic.gov.au)

**Website:** [www.darebin.vic.gov.au](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au)

## **2. Registration Procedure**

Prior to making an application for plans approval:

- Read this whole document
- Discuss any concerns you have with our Health Officers
- For further information on food safety visit the Department of Health website at <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety>.

### **2.1 Planning Permit and/or Building Permit**

Prior to making an application to Council's Health Protection Unit, make an enquiry about your proposal to Council's Statutory Planning, phone (03) 8470 8850 and Building, phone (03) 8470 8899.

With all commercial works it is advisable that you check with Council's services both Statutory Planning and Building to determine whether your intended proposal requires further permit/s.

If a Planning and/or Building permit is required, do not commence any work on the food premises until you have received the required Permit/s.

If you proceed with the works and commence operating without the required permit/s, you will be required to stop operating your business until you have the necessary permit/s.

#### **2.1.1 Compliance with Disability Access Requirements**

All buildings should be accessible to, and provide facilities for all members of the public, including people with a disability. The Building Code of Australia sets the minimum requirements which should be assessed by your Building Surveyor as part of the Building Permit process.

By providing good access to people with a disability, whether they are patrons or staff, you are also increasing access for a wide range of other people including mothers with prams, older people and delivery people with trolleys. With 19% of the population having a disability of some kind, it makes good business sense to provide access for everyone.

### **2.2 On-Site Inspection**

Contact the Darebin Health Protection Unit, phone (03) 8470 8658 to arrange a meeting with a Health Officer on-site to discuss your proposed food premises.

### **2.3 Plans Submission and Approval**

From your discussions, draw a plan of your proposal on A4 or A3 Size paper, showing the following items:

- the use of each area of the premises;
- the location of all fittings, hand basins, sinks, cool rooms and equipment;
- location of the floor waste drain/s, cleaners sink and grease trap;
- details of floors, walls, ceilings, fittings and their finishes; and
- provide specifications on the Mechanical Exhaust System.

Then, submit to the Health Protection Unit:

- a) A copy of the plans on A4 or A3 Size paper; and
- b) A completed Application for Plans Approval form.

## **2.4 Food Safety Supervisor (FSS)**

All **Class 2** food premises require a Food Safety Supervisor (FSS). You must name someone to be the FSS for your business. The FSS must ensure that all staff who handle food in the business have the skills and knowledge appropriate to their duties.

The FSS is required to undertake formal training and must complete the Food Safety Supervisor Course prior to the business opening and submit a copy of the Statement of Attainment (Course Certificate) at the Final Inspection.

For more information about Food Safety Supervisor requirements visit [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/skills\\_knowledge/fss](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/skills_knowledge/fss). Contact the Health Protection Unit on (03) 8470 8658 for local training providers.

**Class 3** and **Class 4** food premises do not require a qualified Food Safety Supervisor. It is recommended you complete the free online training at <http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au>.

## **2.5 Food Safety Program (FSP)/ Minimum Record Sheets**

At the final inspection you may have to submit a FSP with the Health Officer. A Food Safety Program is a written plan that demonstrates how your business will manage the safety of the food you prepare, serve, manufacture or sell.

All Class 2 food premises that sell food are required to maintain a Food Safety Program. Most businesses are able to use a user-friendly template to develop their Food Safety Program. For information on the templates visit: [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety).

All Class 3 premises are only required to maintain minimum records for the premises and are not required to maintain a Food Safety Program. For more information on food business classifications visit: [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety).

## **2.6 Pre-Final Inspection/s**

Contact your Health Officer for inspections to be made during construction. We encourage food business operators and/or builders to work closely with your Health Officer at all stages of construction.

## **2.7 Final Inspection and Application for Registration**

Once the premises has been given final approval to operate, the Health Officer will provide you with an Application for Food Act registration form. At the final inspection the Health Officer will require the following items:

- A completed Application for Food Act registration form;
- New Registration Fee according to Class Type; and
- Statement of Attainment for the Food Safety Supervisor.

The Certificate of Registration will be posted out to you within two weeks.

### **3. Design and Construction of Food Premises**

Making and selling food carries with it certain legal responsibilities. In Victoria these are outlined in the Food Act 1984. The objective of this legislation is to ensure that the food is safe to eat and free of contamination. You must also be familiar with the National Food Safety Standards.

