



***Food Act 2008* FACT SHEET 10**

Becoming a Regulatory Food Safety Auditor in WA

This fact sheet provides general information on how people can become an approved auditor under the *Food Act 2008* (the Food Act).

What is a regulatory food safety auditor and what is their role?

A regulatory food safety auditor is a person approved by WA Health under the Food Act who has specific functions and obligations.

The role of a regulatory food safety auditor is to undertake regulatory food safety audits of those food businesses required to implement a food safety program that complies with Standard 3.2.1 of the *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code* (the Code). Regulatory food safety auditors are required to provide audit outcome reports to the appropriate local government enforcement agencies following completion of an audit.

Only regulatory food safety auditors approved by WA Health may audit food businesses for the purposes of the Food Act. It should be noted that:

- Auditing is a separate function to auditing for HACCP certification purposes; and
- Regulatory food safety auditors are not Food Act Authorised Officers and as such do not have compliance and enforcement powers.

What qualifications are required to be a regulatory food safety auditor?

The evaluation criteria used by WA Health for considering applications for approval is contained within the *WA Health Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Approval Process Policy* (available from the WA Health website at www.public.health.wa.gov.au). The criteria in this policy aligns with the requirements of the *National Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Guideline* which Western Australia is required to implement under the National Food Regulation Agreement ensuring consistent regulation and implementation across Australia.

To be approved as a regulatory food safety auditor, applicants must provide evidence of:

- Successful completion of a Certificate IV or higher in food science or a related field (including 40 hours of food microbiology) or evidence of approval as an Authorised Officer under the Food Act; AND
- Successful completion of national competencies:
 - FDFFScoma – Communicate & negotiate to conduct food safety audits
 - FDFFSCSAA – Conduct food safety audits



- FDFFSCHZA – Identify, evaluate and control food safety hazards.

To obtain approval for a specialised scope relating to cook chill process or heat treatment processes (including canning and pasteurisation), the following national competencies are required in addition to those noted above:

- FDFFS4A – Audit a cook chill process
- FDFFSHT4A – Audit a heat treatment process

Applicants also need to:

- Demonstrate appropriate skills and knowledge in relation to Western Australia's food regulatory system;
- Complete and sign a declaration to abide by the Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Code of Conduct; and
- Consent for WA Health to verify the accuracy and integrity of all application information during the currency of approval.

How do I apply to be an approved auditor?

Applicants wishing to be an approved regulatory food safety auditor must complete the application form 'Application for Approval as a Regulatory Food Safety Auditor' available from the WA Health website at www.public.health.wa.gov.au.

The completed form must be submitted to WA Health with the prescribed fee and any necessary documentation required to support the application.

A person who is approved as a food safety auditor in another State or Territory can be approved as a regulatory food safety auditor in WA via mutual recognition. When applying for approval by mutual recognition, an applicant must provide WA Health with their current approval details and consent for WA Health to access information and particulars required to process the application.

What happens in the assessment process?

Once an application is received, WA Health has 30 days to decide the application or request further information. If the further information requested is not submitted in the required timeframe, the application is taken to have been withdrawn.

When considering an application for approval, consideration is given to whether the applicant:

- Has the necessary expertise or experience to perform the functions of a
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- regulatory food safety auditor; and
- Is a suitable person to be an auditor.

To determine if an applicant has the necessary expertise or experience, WA Health must be satisfied that the applicant has the qualifications identified in the section above, 'What qualifications are required to be an approved auditor?' and that their work experience demonstrates practical application of this knowledge.

If I am an Authorised Officer under the Food Act can I apply to be a regulatory food safety auditor?

Yes but the authorised officer still must meet the criteria contained within the *WA Health Regulatory Food Safety Auditor Approval Policy*. WA Health encourages authorised officers to apply for approval as regulatory food safety auditors. Local government enforcement agencies that provide regulatory auditing services will be able to integrate these auditing activities with regulatory surveillance programs.

Contact the Food Unit:

Any feedback or concerns please utilise the "Food Unit Query Form" which can be downloaded from our website http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/2/786/3/food_informatio.pm

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Note: The information contained in this document covers the food legislation requirements for Western Australia. It is current on the date of publication but may change without notice. The Department of Health is not liable for any costs arising from or associated with decisions based on information here and users should obtain expert advice to satisfy all requirements of the relevant food legislation applicable.

