

Guidelines on Food Safety & Hygiene Practices for Residents Preparing Food under the HDB/URA's Home-based Small Scale Business Scheme

A public health document prepared by:
Singapore Food Agency

General

- Comply with the Home-based Small Scale Business Scheme Guidelines stated by HDB and URA.
- Ensure that all food preparation areas are clean and hygienic.
- Do not keep any pets (such as dogs, cats, etc.) that can roam freely in the house.
- Food are not to be sold to retail food establishments or to/at temporary fairs, as these premises are to prepare the food in their licensed premises or obtain food from approved sources.
- Do not offer catering services, including food stations and stalls at events. Such types of food service typically involve large quantities of food and is a deviation from the Home-based Small Scale Business Scheme, which is intended for small scale businesses. Also, in the context of small residential kitchens, the large quantities would mean preparation of some dishes in advance. Without proper temperature control of the prepared food, the occurrence of contamination of food is higher. When bacteria are introduced onto the food, they could multiply to harmful levels with time if they are kept in the temperature danger zone of 5°C to 60°C.
- Do not prepare ready-to-eat raw fish* for sale. Ready-to-eat (RTE) raw fish is considered a high-risk food as it does not go through a cooking process, and home-based operators may not have the proper facility and segregation of processes to handle RTE raw fish. [**Note: Under Section 2 of the Sale of Food Act (Cap 283), "fish" means any species of fish (whether marine or freshwater), and includes crustacea, shellfish, echinoderm and molluscs; and the eggs and young of any fish.*]
- If you intend to prepare food for a larger number of clients, or prepare food in large quantity for each order, you should shift to a proper licensed food premises to operate.
- Persons who handle and prepare food under this scheme are encouraged to attend the Basic Food Hygiene Course (also known as "WSQ Follow Food and Beverage Safety and Hygiene Policies and Procedures" course).

Practise Good Personal Hygiene

- Wash hands with water and soap after handling raw food, before handling cooked/ready-to-eat food, after visiting the toilet and after handling waste, and in between tasks.
- Wear face mask during food preparation and when handling cooked/ready-to-eat food.
- Use clean gloves or utensils to handle cooked/ready-to-eat food.
- Do not handle food when feeling unwell.

Use Safe Food Ingredients

- Obtain food supplies from licensed or approved sources.
- Ensure that ingredients used are fresh, stored at proper temperatures and have not passed their expiry dates.
- Clean and wash ingredients thoroughly.

Store Food Safely

- Store food in covered containers.
- Store raw food in tightly sealed containers below cooked/ready-to-eat food in the refrigerator.
- Keep perishable foods refrigerated or frozen until they are used.

Defrost Food Safely

- Thaw food thoroughly before cooking.
- Prepare thawed food right away and do not refreeze thawed food.
- Thaw only the amount of food you require for cooking.
- Thaw food either in the refrigerator, microwave oven or submerged in water in a clean container, whereby food must be sealed in plastic bag.

Prepare Food Safely

- Use separate gloves, equipment & utensils (e.g. chopping board) for handling raw food and cooked/ready-to-eat food.
- Cook food thoroughly.
- Keep hot foods above 60°C and cold foods below 5°C.
- Do not cook food too early.

Keep Your Kitchen Clean

- Clean all food preparation surfaces and equipment regularly.
- Keep refrigerator clean.
- Protect kitchen areas from pests.
- Practise good refuse management.