#### **3.1 General Requirements**

The design and construction of food premises must:

- Be appropriate for the activities for which the premises are used
- Provide adequate space for the activities to be conducted on the food premises and for the fixtures, fittings and equipment used for those activities
- Permit the premises to be effectively cleaned and, sanitised

To the extent that is practicable:

- Exclude dirt, dust, fumes, smoke and other contaminants
- Not permit the entry of pests
- Not provide harbourage for pests

Provide sufficient and appropriate food storage facilities.

This is the overall standard that is applied to all parts of a premises used as a food business. When considering the suitability of your home as a food premises you must ensure these general standards can be maintained and complied with.

#### **3.2 Water Supply, Sewage and Waste Water Disposal**

Food premises must have an adequate supply of potable water. This requirement ensures that water is available for washing food ingredients, cooking, adding to food and drinks, cleaning, sanitising and personal hygiene.

Adequate means potable water, available at a sufficient volume, pressure and temperature for all activities carried out at the premises.

Warm water is required for hand washing, personal hygiene, cleaning and sanitising. Food premises must have a sewage and waste water disposal system that:

- Will effectively dispose of all sewage and wastewater
- Is constructed and located so that there is no likelihood of the sewage and wastewater polluting the water supply or contaminating food

This requirement ensures that sewage and wastewater are disposed of effectively. The laundry sink may be used for the filling and emptying of mop buckets. All washing facilities, sinks, dishwasher, floor drains must be connected to the sewer.

### 3.3 Garbage and Recyclable Matter

Food premises must have facilities for the storage of garbage and recyclable matter that:

- Adequately contain the volume and type of garbage and recyclable matter on the food premises,
- Enclose the garbage or recyclable matter, if this is necessary to keep pests and animals away from it,
- Are designed and constructed so that they may be easily and effectively cleaned.

All waste should be contained in bins suitable for the type of waste. Containers must be large enough or in sufficient numbers to contain all the waste. Your normal household bins may not be sufficient to contain all waste therefore you may need to make other arrangements. The area where the containers and waste are stored should also be able to be easily and effectively cleaned.

### 3.4 Ventilation



Food premises must have sufficient natural or mechanical ventilation to effectively remove fumes, smoke, steam and vapours from the premises. This is to minimise the likelihood of airborne contamination of food. Natural ventilation is only suitable in premises where there is little or no cooking that generates steam or greasy air. For example microwaves, toasters, sandwich makers.

Mechanical ventilation systems are recommended above all other cooking equipment that creates steam or grease such as stoves, ovens, hotplates/grills, deep fryers etc.

### 3.5 Lighting

Food premises must have a lighting system that provides sufficient natural or artificial light for the activities conducted on the premises.

Lighting must be sufficient to enable food handlers to readily see whether areas and equipment are clean, to detect signs of pests and to clearly see the food and equipment they are handling.

Light fixtures should be flush mounted or recessed into the ceiling and provided with diffuser covers.

## 4. Floors, Walls and Ceilings

### 4.1 Floors

Floors must be designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted on the food premises.

Floors must:

- Be able to be effectively cleaned
- Be unable to absorb grease, food particles or water
- Be laid so that there is no pooling of water
- To the extent that is practicable, be unable to provide harbourage for pests

To be able to be effectively cleaned floors should be smooth, free from cracks and crevices, resistant to hot water, steam and/or chemicals.

#### 4.1.1 Suitability of Floor Finishes for Food Premises Area

The following table outlines the finishes that can be used on the floor in the food preparation and storage areas.

Finish	Food Preparation	Store Room	Comments
Ceramic / Quarry Tiles	•	•	Epoxy Grout / sealed
Poly vinyl Sheet	•	•	Heat – welded Joints
Polished Concrete	•	•	Sealed
Epoxy Resin	•	•	Complying with AS 3554



*Ceramic tiles with epoxy grout*

## 4.2 Walls and ceilings

Walls and ceilings must be designed and constructed in a way that is appropriate for the activities conducted on the premises.

Walls and ceilings must be:

- Sealed to prevent the entry of dirt, dust and pests
- Unable to absorb grease, food particles or water
- Able to be easily and effectively cleaned
- To the extent that is practicable, be unable to provide harbourage for pests.

Walls and ceilings need to be free of cracks and crevices. Smooth plasterboard finished with a washable paint is suitable for walls and ceilings. Drop-in ceiling panels are not suitable.

Walls behind cooking equipment and wash up areas should be finished with a smooth and durable splash back such as stainless steel, glass or tiles.

### 4.2.1 Suitability of Wall Finishes for Food Premises Area

The following table outlines the finishes that can be used on the walls in food preparation and storage areas.

Finish	Food Preparation	Store Room	Comments
Ceramic Tile	•	•	Epoxy grout
Vinyl Sheet	•	•	Heat welded joints
Painted Plaster		•	Smooth Finish and wash able paint
Trowelled Cement	•	•	Polished Surface
Aluminum Sheet	•	•	Welded or sealed joints
Stainless Steel	•	•	Welded joints or waterproof screw covers

## 5. Fixtures, Fittings, Equipment and Labelling

Food premises must be adequately equipped to receive, store, process, package and sell safe and suitable food. Food contact surfaces should be smooth, free of cracks, chips, crevices, ridges or grooves. This includes preparation benches, tables, storage shelves, trays and cooking equipment. Suitable surfaces include stainless steel, laminate or glass.

Fixtures, fittings, and equipment must be designed, constructed, located and installed so that:

- There is no likelihood that they will cause food contamination
- They are able to be easily and effectively cleaned
- Adjacent floors, walls, ceilings and other surfaces are able to be easily and effectively cleaned

### 5.1 Cleaning of Equipment and Utensils

A double bowl sink must be provided for the cleaning and sanitising of utensils and equipment. Alternatively a dish washer may be used for cleaning and sanitising in addition to a single bowl sink. All sinks must be fitted with hot and cold water and must be large enough to immerse the largest piece of equipment used within the business.

The dishwasher must be capable of effectively sanitising equipment at 82°C, alternatively a chemical sanitiser may be introduced into the rinse cycle of the dishwasher. Domestic dishwashers that do not meet the above criteria may also be acceptable if the manufacturers of the machines provide evidence of their efficiency.

### 5.2 Hand Washing

Food handlers must have hand washing facilities within the immediate food preparation area.

Hand washing facilities must be:

- Permanent fixtures
- Connected to a supply of warm running potable water provided through a single outlet and operated with a hands free device or single lever
- Of a size that allows easy and effective hand washing
- Clearly designated for the sole purpose of washing hands, arms and face
- Supplied with liquid soap and paper hand towels
- Hand washing facilities should be used for the sole purpose of hand washing during commercial food preparation and not obstructed by other equipment.

**Compliance can be achieved for hand and equipment washing by installing a double bowl sink and a dish washer.**



*Double bowl sink with mixer tap*

### 5.3 Food Storage

There must be sufficient facilities for the storage of food used for the business including cold storage and dry storage which is separated from domestic foods.

Dry ingredients such as flour, rice and the like should be kept in impervious airtight food grade containers with tight-fitting lids on shelving.

If the food you prepare or its ingredients require temperature control then you may need to provide a separate fridge or demonstrate that you will have adequate storage in your domestic fridge.



### 5.4 Food Labelling

All packaged food prepared at the business and sold off site is required to comply with the labelling requirements of the Food Standards Code.

All foods for retail sale or sold for catering purposes must be labelled with the exception of the following:

- Food not in a package
- Food in an inner package not designed for sale and where the outer packaging shows required information
- Food made and packaged on the business from where it is sold
- Food packaged in the presence of the purchaser
- Food delivered packaged at the express order of the purchaser
- Food sold at fund raising events

Where a packaged food is except from the general labelling requirements information may still need to be displayed in connection with the food or provided to the purchaser on request.

The following information **MUST** appear on the food label in English:

1. The name of the food.
2. Business and lot identification.
3. The name and business address.
4. Mandatory warning and advisory information.
5. Ingredient labelling.
6. Date mark.
7. Warning and advisory statements.
8. Nutrition information panel.
9. The country of origin.
10. Characterising ingredient declaration (percentage labelling)

Nutrition Information		
Servings per package: (insert number of servings)		
Serving size: g (or ml or other units as appropriate)		
	Quantity per Serving	Quantity per 100 g (or 100 ml)
Energy	KJ (Cal)	KJ (Cal)
Protein	g	g
Fat, total	g	g
- saturated	g	g
Carbohydrate	g	g
-sugars	g	g
Sodium	mg (mmol)	mg (mmol)
Insert any other nutrient or biologically active substance to be declared)	g, mg, ug (or other units as appropriate)	g, mg, ug (or other units as appropriate)

For further information or a copy of the requirements visit the National Food Safety Standards on <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/industry/labelling/pages/default.aspx>

## **6. Storage, Toilets and Food Transport Vehicles**

### **6.1 Chemical and Personal Storage**

Food premises must have adequate storage facilities for the storage of items that are likely to be the source of contamination of food, including chemicals, clothing and personal belongings. Storage facilities must be located where there is no likelihood of contaminating food or food contact surfaces. Chemicals and cleaning equipment such as mops, brooms and buckets should be stored in a secure, separate area.

### **6.2 Toilets**

Toilets located directly of the food preparation area should be separated by an air lock or fitted with self-closing door and a mechanical exhaust fan which operates when the toilet is in use.

### **6.3 Food Transport Vehicles**

Vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed to protect food if there is a likelihood of food being contaminated during transport.

Parts of vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed so that they can be effectively cleaned.

Food contact surfaces in parts of vehicles used to transport food must be designed and constructed so that they can be effectively cleaned and if necessary sanitised.

Potentially hazardous foods are required to be transported under temperature control.

## **7. General**

### **7.1 Pest control**

The design and construction of food premises must, to the extent that is practicable not permit the entry of pests and not provide harbourage for pests.

- Pest proofing measures include:
- Installing fly screen doors
- Covering every window and ventilator opening to the outer air with a fly-wire screen.
- Seal all openings where pipes pass through walls
- Install appropriate flashing/weather strips to the base of all doors.

### **7.2 Pets**

A food business must not permit animals in areas in which food is handled or stored. This includes pets which can contaminate food with pathogenic organisms and also physically with hair, urine or faeces. Areas in which food is handled include all indoor areas where food is made or stored and transported, including cars.

### **7.3 Other Business Options**

If a home based food business is not an option due to the structural set up of your kitchen, you can consider subleasing an approved existing commercial kitchen such as a restaurant and applying for your own food registration for food manufacturing or catering for that location. You will need a letter of permission from the primary licensee and must establish rosters and separate storage areas for your goods. You will be required to go through the full application process for your business to ensure the set up is suitable for your proposed activities.

## **8. Definitions**

### **Potentially Hazardous Foods**

Foods are potentially hazardous if they have to be kept under temperatures control to minimise the growth of bacteria that may be present in the food, or to prevent toxins forming.

Foods that are potentially hazardous include:

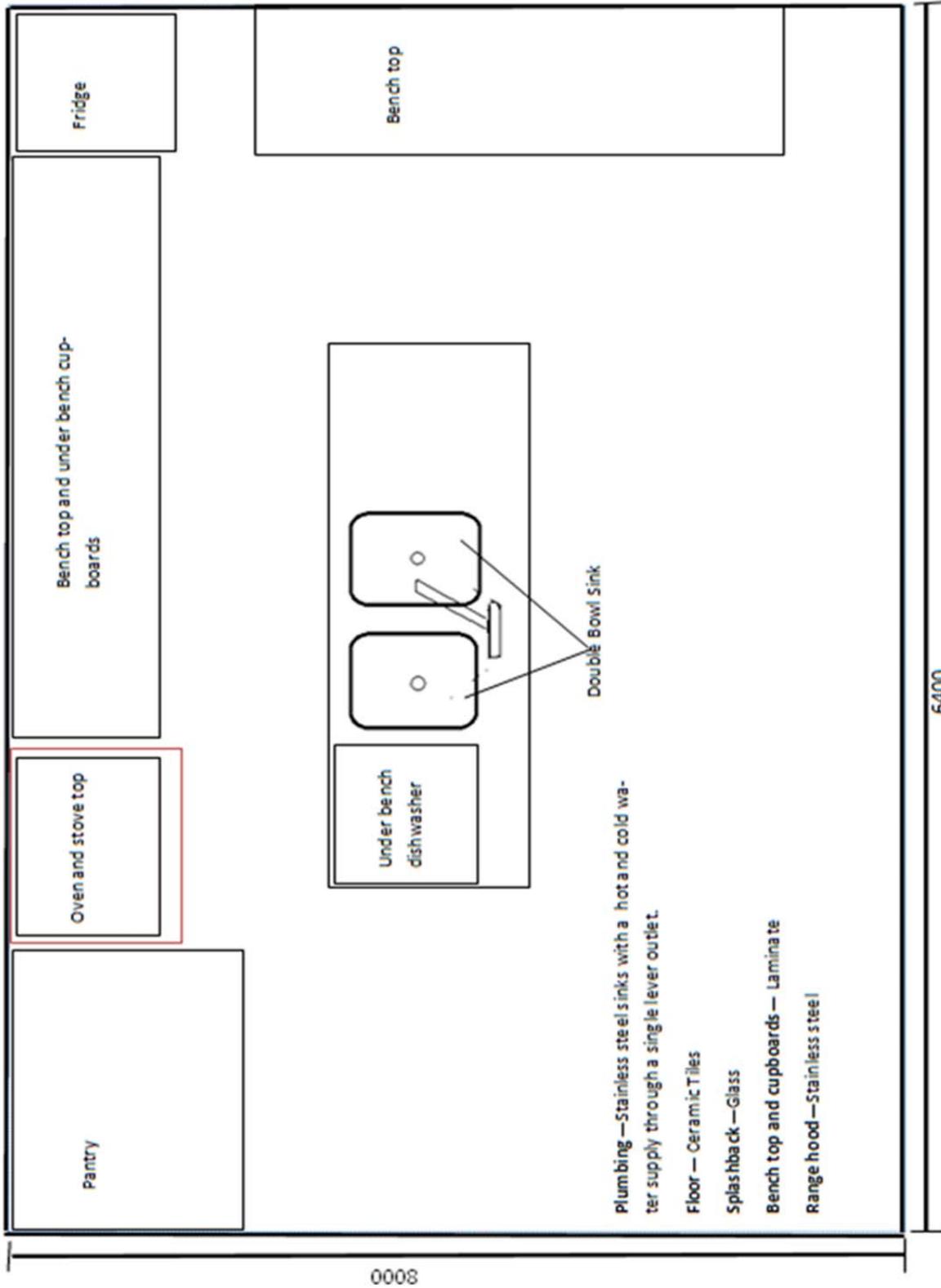
- raw and ready-to-eat meat and fish items, such as ham, pies, fish, meat sauces.
- milks and food containing milk such as cream, custard, dairy-based desserts
- cooked rice and pasta
- ready-to-eat foods such as salads, cut fruit and vegetables
- ready-to-eat meals such as lasagne, curry, sushi and salad sandwiches.

## **9. References**

Food Safety Standards 3.2.3 – Food Premises and Equipment (FSANZ)

Food Safety Standards 3.2.2. – Food Safety Practices and General Requirements

# Appendix 1 – Example floor plan of a home kitchen



## Appendix 2: Food Safety Risk Classifications

	<b>Class 2</b>	<b>Class 3</b>	<b>Class 4</b>
<b>Description</b>	Food business whose main activity is handling unpack-aged potentially hazardous food which need temperature control during the food handling pro-cess, including cooking and storage to keep them safe.	Food business whose main activities involve the sale of foods not commonly associated with food poisoning.  This includes the supply or handling of unpackaged low risk foods, or sale of pre-packaged potentially hazardous food, which require refrigeration.	Food business whose food handling activities pose a low risk to public health.
<b>Examples</b>	Caterers, fast food outlets, cafes	Convenience stores, fruit stalls selling cut fruit, coffee vans	The retail sale of shelf stable pre-packaged foods, sale of uncut fruit and vegetables.
<b>Registration Requirements</b>	Must have Food Act registration with local Council.	Must have Food Act registration with local Council.	Required to notify council of their business operations.
<b>Food Safety Program</b>	Must operate with a food safety program.	Minimum records required.	Do not require a food safety program
<b>Food Safety Supervisor</b>	Must have a food safety supervisor with accredited training.	Do not require a trained FSS.	Do not require a trained FSS.

## Appendix 3: Registration Process

